

Guess Who's Coming to Lecture: Using “Virtual Guest Lecture” to Support the Role of the Classroom Professor

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ABSTRACT

Newly built classrooms include sophisticated and expensive multimedia equipment, left unused most of the time. This essay suggests a little explored potential use of the new “digitized classroom”. The premise of this essay is that the classic mode of teaching – a professor talking to/with students in a classroom – should and will remain the main mode and medium of teaching in the foreseeable future. Under this constraint, the essay examines how the new “digitized classroom” may be put to use to enhance the teaching capacity of faculty. In particular, the essay examines the potential added value of virtually bringing to class leading figures (leading scholars, statespersons etc.), by screening live or recorded talks with them in classroom. This Virtual Guest Lecture (VGL) model allows bringing otherwise non-feasible guest lectures. In the live mode, a leading figure will join the classroom, via video conference or Skype, for a scheduled discussion, the assumption being, that it is easier to invite a speaker to allocate 30 minutes of her time than the couple of days that the traveling would require. The recorded mode will comprise of a recorded lecture or speech of a leading figure or excerpts from previously recorded interviews with her, edited to a Q&A session, where the questions are chosen by the professor and/or students. This essay will commence with a presentation of the VGL model with its two variants, live and recorded. Following, the essay will discuss the benefits of using the VGL model and its suggested administration, to avoid potential pitfalls. The discussion will be reinforced by presentation of published results of experiments in several modes of virtual teaching with close proximity in nature to the VGL model. The conclusions will close the discussion here, but leave the door open for further discussion and experiments ‘in the field’. The essay concludes that the VGL model, if carefully planned and administered, may provide powerful pedagogical tools to the classroom professor, in the context of the traditional classroom. These tools support the content and offer new ways of students’ engagement; they further provide wider options for positive role models for students and enable providing extra-disciplinary skills for the students (e.g. organizing and participation in conferences). Most importantly, in combination with the teaching of the classroom teacher, it provides the best way of teaching a new theory or practical knowledge.

KEYWORDS: guest lecturers; guest lectures; pedagogy; technology in classroom; distant learning; legal education

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1. The “Virtual Guest Lecture” (VGL) Model

1.1. Guess Who's Coming to Lecture¹: Casting the Dream Team

Imagine if you, the classroom professor, could cast your Dream Team of guest lectures, a team that will include all those “big name” scholars whose theories you teach. Imagine they will present their theories to the students and will say all those things they say in conferences but leave out from their written books and journal articles. Imagine that when teaching institutional analysis, you could bring in Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom to present her Nobel winning study. Imagine that in a class discussion on global governance, you could have Kissinger drop in for a quick briefing followed by a Q&A session with the students. Imagine if, wanting to take your students to a tour of behind the scenes of creating a new theory, you could bring Joseph S. Nye, co-founder of the ‘neoliberalism’ theory in international relations, to talk about his intellectual journey. Imagine if,

¹ Compare: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (U.S. 1967), director: Stanley Kramer (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0061735/>).

instead of assigning students to read the famous Hart – Fuller debate, you could bring Hart and Fuller to class and have them debate in front of the students. I wonder if you can.²

Actually, yes we can. Technology allows the classroom professor to cast her Dream Team of guest lectures to help her deliver a course in a whole new way, with a potential to a new kind of “user” (student) experience.

Those of us who were around in the 1970s, might remember the American television series “The Six Million Dollar Man”³. The plot opened when Colonel Steve Austin, a former astronaut, barely survives a crash, and a decision is made to rebuild him using the latest technology. As the narration went:

“Gentlemen⁴, we can rebuild him. We have the technology. We have the capability to make the world's first bionic man. Steve Austin will be that man. Better than he was before. Better...stronger...faster.”

Like Steve Austin, I propose to rebuild the classic classroom using available technology, to make it better than ever before, while keeping its core physics and values. Unlike rebuilding Steve Austin, the “bionic classroom” herein presented will cost much less than six million dollars. In fact, it will cost nothing since it is utilizing what is now widely available basic technology.

1.2. The VGL model

The “Virtual Guest Lecture” model has two main variants, one live and one recorded.

1.2.1. Live VGL

This variant of the model may be used to bring to class a scholar whose theory will be taught in class, a leading practitioner or any other figure who will have significant value as a guest lecture, but who cannot physically attend. She might be too far away, too busy to allocate a couple of days for the journey, or the host institution does not have sufficient funds to bring her.

The live VGL model suggests to approach the desired guest lecture and ask her to allocate 30-60 minutes of her time, without the need to travel or even leave office. She will be invited to join the classroom via videoconference or Skype for a scheduled discussion that may include a speech and a Q&A session. The technological aspect of this model is extremely simple and widely available. Many professors and students already have Skype accounts, and even if not, opening one is free and easy for the average user of computers and smartphones. Having a Skype account, all it takes is to connect one computer or even a smartphone to a projector or a big-screen and speakers, in order to allow the entire class to watch and hear. On the other side of the phone line (the phone line itself now being virtual), the guest lecture needs to have access to Skype. In most cases the guest lecture or one of her colleagues or administrative staff will have Skype installed and be able to manage the technical side. In essence, all it takes is initiative: to contact the potential guest lecture and ask her for 30-60 minutes of her time, a relatively modest request. No extra funds or technology that is not

² Compare: John Lennon, Imagine, online at <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/johnlennon/imagine.html> (viewed April 18, 2016).

³ Online at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0071054/> (viewed April 17, 2016).

⁴ Well, it was the 1970s, the imagined faces around the table must have been more homogeneous.

already available are needed. To illustrate this variant of the model, a hypothetical scenario is hereby sketched:

Professor De Luca is teaching global governance and would like to introduce the new paradigm of Regime Complex. Two current leading scholars are associated with this paradigm: Robert O. Keohane and David G. Victor, one a professor at Princeton University and the other a professor at UC San Diego. Professor De Luca is teaching at Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II in Italy. In order to bring prof. Keohane or prof. Victor as a guest lecture, the guest will have to allocate at least three days of his time, and the host university will have to allocate US\$ 5,000 or more to cover his travel and lodging. These conditions limit the possibility of bringing any of them as a guest lecture. Generally speaking, the more the desired guest is far or busy and the host university poor, the less the chances are to be able to bring him. It is by no means possible to do so every time Prof. De Luca teaches this course and for every major theory she teaches. Using the live-VGL, the task is feasible. Prof. De Luca may contact Keohane (or Victor), and ask if he would allocate 40 minutes in order to explain, via Skype, Regime Complex to her class and answer some questions. If he agrees, they may set the date and time and exchange Skype usernames. Prof. De Luca will then check her classroom's multimedia appliances to find how to connect a laptop or a smartphone to a projector or big-screen and speakers, and by that the preparations have been completed. At the scheduled date, and after a preparatory introduction to the students, Prof. De Luca would log on to Skype, call Keohane (or Victor) and there he will be, on a big-screen in class talking live to the students and taking questions. It could not be simpler.

1.2.2. Recorded VGL

This variant of the model may be used to bring to class a scholar who is no longer with us, or whom it is not possible to bring as live-VGL guest, for any other reason.

The recorded VGL variant suggests the use of a previously recorded video of the desired guest lecturer to be screened in class. The video can be a recording of the guest lecture giving a speech in a conference, a recorded class she gave, an interview and so on. The classroom professor may use an entire recording or parts of it, and he can also prepare a compilation of excerpts from several recordings of the same guest lecture. The compilation can also take the format of a synthetic Q&A session, where excerpts of recordings on a specific issue follow questions that the classroom professor or students have previously chosen. Like the live VGL, also this variant of the VGL does not require any extra funds or technology that is not already available. To illustrate this variant of the model, a hypothetical scenario is hereby sketched:

Professor Wang of Xi'an Jiaotong University is teaching institutional analysis and about to teach the theory that awarded Elinor Ostrom with the 2009 Nobel Prize for Economic Sciences. Ostrom passed away in 2012 and is not available for a live-VGL. However, there are many available recordings of Ostrom on YouTube, including her hour-long Nobel Lecture: "Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems"⁵. Now all Prof. Wang has to do in order to bring a Nobel Laureate into his class is to connect a laptop or smartphone to a projector or big-screen and speakers, go to YouTube and search for "Elinor Ostrom Nobel Lecture" and play the

⁵ Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6OgRki5SgM> (viewed April 17, 2016).

video. It is that simple. If a proper introduction precedes the screening of Ostrom and a meaningful discussion follows, it can be a whole new way to present her theory to Prof. Wang's students.

1.3. A sea of new opportunities

Contacting a professor in order to ask her to attend a live VGL session is easy today, with e-mail addresses of professors often available on their university's website. Then she is just an e-mail away. Success is not guaranteed, but attempting is almost effortless.

For a recorded VGL, there is an abundance of resources, some of them proprietary, the use of which requires the assistance of the library, and many are available online for free. This includes many of the leading scholars and practitioners in practically every discipline. Here is a short sample of such recordings available online for free:

The United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law⁶ features free, online, recorded lectures of prominent figures such as Judge Jiuyong Shi, former President of the International Court of Justice (2003-2006) on The Present and Future Role of the International Court of Justice in the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes; Judge Peter Tomka, former President of the International Court of Justice (2012-2015) on The Contribution of the International Court of Justice to the Development of the Law of Maritime Delimitation; professor Malcolm Shaw on Principles of Maritime Delimitation and also on Territorial Disputes; Judge Xue Hanqin of the International Court of Justice on Transboundary Damage in International Law, a lecture available in two original versions, English and Chinese.

The availability of lectures in languages other than English, such as that of Judge Xue Hanqin, opens possibilities of prominent guest lectures speaking in the students' native language. This of course removes any language barrier, which in itself is a significant learning barrier entwined in a cultural barrier⁷. Another important byproduct is that guest lectures like Judge Xue Hanqin may serve as positive role models for students who may identify with her (e.g. Chinese, female).

The University of California Television (UCTV) has a YouTube channel⁸, which includes a series, titled "Conversations with History", of an hour long interviews with senior scholars. The series includes separate interviews with the two co-founders of the "neoliberalism" theory in international relations, Joseph S. Nye, Jr.⁹ and Robert O. Keohane¹⁰, talking about their personal and professional development and their intellectual journey. This enables the classroom professor to take her class to a virtual tour to the behind the scenes of creating a new theory, and conduct a class discussion on the emergence of new theories.

⁶ Online at <http://legal.un.org/avl/lectureseries.html> (viewed April 18, 2016).

⁷ Julie Spanbauer, Lost in Translation in the Law School Classroom: Assessing Required Coursework in LL.M. Programs for International Students, 35(3) International Journal of Legal Information (2007), 396.

⁸ Online at <https://www.youtube.com/user/UCtelevision> (viewed April 17, 2016).

⁹ Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMqvDEQBCAs> [cited April 17, 2016].

¹⁰ Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5foxGFXNI-s> (viewed April 17, 2016).

The Hart Fuller debate is on paper, but another famous debate, the 1971 debate between Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky on justice, power, politics and human nature, is available on YouTube¹¹.

A professor teaching economic analysis of law, which was founded at and is associated with the University of Chicago, might consider taking his students to a conference on the subject held at that university. It is virtually possible. In 2009, the University of Chicago held such a conference under the theme "Markets, Firms and Property Rights: A Celebration of the Research of Ronald Coase". And it was not just any conference, but one in which the list of speakers included Richard A. Posner¹², the most cited legal scholar of all times¹³ and Coase himself. Ronald Coase, recipient of the 1991 Nobel Prize in Economics Sciences, participated virtually, in a pre-recorded speech prepared specifically for the conference and played at the conference, as he could not physically attend¹⁴. The conference, including the speeches of Posner and Coase are available on YouTube at the links provided in the footnotes.

2. The Pedagogical Value of the VGL Model

2.1. Face-to-face teaching still the core

The reports of the death of classroom as we know it are greatly exaggerated¹⁵. Indeed, online learning has dramatically expanded, providing easy access to, what is at least in some cases, quality education via well-designed-and-taught online classes. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) have a lot of promise but also many issues¹⁶, including difficulties in students' engagement due to lack of face-to-face interaction¹⁷. Using podcasting also suffers from the loss of class interaction. Winterbottom studied students' attitude to lectures delivered via screencasts and podcasts and found that feedback from the students was overwhelmingly positive. However, she also found that the lack of interaction with the teacher and other students is a serious disadvantage, sufficient to dissuade faculties from withdrawing from classroom teaching. As Winterbottom notes:

¹¹ An edited version of the debate with English subtitles is available online at <https://youtu.be/3wfNI2LOGf8>, and the full version, without subtitles, is available online at <https://youtu.be/7TUD4gfvtdY> (viewed April 17, 2016).

¹² Online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7apgu2piKsw> (viewed April 17, 2016).

¹³ Fred R. Shapiro, The Most-cited Legal Scholars, 29(S1) The Journal of Legal Studies (2000), 409.

¹⁴ Coase's speech for the conference is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAq06n79QIs> (viewed April 17, 2016).

¹⁵ Compare the quote, associated to Mark Twain: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated", no official source.

¹⁶ For a review of the issues see Jon Billsberry, MOOCs: Fad or Revolution?, 37(6) Journal of Management Education (2013), 739.

¹⁷ Lei Li and Rong Guo, Can You Hear Me Now? – An Empirical Study on Using Social Media to Improve Student-Instructor Communication, SIGITE Conference Orlando, Florida (2013) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/2512276.2512321>.

“Students miss the interaction not only with the lecturers, but also with the other students. Clearly, this method of teaching is not to be used to replace face-to-face teaching time”.¹⁸

Indeed, an important feature of education and learning is the interaction of the student with the classroom professor and other students. The MOOC and podcasting lack in this respect to the point that its value, at least as a standalone module, is questioned. It is therefore not surprising that online learning and podcasting have not yet replaced the classic classroom, and is not likely to do so anytime soon. The good ol’ classroom will continue as the major theatre for higher education.¹⁹ But change we must.

2.2. Change is the New Normal

Change is one of the few constant things in the last decades. Rapid change. A common notion is that we can adopt or lag behind, but we have actually just one option: to embrace change, to insert change as a constant feature of, in our context, higher education. As Arthurs noted:

“The academy should...chronicle change...should advocate for change...[and] should wrestle with change...In its engagement with change, the academy must not only think about, write about and wrestle with change. It must equip future legal architects and legal artisans with the tools to enable them cope with change.”²⁰

Universities need to embrace change as a feature, not a bug. They should embrace change in content and in pedagogy. Technology derives from and drives change, and it is a necessary part of the required change in pedagogy, though not necessarily the only such change. However, implementation of technology is a process, not a decision, and a complicated process. As Thomson noted, when technology starts to work, there is a period when we have to learn its benefits before we integrate it into our lives. We have yet to fully learn technologies’ benefits to higher education. We need to understand what technology is – and is not – good for²¹. One thing technology is definitely good for is bringing the distant to the close (distant).

¹⁸ Sandy Winterbottom, Virtual lecturing: Delivering lectures using screencasting and podcasting technology, 18(1) Planet (2007), online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.11120/plan.2007.00180006> (viewed April 17, 2016).

¹⁹ E. Grauerholz, B. McKenzie and M. Romero, Beyond These Walls: Teaching within and Outside the Expanded Classroom? Boundaries in the 21st Century, in B. A. Pescosolido and R. Aminzade, eds, The Social Worlds of Higher Education: Handbook for Teaching in a New Century (Thousand Oaks, CA 1999), 582.

²⁰ Harry Arthurs, The Future of Legal Education: Three Visions and a Prediction, Osgoode Hall Law School, Comparative Research in Law & Political Economy Research Paper Series, Research Paper No. 49/2013, available online at <http://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1291&context=clpe> (viewed April 17, 2016).

²¹ David I.C. Thomson, Law School 2.0: Legal Education for a Digital Age (Carolina 2008), Ch. 6: Legal Education for a Digital Age.

The success of using new technologies in higher education lies not in replacing the traditional classroom but rather in embedding technology in the existing learning context²² and in the existing classroom. As Shere and Shea noted:

"It is how faculty integrate technology into their course design and assignments that is the critical piece when using technology to improve learning".²³

The classroom remains the main theatre of teaching, however the new technologies and learning tools expand the "learning playing field"²⁴ and allow classroom professors, in designing and teaching their courses, to explore new approaches and ways to teaching and learning.

2.3. Expanding the "Learning Playing Field": The pedagogical value of the VGL model

2.3.1. The added value of guest lecturers in general

Guest lecturers, both in flesh and virtual, can bring relevance to the classroom²⁵. Jennings et al. state that guest speakers can be used to enhance the sustainability of quality pedagogical methodologies and provide more real world learning opportunities in terms of time and space, as compared with traditional theoretical learning methods²⁶.

There are many advantages for bringing guest lectures, starting from a new face in the classroom that varies the learning experience and breaks routine. There are also deeper pedagogical added value²⁷. No teacher is an expert on everything, and a speaker with proven expertise in the subject matter of the class increases the overall credibility of the teaching. Such an expert may be another professor, and in the case of practical knowledge, a practitioner will enjoy higher credibility²⁸. Guest lecturers may help to reinforce course concepts and add breadth to the examples presented to the students, on the class material as well as a personal example, and may even serve as a role model to some students.

Moreover, reading the work of a scholar is different from attending her lecture. When teaching a theory of a specific scholar, bringing her as a guest lecture has added value in several aspects. It

²² Diana Laurillard, *Rethinking university teaching: a conversational framework for effective use of learning technologies* (2nd ed, London, Routledge 2002).

²³ Pamela Sherer and Timothy Shea, *Designing Courses Outside the Classroom: New Opportunities with the Electronic Delivery Toolkit*, 50(1) *College Teaching* (2002), 15.

²⁴ Id.

²⁵ D. M Eveleth and L. J Baker-Eveleth, *Student Dialogue with Online Guest Speakers*, 7 (2) *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* (2009), 417.

²⁶ G.Jennings, S. Kensbock and U. Kachel, *Enhancing 'Education About and For Sustainability' in a Tourism Studies Enterprise Management Course: An Action Research Approach*, 10 (2) *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism* (2010), 163.

²⁷ Karen Hughes Miller, *The Blessings and Benefits of Using Guest Lecturers*, available online http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/blessings-benefits-using-guest-lecturers/?utm_campaign=shareaholic&utm_medium=printfriendly&utm_source=tool (viewed April 13, 2016).

²⁸ Remko van Hoek, Janet Godsell and Alan Harrison, *Embedding Insights from Industry in Supply Chain Programmes: the Role of Guest Lecturers*, 16 (2) *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal* (2011), 142.

naturally increases credibility, as the theory is thought from the source. When speaking, even in a recorded session, a scholar will say more than she writes, and in a different manner. While an article is the carefully dried version of the theory, a speech is richer with anecdotes, jokes that reveal more truth than some serious talks and all that is edited out in published material. A speech provides much more information also for the mere opportunity to hear and watch the speaker, with the extra information thus made available. Different students have different learning habits and abilities; some students' learning style is mainly auditory, and for them learning through listening would be very effective; visual learners would benefit from watching videos and getting an impression of the speaker's expressions and body language²⁹.

The invention of the video may be the greatest thing that happened to education since the invention of the print in the 16th century. The first book to be printed was the Bible. The first YouTube clip might have been that of a cat, but YouTube and other channels offering video, online and offline, offer more than just collections of "cats gone wild" videos.

2.3.2. The VGL model expands the "learning playing field"

Distance learning tools have expanded rapidly throughout the world³⁰. These tools can be used not just as standalone teaching modules, but also to supplement traditional classes³¹. Modern technology allows us to appear (image and voice) before others even if we are not there in the flesh. It is routinely done by live broadcast or video recording. The current prime minister of India, Narendra Modi, made history being the first candidate to use hologram to appear in election rallies, thus reaching more places than he could in flesh³².

The traditional visiting lecturer comes to class. In this mode the lecturer and students are at the same place at the same time. Simple technology, such as the phone, allows having a phone-based visiting lecturer, where the lecturer and students interact at the same time, but from different places³³. The live VGL works on a similar dimension. Simple and accessible technology allows also having a visiting lecture contributing from a different place and different time³⁴, as does the recorded VGL.

The VGL model does not replace the classroom teacher, with her unmediated interaction with the students. It preserves the physical classroom with the presence also of other students in class, as well as before and after class, when socialization can occur. The VGL simply expands the learning playing field and provides the classroom teacher with teaching techniques in addition to the traditional ones.

²⁹ Peter Honey and Alan Mumford, *Learning styles helper's guide* (UK: Peter Honey 2002).

³⁰ For a review of distance education see, for example: M. G. Moore and G. Kearsley, *Distance education: A systems view of online learning* (Wadsworth 2011).

³¹ Sherer and Shea, *Designing Courses Outside the Classroom* (cited in note 22).

³² Tom Lasseter, *India's Top Candidate Went Full Tupac, Campaigned Via Hologram*, Bloomberg (May 20, 2014), online at <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2014-05-13/narendra-modis-hologram-on-the-hustings-for-indias-epic-election> (viewed April 13, 2016).

³³ J. A. Ballard, *Extending the classroom: The telephone visit*, 6(1) *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* (2008), 173.

³⁴ Daniel M. Eveleth and Lori J. Baker-Eveleth, *Student Dialogue with Online Guest Speakers*, 7(2) *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* (2009), 417.

Guest lecturers are not substitute teachers, and they are not responsible for the overall teaching of the course or even of the session in which they participate. The overall responsibility for the class remains in the hands of the classroom professor. When bringing a guest lecture, the classroom teacher might be tempted to treat her as a substitute teacher. In addition, the mere respect to the guest lecture and allowing her space to perform her part as she sees fit, may also derogate from the overall responsibility of the classroom teacher. However, compared to traditional guest lectures, in the case of a virtual one there is a low risk of the guest lecture feeling or being treated as a substitute teacher, simply due to her physical absence from class. The VGL has the important value of supporting and enriching the role of the classroom professor in several ways presented herein. The core paradigm of teaching remains face-to-face teaching, but it may and should be enhanced by adding a periphery of a Dream Team of virtual guest lectures. The use of virtual guest lecturers enables to bring to class lecturers that would otherwise not be available, and still maintains students' interaction with their classmates as well as with the 'regular' professor of the course.

Another important by-product is that guest lectures like Judge Xue Hanqin may serve as a positive role models for Chinese students, as other guest lectures can serve as a role model for students with similar background. The classroom professor may serve as a role model for some of the students, but likely not for all, especially as the capacity to serve as a role model is still determined, at least in part, by features as nationality, gender and even color³⁵.

The VGL has its pitfalls and limitations. The guest lecture is not physically present, and with the recorded VGL he is not even conducting a direct dialogue with the students. The use of the VGL should in any case be moderate. Intensive use of the VGL – or a traditional guest lecturers for that matter - might reduce credibility of the classroom professor, and her perceived knowledge of the materials. A VGL session may take the entire class time, but may be better structured if it occupies only a part of it, preceded and followed with input from the classroom professor, a discussion or other students' engagement, led by the classroom professor.

2.3.3. New paths to students' engagement

The VGL may be exercised together with students' engagement in the virtual lecture³⁶. Before a session of a live VGL, the classroom professor may ask the students to read background materials on the guest lecturer and her work and prepare questions they will ask during the Q&A session. After a live or recorded VGL session, the classroom professor may conduct a discussion, for example, on the new theory just learnt, and how the experience of learning it from the source is different from how they learnt other theories, those learnt from the written works of the scholars.

The conference held by the University of Chicago, mentioned above, with its inclusion of a virtual speech by Coase, may be adopted to use in class. Following this example, the students may be given

³⁵ Lewis Z. Schlosser, Regine M. Talleyrand, Heather Z. Lyons, Bryan S. K. Kim, and W. Brad Johnson, Multicultural Issues in Graduate Advising Relationships, 38(1) *Journal of Career Development* (2011), 19.

³⁶ See Lei Li and Rong Guo, A student-centered guest lecturing: A constructivism approach to promote student engagement, 15 *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies* (2015). An even more interesting and revolutionary idea is teaching via the platform of Second Life, see Prude, M. A. 2013. A Classroom of Bunnies, Blimps, and Werewolves: Teaching Asian Religions Online in Second Life, 20 (2), *ASIA Network Exchange* (2013), 1.

the task of organizing a conference, in which the speakers will include students and virtual speakers like Coase. Students may be given liberty and the corresponding responsibility to choose the theme of the conference (under the general theme of the course), choose the panels, prescribe and serve as panel chairs, speakers and perform all other duties and functions. They may be guided to bring at least one guest lecturer from the faculty to the conference at large and one prominent virtual speaker for each panel. This activity will benefit students in multiple ways, inter alia by understanding the material through engagement, experiencing participation in a conference, and more than that – understanding how conferences work, a valuable ‘inside information’. They will further need to identify the leading schools and scholars and carefully choose the speakers. Since the possibilities are numerous, it would have to be a calculated selection, rather than bringing the only scholar who agreed to come.

The VGL may be extended to students’ engagement outside the classroom. Students may also be encouraged to choose a scholar they would like to interview, other than those brought to class. The students may then contact the scholar, under the guidance of the classroom teacher, and ask for an interview. If the scholar agrees, the student will read a relevant work of the scholar, watch a recorded lecture of her and prepare for the interview, which may last as little as 10 minutes. The student will then write a report on the interview and potentially present it in class. In this way the student will experience a one-on-one personal interaction with the scholar. A downgraded version of this is to assign students to choose a scholar whose theory is part of the reading list, view at home a video of a speech or class he delivered, and write a report on it. In both cases, the chosen scholar might also become to be a role model, as the initial student’s choice of the specific scholar might derive from identification with her or his background, not just from special interest in her theory.

The new technologies also opens new possibilities for students working in groups which include students from other universities, using video conference, such as Skype’s group video. As always in video, it lacks the unmediated personal interaction, and only a use that brings a meaningful added value, will justify the use of video. In the case of guest lectures, the benefit of bringing leading scholars outweigh this disadvantage. In the context of students group, working with students from other universities in the same state may not have a sufficient added value. However, working with students from other states may indeed have such high added values. Think, for example, Canadian students working on a project on global governance, together with students from a university in China or India. Whether the end product will be joint or the Canadian, Chinese and Indian students will submit separate essays to their respective universities, the opportunity to be exposed to how global governance is being taught and understood in other countries carry with it enormous value. It is particularly valuable for the understanding of the possibilities and challenges in establishing and maintaining global governance regimes, as these regimes are built on international cooperation.. In this case, the pedagogy supports the content above and beyond, conferring to the students more than the textbooks can ever offer.

2.4. Empirical experience and need for further study

The VGL is yet to be experimented to study its effects on the overall teaching and students' understanding and engagement with the content of the course. Ballard, who experimented with a phone-call guest speaker reported that:

"...the experience increased students' understanding as indicated by their written reflections on the experience and motivation as suggested by the quality of discussions on later cases. Course evaluations indicated the conversation with the director was the highlight of the course."³⁷

Ballard also reported that using a virtual guest lecturer also provides considerable flexibility:

"I have used telephonic visits in numerous courses. Compared with physically having guest speakers in the classroom or making field trips, the telephonic visit is less demanding, more efficient, and still very effective. I especially like the flexibility of the telephonic visit. Reading about a strike in the morning paper, in a few minutes I had arranged a telephonic visit with a union representative for my Human Resource Management class later that day. The telephonic visit is also flexible in that the time devoted to the activity can be extended or shortened. A CEO who committed to giving one of my classes 15 minutes gave us 45 minutes."³⁸

Beyond the possible effects on understanding of the content, it will be interesting and important to study the effect the VGL might have on students' identification with the guest scholars and their theories. Did they tend to adopt the theories of those scholars who (virtually) visited the classroom? One possible way to study that is to follow a VGL session with a survey among the students to examine if there is more support for the theory presented by the guest lecturer, compared with contending theories of scholars who did not appear in class. My hypothesis is that at least a live VGL session will increase the acceptability of the guest lecturer's theory, but this requires empirical data. If the hypothesis is right, then further discretion is advised in the selection of the guest lectures.

I suggest, but this is another matter to be empirically studied³⁹, that bringing all these guest lectures and even some of them turning to a role model for students, will not diminish the role of the classroom teacher, but rather enhance it. After all, a classroom professor is never everything to everyone. However, now she can open new doors to the students, connecting them to more scholars than could ever been possible before and providing them with extra-disciplinary tools. This extends the possibilities and responsibilities of her as the classroom professor, e.g., she may not be able to be a role model to all of her students, but she will match a few more role models to her students.

³⁷ J. A. Ballard, Extending the classroom: The telephone visit, 6(1) Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education (2008), 173.

³⁸ Id.

³⁹ An empirical study to confirm or refute this suggestion may be performed by following two different classes of a same professor, one in which she brings guest lectures and one in which she does not. The study may include handing out questioners to the students at the beginning, middle and end of the course, examining the role of the classroom teacher and her influence on the students.

3. Conclusion

The traditional classroom and classroom professor, with its face-to-face interactions, is and should remain the leading paradigm in higher education, allowing for unmediated interactions of students with the teacher and with other students. However, change is a must and development is due. Bringing virtual guest lecturers, provides all that. It keeps all the familiar faces, of a teacher and other students, but adds, on top of that, new faces of leading scholars. Properly planned and administered, the VGL may provide important pedagogical tools for the classroom professor, in support of the content and providing the students extra-disciplinary tools (e.g. planning and participating in a conference, having a role model). In proper use, it enriches pedagogy and its support for content.

The VGL method allows classroom professors, in designing and teaching their courses, to explore new approaches and ways to teaching and learning; it expands the 'learning playing field' by bringing to life theories and theorists, while maintaining unmediated connection between students and the teacher, and between students themselves. Guest lecturers, especially virtual, are not substitute teachers. The overall responsibility for the class remains in the hands of the professor. The VGL has the important value as supporting and enriching the role of the classroom professor in the digitized classroom.

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