

Distance Learning and Simulation Technologies to Support Bioterrorism Preparedness Education

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Abstract

- The primary objective of the Idaho Bioterrorism Awareness and Preparedness Program (IBAPP) is to administer and deliver continuing-education classes relevant to bioterrorism preparedness to healthcare professionals in rural Idaho. This program will address the gaps and deficiencies in current curricula identified through our in-depth needs assessment data. In Idaho, the current training methodologies in bioterrorism preparedness are limited mostly to face-to-face *traditional* classroom format. The IBAPP program will expand this traditional delivery mode so as to reach as many healthcare workers and emergency response professionals as possible. To achieve this we are designing a mixed mode of training delivery that will complement, enhance, and in some cases replace face-to-face classes. Our broader spectrum of delivery mechanisms will include virtual tabletop exercises, online and off-line simulations, and webcasting of various types namely interactive, non- interactive, on-demand, and live. This paper provides a snapshot of the different underlying learning technologies of the IBAPP program. We also outline our evaluation plan to determine the effectiveness of our delivery mechanisms and teaching methodologies.

Index Terms

- distance-learning, multiplayer environments, medical simulations, bioterrorism preparedness. Presented at **CATA-2006: ISCA 21st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMPUTERS AND THEIR APPLICATIONS**, Seattle *March 23-25, 2006*.