Author’s response to reviews

Title: A Virtual Computer Lab for Distant Biomedical Technology Education

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Cover letter for BMC Reviewer Comments

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We are very grateful for the comments and suggestions of both reviewers and have addressed them as follows:

Reviewer 1

We have included screen shots of the database application and the 3D molecular viewer that were taught.

We added detail about the evaluation, indicating that organization and usefulness was rated using a five point Likert scale.

We do not know how to address the comment about the lack of legends for the figures. All the figures had legends. The legends were done in Word and the figures themselves were .jpg files that were uploaded separately. We do not know exactly what the reviewer saw, but perhaps the comment was due to the fact the figures and legends were detached when submitted online.

Reviewer 2

We tried to address the three questions the reviewer raised about the model’s contributions and implications as well as future research. They are addressed in the conclusions section of the manuscript. The work was a case study addressing a practical need, but it extended interaction between teacher and student from written and oral communication to actually observing students and performing tasks on their desktops remotely to provide feedback. We believe this provides another means of extending presence in distance learning that has not been formally researched, but could be using sense of community and presence measures that go beyond the teaching evaluations that we employed.