

**Title of Grant:** Selecting and Creating iPod Lessons and Integrating iPod Technology into the Blackboard Environment for Reading, Spanish, and Information Technology classes

**SP2008 – 138P – PF**

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**Abstract:**

Spanish, English, and Information Technology faculty members researched ways in which faculty members at TCC, other community colleges, and universities are using iPods, podcasts, and video-casts to enhance student learning. We adapted the information for use in our classes within the Blackboard environment, and created demonstrations and lessons to encourage the use of podcasting (audio and video) by other VCCS faculty members.

**Actual Outcomes:**

The grant participants are pleased to report that all expected outcomes were met to varying degree, with a few exceptions that will be discussed further in the following sections. Furthermore, additional outcomes have developed that were not expected. For example, both Cahill and Edson have gotten students involved in creating some podcasts to add to those created by faculty, an unexpected personal development opportunity for the students. Additionally, attendance at the SALT conference provided opportunities to learn about many other uses of technology for teaching and learning, and all three faculty have begun working with blogs, wikis, and Google Docs to further enhance the use of podcasts in their classes and lessons. Finally, the experience gained by Cahill and Edson prompted them to initiate a proposal to engage the college in the VCCS' iTunes U pilot program. Although their proposal was not accepted in its initial version, the College became engaged in the pilot program, and Cahill and Edson worked with a faculty committee to establish best practices, standards, and guidelines for publication of academic content on the eventual site.

**Other Colleges:**

N/A (See the next section for elaboration of some challenges faced in dissemination.)

**Discussion and Critique:**

All three faculty felt this project was a complete success from many different viewpoints. Collections of third-party pod/vod-casts were completed; new podcasts were created by faculty and students and integrated into the Blackboard environment; and the experience of the integration of pod/vod-casts has prepared the way to move to the next level - iTunes U. The project was not without a few bumps in the road, however. Sadie Hastings' role in the implementation of podcasts for use in teaching and learning has been limited through no fault of her own, in that both her spring and summer 08 classes were either cancelled or reassigned to fulltime faculty. Nevertheless, she has been a superior resource in dealing with some issues related to technology for Cahill and Edson.

Additionally, dissemination of the project to the college community was delayed because of some purchasing issues related to the delay in finalizing the contract between Apple and VCCS. This resulted in a one-year delay in the receipt of iPod devices/ancillaries necessary to conduct training sessions demonstrating some of the uses of the selected and created podcasts, which was one of the promised contributions to the grant from the College. All three faculty are were committed to appropriate dissemination even after the actual grant period ended and planned some sessions since most of the promised equipment did arrive. While no specific changes would be recommended, other than those outside their control related to purchasing, the faculty highly recommends that mini-grants continue to be supported that fund attendance at national and regional technology conferences. Both Cahill and Edson, in particular, found the conference transforming. Neither found anything particularly enlightening in the podcast sessions, which was their original interest in the conference, but the unexpected value added from sessions on Web 2.0 technologies was invaluable.

**Evaluation:**

Proposed evaluation methods on the original grant application were used and met, with the exception of the issues related to the Information Technology classes as noted above. Cahill and Edson created key Reading and Spanish podcasts, selected high quality podcasts and video casts that reinforced lessons that are taught in their classes; integrated these lessons into the Blackboard framework, and prepared for dissemination. Dissemination was delayed by the previously noted delay in receiving all necessary hardware for demonstration and training purposes.

**Dissemination:**

Plans included local demonstration and training sessions. Lessons learned will also be applied to the development of the College's iTunes U presence. The applicants will propose a session for the next Distance Education Peer Group Meeting.