Teaching Your @ From Your Elbow: How Mediasite Technology Empowers Faculty Instruction

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Abstract: The goal of this presentation is to share the experiences implementing Mediasite in one of the online History courses at Norfolk State University (NSU). Mediasite records faculty presentations and can webcast them live over the internet automatically, or students can access online lectures anytime, anywhere on-demand within an online video presentation catalog. Using Mediasite allows faculty to reinforce studies with recorded lectures for reference and it reduces distractions and improves retention by reviewing content at a student’s own pace online and on demand. Mediasite is a great tool for online classes because it can be played back through a standard web browser on both PC and MAC. The instructor recorded 22 lectures using Mediasite with the coordination of Instructional Designer. The presenters will discuss the production process and the instructor’s educational experiences using this particular technology in her online History course.

Problem/Issue

NSU has the first and only degree program in Interdisciplinary Studies, a program whose courses meet exclusively online. This program was initiated in 2004. Besides this program, there are many other blended and fully online courses offered by various departments at NSU. To facilitate eLearning on NSU’s campus, Mediasite, along with other various technologies were purchased. However, Norfolk State University’s faculty is made up of majority late(r) adapters who were reluctant and in some cases, resistant to learning to use these technologies in online courses. Mediasite was at NSU for a year prior to use. However, a younger professor beginning her career at the University with a skill set compatible with educational technology used Mediasite.

Description of Activity, Project, or Solution

In Summer 2007, History 335-90, a course detailing the African American experience to 1865 was taught to a class of twenty-two students. In order to facilitate learning and create a cohesive on-line learning environment, this faculty member collaborated with the NSU instructional designer to design a course that would give the class a more interactive feel. Realizing that this course would compete with students attention, as the majority of students taking classes online are working professionals returning to school and are, by extension, late adapters themselves, the faculty and instructional designer decided it would be best to create an online learning environment that would be relatively easy for the students to access and digest. Mediasite, a technology that had been at NSU for more than one year and had remained untouched was selected as an instructional technology that would meet the needs of students best. The course was divided into twenty-three twenty minute lectures. The instructor lectured, and was complimented with a series of images and photos selected to teach students about the African American experience before the Civil War. After each lecture, a twenty minute quiz was administered to drive home the points of the day’s lecture.
Outcome

First, the outcome was met with the implementation of Mediasite as a method of delivery. As mentioned previously, Mediasite was purchased by the university and had remained unused for over a year. The use of Mediasite had two more long-lasting outcomes as well. First, as is shown in anecdotal evidence (emails), students enjoyed the class. It fit into their schedules and it was very easy for them to access the information anytime, anywhere. Secondly, after taping lectures and using Mediasite, the faculty member and instructional designer then took the show on the road, so to speak, giving presentations and assuring those faculty members who were late adapters that Mediasite was not as complicated as they had imagined.

Importance or Relevance to Other Institution

The issues of late adapters, both faculty and student population is one that all institutions face. At Norfolk State University, because of the population it serves and the faculty base that instructs has a large population of late adapters. However, with the lessons learned in the Summer 2007 history course, online learning is beginning to make inroads in both the student learning and faculty delivery of materials. The close collaborative process between faculty and instructional designer at NSU is one that can be a model for others attempting to introduce regular use of technology in the classroom to a majority of late adapters.