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Elizabeth Martin CD Summer 2010

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2010 Innovative Course Development Grant Report

Project director: Liz Martin
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Date submitted: March 4, 2011

Title of Grant Award: 2010 Innovative Course Development Grant

Project Goal: Designing a hybrid course in French popular music using Moodle

When Implemented: Winter 2011

Brief Description of the Project (as described in the proposal):

This project combines synchronous classroom instruction with asynchronous e-learning in a culture course for our French B.A. program. Taught entirely in French, the course provides an historical survey of French popular music from the late 19th century to the present day, introducing students to legendary French singer-songwriters as well as Francophone recording artists in Quebec and West Africa. While gaining cultural insights, students develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the target language and participate in a number of activities designed to enhance critical thinking.

Delivered through face-to-face classroom instruction, this course has been web-enhanced by designing a course website in Moodle with interactive activities linked to a plethora of open access resources online, including mp3 file songs, music videos, podcasts, recording artist biographies, and article and interview archives.

How the Project was Implemented (including how it differed from original plan):

The various course components outlined in the original proposal were as follows:

- Listening comprehension exercises involving online audio materials (e.g., French-language podcast interviews, music audio clips, and online music videos)
- Reading comprehension exercises based on online bios for French singer songwriters, press articles, French song lyrics and/or other texts

- Web activities to introduce students to Francophone music resources available online (Part I), each concluding with online forum discussion questions (Part II) to improve students' writing skills in French and increase interaction among class participants
- Three quizzes
- Final exam

All of these materials were successfully developed according to the proposed timetable and uploaded to a new Moodle site (French Popular Music) specifically designed for hybrid course delivery.

Results of the Project:

The Summer stipend generously funded through this Innovative Course Development Grant enabled me to design the course content, develop course materials, online activities and assessments, and build the corresponding Moodle course website. Online components include streaming interviews, official websites and blogs for French and Francophone recording artists, interactive video-based listening comprehension activities, reading comprehension exercises involving song lyrics, artist bios and additional texts, plus links to TV5MONDE, Radio France Internationale, video share sites (e.g. YouTube, Google Video, Dailymotion) and other online resources.

The course is being piloted in Winter 2011 under the rubric FREN 470 and is producing very positive results. Students are actively engaged in the material and appear to be finding the course content and pace of delivery appropriate to their level.

Additional Comments (Lessons Learned, Insights, Future Plans, etc.):

In July, I will be sharing some of the online activities I developed and tips for designing a course of this nature at the 84th annual convention of the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF) in Montreal, Canada (proposal accepted). Feedback received at this conference, coupled with my SOTES results for Winter quarter, will enable me to further improve the course components and delivery.

In the meantime, the course will remain on our Moodle server for future use. Given the enthusiastic response thus far on the part of students, I anticipate this being a regular course offering for our French B.A. program, and one that could eventually be moved to an entirely online environment for distance learners and/or offered in English to draw a wider audience.