BCIT CHAMPIONS CANADA'S FIRST INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SLIDE IMAGING SYSTEM

BRITISH COLUMBIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

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Two instructors from BCIT's Medical Laboratory Sciences department are introducing a new approach to teaching. This coming winter, Diane Van Paridon and Tom Wells will be the first educators in Canada to use Panoptiq, the **world's first interactive digital slide imaging system,** to digitize glass slides of hematology and histology specimens.

students using new Panoptiq system

students using old methods of learning

Traditionally, the disciplines of Hematology (the study of blood-forming organs and blood diseases) and Histology (the study of the microscopic anatomy of cells and tissues) have been taught by using glass slides and light microscopes. Since only one person at a time can view an image with a microscope, teaching large numbers of students is difficult and there is no practical way to share the microscope image with other students at the same time.

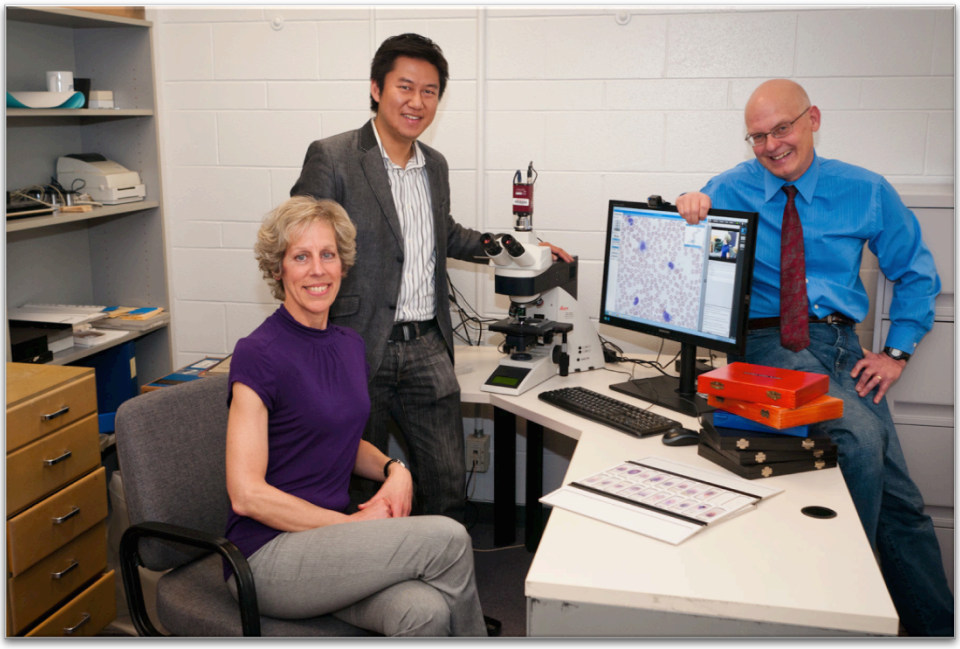
Although the resulting one-on-one and small-group learning might seem like an ideal scenario, it isn't. With 20 students and only two instructors, slide review can take up a significant portion of lab time. And because the students are not viewing exactly the same cells at the same time (the slides are from the same medical case but each slide is different), the other students in the class don't get the benefit of the information the instructors provide to the student they are helping at the time, which doesn't promote consistent learning between all students.

Using Panoptiq, a low-cost slide scanning system that fits onto any desktop microscope, glass slides are digitized and viewed on a computer monitor. Using web-based conferencing software, instructors can share stored images or display "live" scans on the student's workstation monitor. This way, all students can view the same image at the same time—and get the exact same information from the instructor. The images can also be shared with anyone connected to the system online, allowing instructors to conduct tutorial sessions with students on and off campus, at any clinical site in the province and around the world. The web-based nature of the conferencing software allows for collaborative sharing of interesting slide cases and learning opportunities with other hospital sites. Panoptiq also allows instructors to build a digital library of slide specimens that can be accessed at any time by students or instructors for use as a study tool or instructional aid.

BCIT has played a major role in the development of Panoptiq. In fact, the company that sells **the interactive digital slide imaging system**, ViewsIQ, got support from the BCIT Commercialization Assistance Program (CAP). The program helped ViewsIQ with the costs involved in filing patents and gaining a Class 1 Medical Device License from Health Canada.

Tom Wells and Diane Van Paridon, the instructors about to introduce the system to their students, were instrumental in providing product feedback and implementation ideas for the Panoptiq system in an educational institution. As a result, they are extremely happy to bring the system into their classrooms.

"We are very enthusiastic about starting the new fall term and introducing new, exciting, innovative learning activities for the students in Medical Laboratory Sciences," says Diane.



Herman Lo (ViewsIQ), Diane Van Paridon, and Tom Wells with the new Panoptiq digital slide imaging system at BCIT

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