

Final Report Form

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Project Title: (10 words or less)	iStudy Abroad: Portable Media Technologies to Enhance Language Acquisition and Promote Cultural Competency

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

Portable media technologies will enhance the study abroad experience by creating a familiar learning community, providing necessary portable language resource content, removing unnecessary anxieties related to study abroad, and improving language and cultural competencies. Therefore, the main goal of this grant is to build upon the proven success and results of the 2006/2007 Pilot Podcasting Project, "iPods, Podcasting and Podagogy," and the award from the National Endowment for the Humanities-Digital Humanities Initiative, to provide portable language content and a learning community environment to our students studying abroad.

This iStudy Abroad Initiative will make significant contributions to the study of languages and the study abroad experience. It will address how ubiquitous technology, portable media in particular, can be used to transform the study abroad experience with the potential for increasing the number of ODU students going abroad. The ability to interact instantaneously, from anywhere with anyone expands the possibilities for language acquisition and a more successful experience abroad. The Initiative plans to use podcasts and blogs to achieve the goal of community, connectivity, and competency to

enhance and promote the study abroad experience. Moreover, The Initiative will connect students' study abroad experiences with those of ODU students on campus.

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

The teaching and learning issues remain the same, but the project was delayed from the start and initial progress was slower than anticipated due to faculty schedules for summer 2008. The project is making much better progress, including several additional languages than originally planned (Japanese, for example).

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

Although the iStudy Abroad Initiative has three major phases, the focus thus far has been mainly on Phase I, (Modules 3&4) and Phase II (Modules 5&6). Phase III for updates and improvements will be explored more during the student field testing of Phase I & II for the spring semester 2009. Each phase and its subsequent modules will contribute to the creation of portable language resource content, a familiar learning community, connectivity, language and cultural competencies, and the readiness to study abroad.

Phase I: Language resource content and language tutorials. In this beginning phase, French language resources will be created and downloaded to individual iPods for student use and reference abroad. Experienced faculty members from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures will contribute their expertise to this developmental phase, including:

(Module 1) A "survival guide" type dictionary with visual images, pronunciation, and translation produced at the intermediate-level.

(Module 2) A grammar reference tutorial for verb conjugations and accurate sentence construction.

(Module 3) Country and city specific plans and subway maps, hotel contact information, airports, and U.S. Embassies.

(Module 4) The essential contact information from the Office of Study Abroad, contact information for family and friends, etc.

Phase II: Student Reflexion. In this second phase, students studying abroad will use a blog environment to share their knowledge of another country and culture with the ODU community in order to both share their experiences and to promote study abroad. This phase will contribute to the familiar learning community and connectivity.

(Module 5): Student testimonials or "Blog Abroad." Students studying abroad will be asked to contribute to an online blog or "Blog Abroad." They will share what is working best in their new environment and what is creating challenges. They will be able to provide feedback on their study abroad experience, receive advice about making their stay more successful, inform prospective study abroad students, answer questions, and dispel common myths about the environment abroad. Students studying abroad will, in essence, publish their thoughts.

(Module 6): Interviews with native speakers. Students will make recordings of interviews with native speakers to bring the experience home. This module will contribute to language and cultural competencies.

PHASE III: Updates and improvements. In this third and final phase, updates will be made to each of the modules with improvements and modifications that will benefit both students studying abroad and those at home and on campus. This will be an opportunity to provide additional resources and tips for successful study abroad.

4. Describe the learning outcomes attained by the project.

The objectives of the iStudy Abroad Initiative are two fold. First, podcast modules allow students studying abroad to (1) have portable access to language learning resource content and tutorials, such as a dictionary with audio and images, verb conjugation and sentence structure, (2) increase linguistic gains, including fluency, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking, oral proficiency, and writing, (3) build confidence and increase their readiness to live abroad, thereby facilitating their entire experience abroad while promoting sociolinguistic skills, (4) focus on cultural competency that can only truly be obtained abroad and (5) prepare and establish high quality teacher qualifications that will enable them to function more successfully in a culturally, technologically, and linguistically diverse classroom.

Secondly, the project (1) expands the study abroad program by increasing the number of students studying abroad and encouraging perspective students to do the same, and (2) establishes the basis for an iPod loan program at ODU.

There is certainly an increase in participation from students eager to use the ipod and M-Audio while studying abroad if they don't already own one.

5. Describe unexpected outcomes, if any.

Although the "Blog Abroad" was late in development online, students have expressed their interest to post to the website after they return from their study abroad. They are willing to express their thoughts and ideas with regard to their sojourn during the spring and summer 2008. They are eager to publish their experiences on their time abroad and

encourage other students to travel as well. Former students are also contributing to the Blog Abroad site with wonderful suggestions for those about to travel. Student participation is strong, including several new suggestions for improving the existing project and ideas for new podcasting projects according to the podcasting student surveys for the fall 2008 semester.

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

Participation in the "Blog Abroad" is affecting all languages and not just French. Participation from current and former students in other languages translates to more interest and participation on the part of faculty members in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

The Office of Study Abroad is helpful in promoting the project to interested students studying abroad for the spring 2009 semester. They supply the website information to all students going abroad.

Collaboration with universities across the nation has helped interested faculty members create a similar project for their students on campus and abroad.

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

The project promotes the use of podcasting and blogging for foreign language acquisition as well as encourages study abroad. It provides a model for other languages offered in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures as well as across disciplines for those interested in studying abroad. Portability and the compact size make the iPod and the M-Audio Digital Recorder easy and well suited for travel abroad. Other disciplines and colleges across campus that travel abroad on programs during spring and summer break will benefit from this project initiative, such as: the "Comparative Higher Education Systems" in Brussels and Paris, the "Cultural and Economic Development of the Great Port Cities" in Belgium, and summer language study at L'Institut de Touraine. The project would also be made available to faculty members traveling abroad to francophone countries in need of language survival guides, country and city plans, subway maps, hotel information, as well as essential contact information both at home and abroad.

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

The project opted to use the Blogger.com free Blog creation and maintenance site as opposed to the original idea of financing an expensive closed educational blogging site for students. This Blog will be monitored for any foul play and it will be determined as to whether the open site continues. Currently, there are no problems.

In addition, the M-Audio Microtrack 24/96 Professional 2-Channel Mobile Digital Recorder remains popular due to its small and convenient size for portability. This project was able to take advantage of the latest model and to improve upon the quality of recordings.

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

Grant applications were submitted to the Department of Education in Washington, DC for the International Research and Studies Program in April 2008 with invitations to visit the office in March and October 2008 to discuss how to emphasize priorities in order to make the application stronger. The IR&S announcement will be made in January 2009. In addition, a grant application was submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities "Collaborative Research Grants" program in early November. It was determined to be a better fit for the Division of Education Programs. This grant application will be pursued if and when funding becomes available in 2009.

Publications include:

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 (New York/UK: Information Science Reference/IGI, July 2008).

Articles: "MALL Technology: Use of Academic Podcasting in the Foreign Language Classroom." *ReCALL*, 21(1), UK: Cambridge University Press (Forthcoming January 2009).

Presentations include:

"Academic Podcasting for Foreign Language, Literature, and Culture," at the Summer Institute -Center for Learning Technologies, "Making the Magic Happen" at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, May 21, 2008.

"Academic Podcasting Technology," at the Summer Institute - Center for Learning Technologies, "Technology Fair" at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, May 19, 2008.

"Academic Podcasting Technology: The Impact on Foreign Language Acquisition." Research Expo 2008, "Communities of Research: Discovery, Innovation & Entrepreneurship," Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, April 9, 2008.

"The Impact of Academic Podcasting on Student Learning Outcomes." CALICO with IALLT 2008 Annual Conference, University of San Francisco, San Francisco, California, March 22, 2008.

“The Impact of Academic Podcasting on Student Learning Outcomes: Emerging Technologies in the Foreign Language Classroom (NEH-DHI).” SEALLT-MAALLT Joint Conference 2008, Pine Crest Preparatory School, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, February 1, 2008.

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

Project plans will continue for additional languages, including: Arabic, Farsi, Russian and Chinese to accommodate the Department of Education’s priority for critical languages and to increase chances for federal funding for the next application.

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

Final Budget Matrix

Budget Item (equipment, personnel, software, etc.)	Qty	Total Cost	Source of Funds	
			Amount from FIG	Amount from Other Source
ipod Touch (8GB)	5	\$1,345.00	\$1,345.00	\$0
AppleCare Protection Plan	3	\$186.00	\$0	\$186.00
Apple (International) Adapter Kit	1	\$41.00	\$0	\$41.00 NEH
USB Adapter	1	\$31.00	\$0	\$31.00 NEH
M-Audio Recorder	4	\$1,160.00	\$870.00	\$290.00 (1FL01)
Student worker	1	\$2,030.00	\$0	\$2,030.00 (1FL01)
Faculty stipends	2	\$350.00	\$350.00	
Travel		\$1,964.00	\$425.00	\$239.00 1FL01 & \$1,300.00 (NEH & Faculty member)
TOTALS		\$7,107.00	\$2,990.00	\$4,117.00