

Teaching a Large Scale Crystallography School with Zoom Webinar

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In order to address the loss of crystallographic training opportunities resulting from the cancellation of conventional schools around the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic we have started an online crystallography school with live lectures and live Q&A using Zoom Webinar. As we submit this abstract, we are in the middle of the first edition of the school and plan to broadcast a second edition of the school in July. Since we are trying to reach a large audience in a relatively short period, we have limited the school to ten 1-1.5 hour lectures covering practical aspects of small molecule crystallography including data collection, data processing and structure solution. In the school, we are also covering some advanced topics that students commonly see in their work: absolute structure determination, twinning and disorder. To round out the education, we are providing lectures on macromolecular crystallography and powder diffraction. So that students might practice on their own, we are using freely available data reduction and structure solution software, as well as data sets with which to practice. To give students credit for course completion, we are providing an online exam and an electronic certificate of completion. In this presentation, we will provide some insight into the issues of holding lectures with up to 750 students of very diverse backgrounds and review the efficacy of the school in teaching crystallography for the two cohorts of students.