

Podcasts in the General Biology Laboratory - Not Just a Communication Tool

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Podcasting for the general biology laboratory can be used not only as a communication tool, but an educational tool as well. At Lafayette College, we have been using both audio and video podcasts in general biology for over 5 years now. We use weekly audio podcasts to recap from the previous week and for reminders and general information about lab for the current week. Video podcasts have been used to demonstrate techniques and have also been used as “review sessions.” Podcasts allow the students to digest the information in small pieces and replay the information again and again. Students reported viewing the podcasts mostly on their personal computers, but also on their smartphones and tablets. Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive. Some have included the podcasts as the most important factor for their success in the course. In this session, we will discuss the theory behind podcasting and review sample podcasts used at Lafayette and other institutions. We will demonstrate how to create both video and audio podcasts using Audacity (a free and easy to use audio recorder and editor), Power-Point, and Keynote. Where to post podcasts for student use will vary from institution to institution. We will review what has been done at Lafayette and discuss options for your institution. There will be time set aside at the end of the session to discuss how you might use podcasts in your setting.

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