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# Nothing Left to the Imagination: Web Videos Help Students Learn Biology Without a Microscope

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**NOTHING LEFT TO THE IMAGINATION:  
WEB VIDEOS HELP STUDENTS LEARN BIOLOGY WITHOUT A MICROSCOPE**

DAYTON, Ohio — If a student in an introductory biology class has trouble picturing how cells divide, she no longer has to trudge to the lab to get out the microscope and cell slides.

Thanks to David Wright, a lecturer in the biology department at the University of Dayton, the student simply clicks the mouse and goes to the <http://biology.udayton.edu> site and soon sees a short video of the process.

With collaboration from faculty at Sinclair Community College and use of Sinclair's new high-tech Center for Interactive Learning, Wright has made about 40 two- to three-minute online videos that serve as supplemental study guides for UD students. Soon Sinclair students will be using the videos, too.

The videos, on topics ranging from atoms to microscopes, are used along with a program that Wright developed called "Mentor" that offers students an interactive study tool with a series of online questions. The program rewards correct responses, reacts to incorrect responses and offers a summary of the overall performance. Teachers can also use the performance summaries to evaluate their teaching methods.

"It's a new approach to teaching that supplements the lecture-exam process," Wright said. "We've put a lot of effort on giving additional support materials outside of class."

However, this latest tool is available only because of UD's partnership with Sinclair in the Center for Interactive Learning, according to Wright. "We're only able to do it now because we're working as a team." His goal is to complete 200 videos by the end of the year.

William Klopfenstein, a professor of biology at Sinclair and one of a handful of biologists to appear on the videos, said the collaboration has opened new lines of communication between the departments.

As part of UD's partnership with Sinclair, faculty in the psychology and education departments are also working on research collaborations involving technology.

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As Wright continues to use the digital video technology available at Sinclair to make more videos, he's also helping the Sinclair faculty set up a server that will allow them to incorporate the technology into their classes.

The videos can be sampled at <http://biology.udayton.edu/Courses/BIO151/section1/BIO151Section1Review.htm> by using "guest" as the password. Microsoft Windows' Media Player, which can be downloaded for free, is required to view the videos.

The Mentor software is available free at <http://mentor.udayton.edu/AboutMentor.htm> and can be adapted to virtually any subject. The software has drawn attention from about 40 universities and organizations including Georgetown University, Harvard University and the Boy Scouts of America.

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For media interviews, call **David Wright** at (937) 229-2859 or **William Klopfenstein** at (937) 512-2914.