

## **“ZOOMing into a scientific discussion: learning to ask, not to answer.”**

The 2020 global coronavirus pandemic has unwittingly opened up unprecedented opportunities to test novel e-learning pedagogies. E.g., virtual ZOOM meetings have eliminated all logistic restrictions in organising guest lectures and site visits. In this study, I propose to utilise this unique feature to enrich learning experiences in BCH4064 (Biological Techniques and Instrumentation). This activity is a part of my effort to utilise the students' concern and fascination over the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to increase their motivation of learning biological techniques. Students will be taken to a drug screening facility at PolyU on a “virtual” site visit, followed by a lecture on a 2004 paper on screening anti-SARS molecules. Each student then submits 5 questions on drug discovery technologies. All submitted questions are posted, anonymously, on Canvas, and students vote for their favourite questions. The authors of the 2004 SARS paper are invited to participate in a ZOOM meeting with the students, in which the voted questions are asked. Students then extract the knowledge and ideas from this learning activity, and come up with proposals for discovering anti-COVID-19 compounds. This pedagogy emphasises the importance of “asking the right question” over “finding the right answer” as the tool for thinking and acquiring knowledge in the 21st century. I hope the students will be encouraged to replicate the positive experience of this exercise in future when they attend a formal research seminar.