

TLI Grant Report – Kinesiology 017 – Ballroom Dancing Videos

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Purpose

The purpose of the Ballroom Dance TLI Grant project was to develop a series of ballroom dance video tutorials for students to access prior to and between classes to enhance learning of dance steps.

The initial idea for this project developed when I filmed short videos of several dance steps and posted them on YouTube. The videos were basic and very poor in quality. Since I had borrowed a video camera from the Center for Learning & Teaching, I asked Mary Ann Mengel for some input and guidance on my initial endeavor. Afterwards, I expressed my desire for help with making better quality videos. Mary Ann encouraged me to apply for a TLI grant.

The 16 instructional videos created through this grant provide an instructional resource which allows students to observe and practice correct dance steps in various dance styles. Students do not always remember how to correctly perform the steps from one class to the next. Many times they are only capable of learning part of a step. In the past, a textual description of dance steps was provided to students. However, providing a visual depiction of the dance steps is a great enhancement to learning and retention. Students can repeatedly watch the videos, and practice the steps correctly in order to be better prepared for class. The videos are also beneficial to students who may have missed class. Having the resource available helps the student come back into class feeling prepared rather than falling further behind.

Project Design

At the initial meeting with Mary Ann Mengel, the project manager for the grant, I shared my thoughts about the project and was given some general guidelines and a timeline to follow. Our design process began with identifying the steps that would be most beneficial to share through video and choosing appropriate music.

We discussed an instructional template and methods for the presentation of content through video such as dialogue, written content on screen, presentation of steps in side view, back view, solo or with partner, practice videotaping & review, and practice steps with partner. Part of the process involved videotaping, and learning how to use iMovie software (introduction & set up with Mary Ann, viewing Media Commons tutorials, and calling the Media Commons help desk).

In order to test the process, I completed one instructional video and reviewed it with Mary Ann. We discussed what worked well and then I began the completion of 15 more videos. As I completed each one, I became more proficient in the process with the hardest part being the matching of music and phrasing with the steps.

Implementation

The series of sixteen videos were posted on YouTube for the 2011 fall Ballroom Dance class with the intention of having the students view them to reinforce learning from class. Students were encouraged and they acknowledged using the instructional videos stating their effectiveness in promoting better learning, understanding, and recall of the steps.

Next Steps

For the future, the videos will also be utilized in class to observe style, posture, and partner interaction. The students will be able to watch videos during class time in order to facilitate learning (class instruction is initially done by instructor and then students are encouraged to work and help each other as they practice).

Conclusion

In conclusion, learning how to design, record, edit and implement a series of instructional videos with all its capabilities has led to the development of other ideas for similar usage. In other courses, the use of instructional videos can allow students to review various instructional protocols on professional/client interaction, testing of observational skills, and as student project presentations.

The key to successfully creating and implementing the use of instructional videos into a course is the time it takes to plan, make the first test run, and then produce the final product. The long-term result is the bonus of freeing class time to cover more key concepts.