

PODCASTING 101

By DAVID ANDREATTA Education Reporter



'Apple' for teacher
'If (students) want to sit on the subway and listen to the lecture on their little iPod, I think that's perfectly all right'
-Dr. Letty Moss-Salentijn (above) of Columbia University
Photo: Thomas Hinton

January 23, 2006 KIDS GET PROFESSORS' LECTURES TO GO

College professors across the city are asking students to turn on their iPods, tune in to Internet "podcasts" and take notes.

For years, professors have uploaded recorded lectures and PowerPoint presentations online. But only recently have they begun exploring the uses of Apple's ubiquitous tiny \media player as a teaching tool.

"Some students like to manage their time in different ways," said Dr. Letty Moss-Salentijn, a dean at Columbia University's College of Dental Medicine, whose podcast lecture on the formation of the lower jaw last week is believed to have been a university first.

"If they want to sit on the subway and listen to the lecture on their little iPod, I think that's perfectly all right," she said, recalling that when she announced she was recording her lecture for podcast, her first-year students' "faces lit up."

The term "podcast" is a hybrid of "broadcast" and "iPod" that means a digital recording available on the Internet for download to a personal audio player. National Public Radio and NASCAR both offer podcasts online.

Some universities, including Duke and Purdue, offer hundreds of podcast courses. Advocates say they allow professors teaching a tech-savvy generation to combat student boredom by freeing them to review material at their own pace.

In some cases, the tactic backfires. A podcasting professor at the University of California at Berkeley recently lamented that only about 20 of his 200 students regularly showed up for class.

To prevent that, some instructors use podcasts to supplement their classroom lectures.

Jennifer Sparrow, an English professor at CUNY's Medgar Evers College, is creating a museum-tour podcast to complement her teaching of Homer's Odyssey. "Students are so busy and overscheduled that it's just not possible to tell them to meet you at the Met [Museum] for a class," Sparrow said.

George Otte, director of instructional technology for CUNY, said good podcasts should "guide and shape" a study topic.

"Podcasts can offer students an experience where the professor can't be there, but is there," Otte said.

Maurice Matiz, director of Columbia University's Center for New Media Teaching and Learning, said podcasting teachers should imagine they're instructing one student.

"There is a close, personal relationship between the podcaster and the person who is listening," Matiz said.

"People tune out everything [else] with an iPod."

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