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# Putting a Squeeze on PubMed

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# Putting a Squeeze on PubMed

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## Introduction

How do you squeeze a 13-hour professional development class on PubMed into a 1-hour staff development workshop? This was the challenge that we, the workshop organizers, faced after completing the *PubMed for Trainers* class in the summer of 2013.

Although the University hosted the class, there were several UVM librarians who could not attend. The issue facing us was how to effectively pass along the valuable information from the workshop to those absent colleagues.

Our solution was to distill the most essential information from the class into a series of micro-presentations and deliver them using a modified **Pecha Kucha** format. This poster outlines that process.

## What is PubMed for Trainers?

*PubMed for Trainers* is a hybrid class offered by the National Library of Medicine (NLM) that is intended for "those who train, or will train, others to use PubMed" to search the biomedical literature.

It consists of:



15 hours of course work



3 online sessions lasting 2 hours



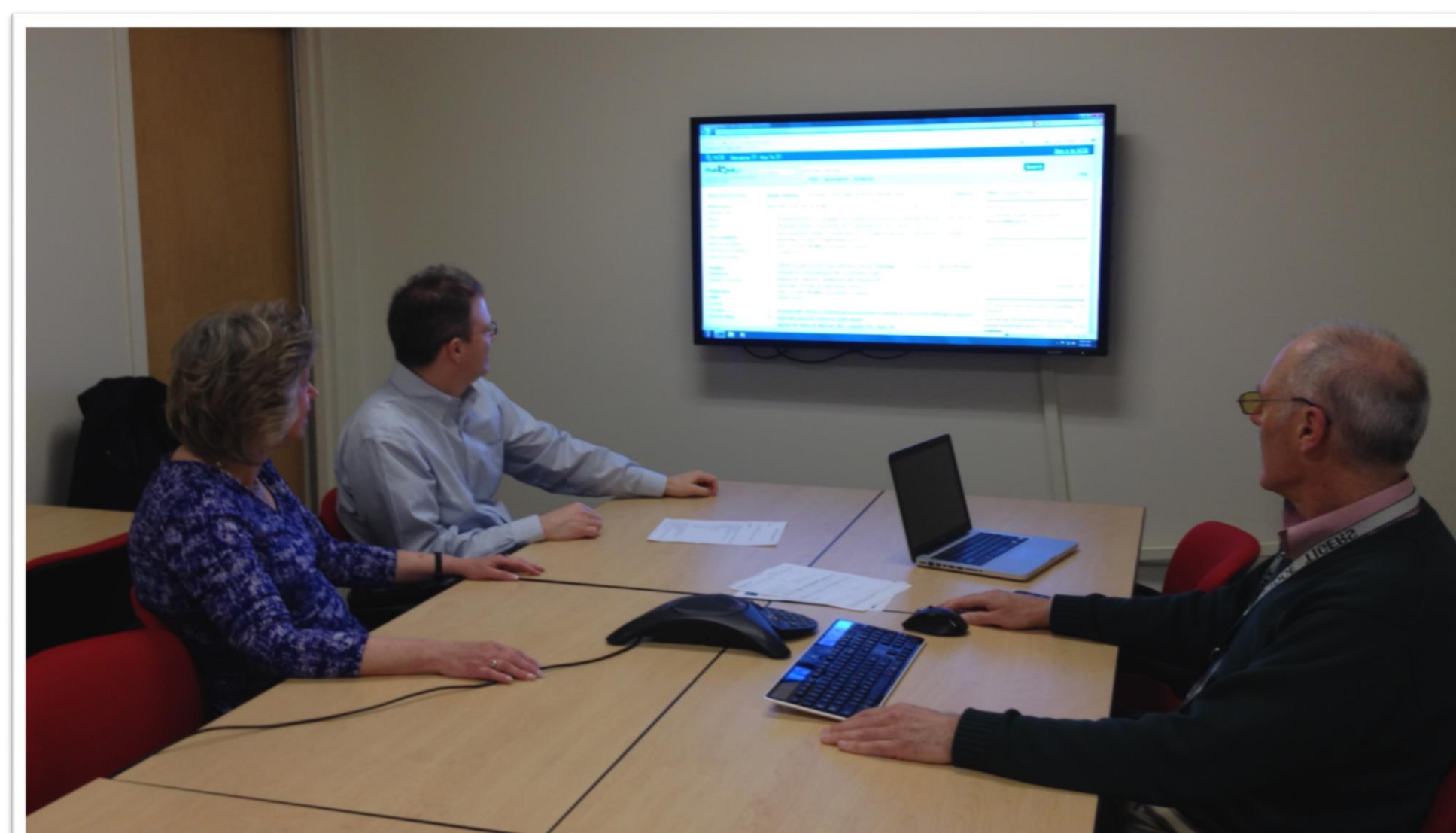
1 in-person session lasting 7 hours



2-3 hours of homework

Class Objectives:

- Enhance knowledge of the MEDLINE database
- Improve ability to analyze and implement Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)
- Employ PubMed features and functions for use in searching and training
- Discuss instruction techniques with fellow trainers
- Experience peer collaboration and learning



## Choosing a Presentation Strategy

**Pecha Kucha** seemed to be a perfect fit for our professional development workshop. This presentation format uses the following formula:

$$20 \text{ Slides} \times 20 \text{ Seconds Each} = 6:40$$

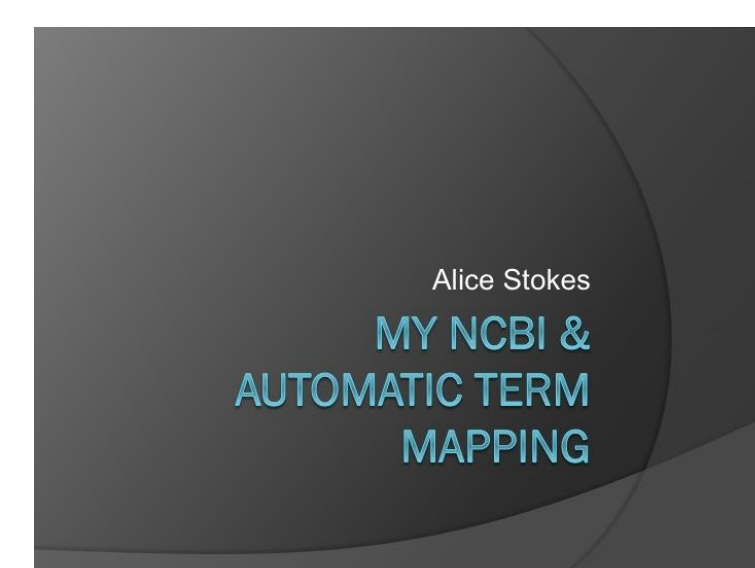
Other advantages of Pecha Kucha:

- Slides advance automatically to ensure that the presenter adheres to the 6 minute, 40 second time frame
- Format forces the presenter to be clear, concise, and focused

## Our Modification

Although the Pecha Kucha structure was appealing to us initially, its requirements (number of slides X the amount of time that each slide is visible) became limitations for our presentation needs. These strict requirements were gently modified whereby each presenter was given the freedom to select the number of slides in their own presentation and the slides did not have to automatically advance. In addition, each presenter's time limit was expanded to 7-8 minutes.

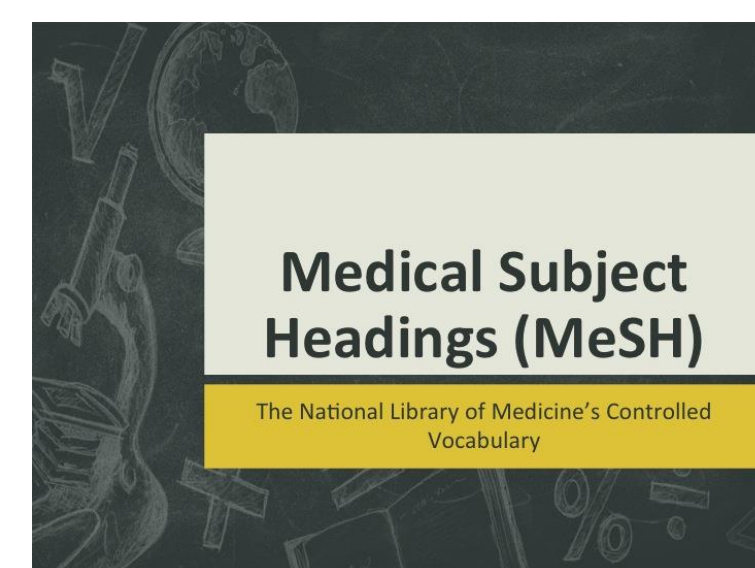
The five presenters covered the following topics:



*My NCBI & Automatic Term Mapping*  
by Alice Stokes

Presentation covered two topics:

- How to create a MyNCBI account and a review of key functions of MyNCBI, such as the ability to set display preferences
- What Automatic Term Mapping is and how it works when PubMed processes a search



*Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)*  
by Nancy Bianchi

Presentation reviewed:

- Definition of Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)
- MeSH use in searching PubMed
- Arrangement of MeSH headings
- Explanation of Supplementary Concepts
- Suggestions for using MeSH terms in a search



*Searching PubMed for Drug Information*  
by Joanne Montanye

Presentation focused on:

- Using PubMed to search specifically for drug data
- Explaining the difference between MeSH and Supplementary Concepts
- Outlining the strengths and weaknesses of different search scenarios



*Rapid Design*  
by Gary Atwood

Presentation reviewed:

- The Rapid Design process – an instructional design technique that each group in the class needed to use to complete their final assignment
- All elements in the Rapid Design process
- Two working examples of this process



*Comparative Effectiveness Research*  
by Fred Pond

Presentation introduced:

- Relatively new realm of Comparative Effectiveness Research (CR)
- Definition of CR
- How researchers can use PubMed to find CR research
- Opportunities for librarians to utilize their search skills in a new environment

Each presenter also created some kind of handout for the participants. Some handouts provided additional information about the topics that were presented while others contained links to related resources.

## Results

No formal evaluation of the workshop by attendees was conducted. Consequently, its demonstrable effectiveness is purely subjective. However, there is good reason to believe that the workshop was successful:

- Audience members provided very positive verbal feedback afterward. Comments addressed both the subject content of the workshop as well as the format. It was noted that having several different speakers in such a tight, focused framework was quite effective.
- Workshop topics generated a respectable number of follow-up questions during the Q & A session. Although the format was not formally addressed in the Q & A, the "tight, focused framework" comment was highly suggestive of a liking of our modified Pecha Kucha style.

## Conclusions

This modified Pecha Kucha format provided an **effective** and **efficient** vehicle for sharing the information that was learned from the *PubMed for Trainers* class.

It was **effective** because it used a minimalist framework to help us concentrate on the most essential elements of the *PubMed for Trainers* curriculum. And, it was **efficient** because it provided the discipline we needed to stay on topic during each presentation.

This format is not appropriate for every topic or situation. There are some topics, for example, that require a higher level of detail than this format probably allows. This format also does not lend itself well to situations where more active learning outcomes are expected.

We certainly intend to use this format again when the right opportunity presents itself.

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