

Interactive comment on “Experiences of using mobile technologies and virtual fieldtrips in Physical Geography: implications for hydrology education” by D. G. Kingston et al.

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I liked this paper very much and the information in it is very useful for teaching introductory hydrology and other field-based courses. I feel it is well-written and can stand-alone without making any changes that I suggest below. Here are just a few minor comments:

I don't care for the term "dummies' guide" in Section 4, line 28.

I think it is a bit of a stretch to call an interactive DVD a "virtual field trip," but I've tried to think of another name for DVD of this sort and can't. In my mind a virtual field trip

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has a gaming component to it and takes place in a space like Second Life or World of Warcraft. Don't change it, I just wanted to make that comment. I'm glad to see that after using the DVD student grades went up. One can't argue with that!

It is good that you've pointed out the fact that implementing a new technology such as this DVD takes a significant amount of person hours, up-front, during beta testing, and following up. Then there's also the fact of changing the DVD after the course has run a few times. This is nightmare that not many faculty, administrators, or staff take into consideration.

The course has run in its current form for four years (p. 11122, line 11) and yet you only have nine participants taking your survey (Table 1)? That seems small and that's why I down-graded the "Scientific Quality" section.

Though I agree that GIS in the field is important and valuable for a host of reasons, it's not clear to me what the authors had the students doing with those PDAs and ArcGIS. Figure 1 shows someone streaming points in the school quad. GIS in the field on a handheld is very good and very useful. That should be elaborated on especially because those learner grades have gone up! Maybe that will be in another paper?

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 8, 11115, 2011.

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