Technologist – It's Alive

In this Technologist module the technology-enabled solution I identified was a Virtual Reality Tutorial. I used the Empathy Map to identify the Pain Points in the Anatomy course that I teach. This process helped me realize some of the barriers that the students face regarding attendance in the tutorial sessions. They are always scheduled on campus to access the anatomy models in the lab, and are always in the evenings after the students have had a full day of classes. This results in extremely low attendance rates in the on campus tutoring sessions. Remote tutorials have been more successful however they are less interactive for the students and usually result in the tutors just talking and reviewing material while the students just listen and watch. Using virtual reality headsets and software would allow students and tutors to meet in a virtual environment and have access to virtual models that they can manipulate and interact with.

The learner challenge is access to the tutors and the anatomy models. Choosing the technology was easy because I had already started to implement the use of virtual reality in my labs. TI was already familiar with the technology and my students were already using it as a 'station' in my labs. I used the SECTIONS model to assess the idea's fit to include other factors and support requirements. This helped me consider those factors and the time required to prototype and implement this idea.

The implementation plan involves designing a prototype for the tutorials, testing the design, and getting feedback for it and then refining the design based on the feedback. I was able to test the initial design with a small group of students and colleagues and begin to plan for the next iteration. This will include creating pre-recorded videos for the tutors to use in each session.

Here is a photo of me using the VR headset with my learners providing the live in-person instructions. In the next iteration, this would be a pre-recorded video that they will watch on MS Teams prior to putting on the headsets and entering the virtual classroom with the tutors from home.

Here is an image of some of the learners' avatars in the virtual classroom. They all have pointers which they use to interact with the anatomy models.

This is a photo of one of the learners identifying an anatomical structure on a virtual model:

Body of sternum
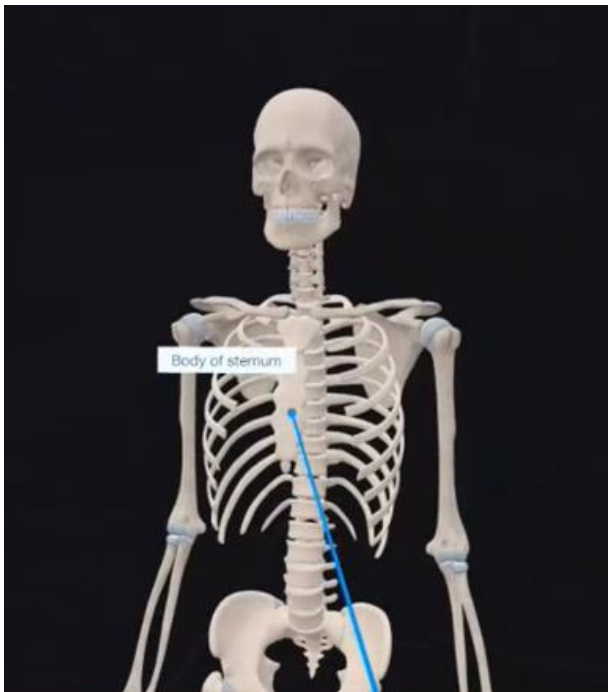
Here is an image of a student using the VR headset interacting with the virtual models: