

## **Completed Project Report for Title III Project Funds**

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Submitted by Alison Kuehner, Professor of English

### **Project: “Integrating Audio and Visual Materials into an Online Class”**

#### **Summary:**

In order to integrate more audio and visual materials into my spring semester online class, English 115: Women in Literature, I did the following:

- 1) Purchased software (SnapZ Pro) and learned how to use it to record audio and visual files. I created two short movies with audio for the class: a brief introduction to the class and to the literature, and an introduction to techniques for reading poetry. These movies were posted on the first week of class and available to students as recommended viewing.
- 2) Included on each week’s assignment page and on the class homepage picture(s) of the women writers we were reading that week.
- 3) Added links to film versions of the novels we read. For instance, the BBC has excellent productions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Jane Eyre* and I could link to dramatic enactments of key scenes in each novel, corresponding to the reading for that week of the class.
- 4) Added links to poems with visual tags—the tags included questions or comments about the word choice in the poems. These poems were created by other professors and available on the web.
- 5) Added links to interviews with authors or authors reading their work aloud, whenever I could find these.

#### **Assessment:**

Although I had ambitious plans to survey students about the class and which additional materials they felt best helped them understand and/or appreciate the readings, I did not have time to do so. However, many students emailed me to let me know they appreciated the class and felt they learned a lot.

#### **Project Outcomes:**

Personally, I was pleased with the results of most of the audio and visual improvements to the class. In particular, posting images of the women writers was easy and made each weekly assignment page more visually interesting. I was also pleased to discover the excellent film versions of the novels to which I could simply provide links for student viewing.

However, using Snap Z Pro to create my own audio and visual files was immensely time consuming: I had to learn to use the software, understand the limitations of the file sizes, and experiment many times to get the audio clear and the files compact. Moreover, with a

deaf student in the class, I had to create a transcript of the audio that I could email to her. With only four weeks between semesters to prepare for classes, this took up most of my time and, in my opinion, probably did not have a big impact on students. I think I need to think carefully and learn from other faculty how best to use this software. And also look at alternatives, such as ipod recordings or other movie software.

**Recommendations:**

My primary recommendation to other faculty who would like to include more audio and visual materials is to use resources that currently exist on the web as much as possible. These are often easy to find, of high quality, and require little effort on the instructor's part—except to integrate these thoughtfully into the class. On the other hand, creating my own audio and visual files was very time consuming. I will continue to experiment with my own movies, but will also think long and hard about what will be the most worthwhile for students to hear and see.