

Faculty Innovator Grant 2007  
Center for Learning Technologies

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Project Title: (10 words or less)	The Pedagogical Effectiveness of Academic Podcasting: Progressive Technology for Foreign Language Study

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**1. Describe the specific teaching and learning issues being addressed by the proposal.**

This study continues to evaluate the pedagogical benefits of integrating podcasting technology into the classroom environment and into students' out-of-classroom study routines. The academic use of podcasting allows for 24/7-accessibility and portability of the teaching and learning experience that expands the boundaries of the classroom. It also permits restructuring valuable classroom time and converting the popular ipod and other MP3 players into a multi-purpose teaching and learning tool that can be used to reinforce class content, improve pronunciation and vocabulary, and improve oral and aural skills. The popularity and ready availability of ipods (many students own them) promotes the use of podcasting as a pedagogical tool by college instructors, and its acceptance by students as a learning tool. Podcasting is a new and innovative way to distribute audio and video (vodcasting) programming over the internet. This grant makes a significant contribution to research in the field of technology for L2 acquisition.

**2. Describe the revised specific teaching and learning issues being addressed by the proposal (if applicable):**

N/A

**3. Describe the development activities involved addressing the learning or teaching issue.**

Academic podcasting in the foreign language classroom continues with beginning Italian; advanced French and Japanese grammar; Spanish, French and German literature; and Foreign Literatures in English Translation for the spring and fall 2007 semesters. Necessary improvements are made based upon the results of the Pilot Podcasting Project. Participating faculty members determine the appropriate academic podcasting projects best suited for their classes, including:

- a. Recording class lectures. Specific lectures are recorded as podcasts and made available as MP3 files for download by students to their computers or ipods. Students in turn use these recordings as study tools or to listen to a missed

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lecture. These podcast files will be linked to the LLC website and to ODU on iTunes U. For the spring 2008 semester, Blackboard will be used. The frequency and duration of each podcast will be kept to an appropriate length (1 hour or less) so that student attention is not lost and they do not take up too much storage space on the server or bandwidth on the internet.

- b. Student projects allow for recordings of oral interviews/exams with instructor feedback, and peer group presentations.
- c. Providing supplementary material to students as a required/non-required component to the class. These may include vocabulary lists and pronunciation tools. For example, dictations for French 407/507.

Academic podcasting in the foreign language classroom focuses on three of the most commonly taught languages (majors in the department); two less commonly taught languages with growing student enrollment at ODU and nationally; and foreign literature in English translation. These courses include beginning language courses, general education requirement courses (English), and upper level literature courses. Participating faculty members and the specific courses selected for this project are outlined in Table 1. The total student enrollment over the two semesters is 173.

Language	Instructor	Spring 2007	Fall 2007	Student Enrollment 173
Italian	Motta	Beginning 102		25
French	Foster	Phonetics 415/515		20
French	Foster		Adv. Grammar & Syntax 407/507	13
French	Schulman		Poetry 333	16
German	Lubich		Strum und Drang Jugendstil 380	10
Japanese	Ishibashi		Adv. Lang & Culture 311	20
Spanish	Huizar		Speaking & Listening 311	12
Spanish	Huizar		Digital Lat. Amer. Poetics 496/596	8
Spanish	Daas		Sex and Religion 495/595	15
English	Slater		Understanding World Literature 100	34

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Each participating faculty member took part in preliminary discussions to select the appropriate podcasting techniques for their courses. They participated in ongoing discussions that focused on their experiences to further identify best practices and challenges. The lessons learned will be used to modify and to improve instructional practices relying on podcasting technology for the spring 2008 semester.

**4. Describe the learning outcomes attained by the project.**

The objectives of the project are to extend oral and aural practice beyond the foreign language classroom by: (1) providing portable access to course sound and video files, (2) helping students sharpen vocabulary, writing, editing, and presentation skills, (3) disseminating student oral interviews with faculty commentary, (4) disseminating instructor tips on completing assignments or preparing for class activities, and (5) having students create their own podcasting projects, such as engaging in conversations with native speakers in real-life situations, completing oral activities or recording interviews. The use of academic podcasting enriches course delivery, rethinks course design, and enhances course content. Language proficiency improves with this new learning tool as well as oral and aural skills. By improving foreign language education, the project makes an important contribution to preparing a workforce with the ability to function in an increasingly culturally, technologically and linguistically diverse environment.

**5. Describe unexpected outcomes, if any.**

- Requests by students to podcast more classes
- Interest in project by faculty members from other disciplines
- Instructors able to record their own lectures (saving student work time)
- Interview with the Virginian-Pilot spring semester 2007 by Janette Rodrigues
- Interview with ODU Relations Office fall semester 2007 by Michelle Falck
- Award from the National Endowment for the Humanities – Digital Humanities Initiative

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**6. Describe the impact of the completed project on your colleagues, department, college, or community.**

The overwhelming success of this project has helped students of French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, German, and FLET with their understanding of language and literature concepts, adding out-of-class language learning to their repertoire of resources.

In addition, the innovative use of technology has raised awareness for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

**7. Describe how the project can be a model, template, or prototype for use by other instructors.**

The project promotes the wide-spread adaptation of effective strategies and materials for academic podcasting in foreign language classrooms. It provides a model across disciplines for integrating technology into the classroom by making instructional strategies and resources more widely available to students and instructors that improve the learning experience and academic performance of students in foreign language courses. The instructional handouts for students and faculty members developed during the study help to spread the use of podcasting technology within the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and other departments, including: Linguistics, English, Political Science, Communications and Music. Collaboration with other Hampton Roads area colleges and universities has also been quite successful, including: the College of William and Mary, Norfolk State, and TCC. Grant applications with colleagues at these institutions will be made for spring 2008.

**8. Describe the technology used to help address the issues described in the proposal.**

- M-Audio Microtrack 24/96 Professional 2-Channel Mobile Digital Recorder (thanks to the CLT Summer Institute in May 2007)
- Sony Wireless WCS-999
- Mac Book and MacPro computers from Apple.

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**9. Describe products, if any, that are a result of the project.**

- Publication of Book Chapter: "The Impact of Academic Podcasting on Students: Learning Outcomes and Study Habits" in *Research on E-Learning Methodologies for Language Acquisition*, ed. Rita Marriott and Patricia Torres (UK: IGI, forthcoming 2008).
- MAALLT 2008 Proposal Acceptance to present study results, February 2-3, 2008 in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.
- CALICO/IALLT 2008 Proposal Acceptance to present study results, March 22, 2008 in San Francisco, CA
- Proposal submission to EuroCALL CMC and Language Learning: Research and Practice, April 17-19, 2008 in Padova, Italy.

**10. Describe the future plans for this project, if any.**

- iStudy Abroad: Portable Media Technologies to Enhance Language Acquisition and Promote Cultural Competencies, grant proposal. This will take the current successes of the iPod project international and truly portable.
- Department of Education Grant Proposal: Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign language Program. Application submitted November 26, 2007.
- National Endowment for the Humanities – continuation for current project.

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**11. Attach a financial report with updated Budget Plan Matrix.**

**Final Budget Matrix**

			Source of Funds	
Budget Item (equipment, personnel, software, etc.)	Qty	Total Cost	Amount from FIG	Amount from Other Source
Personnel		700.00	700.00	0
Travel		1,687.36	124.00	1,563.36
Equipment:				
• 3 digital recorders, 2 flash cards	3	889.00	0	889.00
• Apple Mac Book computer	2	3,150.00	1,575.00	1,575.00
• Sony Mic	1	110.00	110.00	0
• Apple iPod	2	398.00	398.00	0
• Computer slips, flash cards	2	93.00	93.00	0
Student worker	1	1,165.00	0	1,165.00
<b>TOTAL=</b>		<b>\$8,192.36</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>	<b>5,192.36</b>