Greetings! On behalf of the staff of the Office of Instructional Technology, I would like to welcome you back from the Christmas break which I hope provided each of you with an opportunity to recharge, renew and reinvigorate! As we look forward to the upcoming semester, we wanted to provide you with this newsletter not only to highlight some of the accomplishments of the past semester, but also to provide you with information on some of the upcoming events and the services offered through the Office of Instructional Technology. In addition, you will find some information regarding changes to policies related to the Online Learning program that may be of interest to those of you who currently teach online or are considering doing so.

This past Fall semester marked a series of firsts for the Office of Instructional Technology and the SHU community:

- The Introduction of the Innovative Teaching Coalition Brownbag Series provided an opportunity for participants in the annual Summer ITC Faculty Workshop to showcase their hard work and to share their projects with the entire SHU community. A total of 7 sessions attended by over 70 faculty and staff members were offered throughout the Fall semester.

- The initial online offering of the Digital Learning Teacher Certification Course graduated its first cohort of nine 'scholars' last December. This pilot offering proved to be very successful in achieving its primary goal: 'arming' participants with a series of tools and strategies to aid in the process of designing and conducting a successful online course. For additional information on the Digital Learning Teacher Certification Program or if you are an instructor interested in participating in the Spring course, please see Ekaterina Ginzburg's article on page 2. Additionally, through the effort of the Digital Learning Task Force, the inter-college advisory board which oversees the administration of SHU's online learning program, some new policies regarding the award of course development stipends are in the works. For more information on these policies, please refer to the panel below.

- The Office of Instructional Technology's Faculty Workshop Series was also initiated this past Fall. A series of hands-on workshops covering topics ranging from Basic Blackboard skills to Advanced Flash programming to Podcasting were offered throughout the semester. These workshops will be offered again throughout the Spring semester – if you are interested in learning more about any of these sessions, please review the (Continued on Page 3)

Are you interested in developing an Online Course?

If so, you may be eligible for an online course development stipend. In order to receive a stipend, you will first need to submit a completed Online Course Development Agreement prior to the development of the course. You can download the form at: http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/dltcp

Stipends range from $500-$2,000. For additional information, please contact David Demers (demersd@sacredheart.edu; x8369) in the Office of Instructional Technology.
Enhancing The Foreign Language Experience Through Multimedia

by Christopher Neidig

Through the summer and the fall semester the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) has been working on transforming the existing language lab classroom into a virtual language lab. We have worked to digitize lab materials, converting other materials into web-compatible formats and created a supporting Web site. The foreign language faculty and students are now able to access the materials they need through this Web site, ensuring easy access from a smart-classroom or anywhere on campus.

The OIT worked with Professor Ana Yepes digitizing videos from 8 millimeter and VHS tapes. We then put the videos on a password protected Web site, limiting access to students and faculty associated with the Modern Foreign Languages department. The Web site (http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/VLL) is currently being used by students on campus and by faculty teaching in the classroom. The popularity of this project spread throughout the Modern Foreign Languages department, inspiring additional professors to learn how to “go digital”.

Podcasts have become a popular word around campus and the staff at the OIT would be glad to assist any faculty member in creating one. Recently we helped Dr. Pilar Munday create a Spanish Podcast to coincide with the textbook she uses for her beginner Spanish courses. Dr. Munday approached us with audio files (mp3’s) that her students helped her create. We then created an RSS feed which is a Web page that has the audio files and information about the audio files on it. We then submitted the link (to the Web page) to iTunes and now Dr. Munday’s Podcast is ranked in the top 20 for popularity among language podcasts. To help students understand and access Dr. Munday’s podcast we created a Web site (http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/Spanish-Podcasts) with information about listening to her Podcasts as well as a link to her podcast in iTunes (pictured at left). If you have any questions or interest in learning more about this, please contact Chris Neidig (neidigc@sacredheart.edu; x7613).

Did you know?

You can sign up for OIT Workshops and events right online! Please visit our website at:

http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/workshops

(Greetings; continued from Page 1) workshop descriptions on page 4. In addition, you may review the workshop descriptions and sign up to attend any (or all!) of these workshops right on line by visiting our website (http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/workshops). Don’t wait! Seats are limited!

• This coming March, members of the OIT staff will be attending the annual NERCOMP (North East Regional Computing Program) Conference in Worcester, MA. NERCOMP is an Educause affiliate which fosters communication and dissemination of information related to the use of computers in education throughout the northeastern US. At this conference, we will be presenting a couple of posters highlighting various projects we have collaborated on with faculty over the past year. If you are interested in attending the NERCOMP conference (March 20-21), limited funding will be available to support travel to the event. For additional information, please contact David Demers (demersd@sacredheart.edu; x8369).

We hope you will find the content provided in this newsletter informative. Should you have any questions or comments regarding any of the information presented in this newsletter or on any of the services provided by the Office of Instructional Technology, please don’t hesitate contacting us! Our doors are open! Good luck and we hope your Spring semester runs smoothly!

David Demers – Director of Instructional Technology.
This past fall, the Office of Instructional Technology conducted a pilot of the online version of the Digital Learning Teacher Certification Course. This program was designed for SHU faculty members who currently design and teach online courses or are interested in doing so. It was created to help instructors incorporate best practices in instructional design as applied to online courses and to provide support, suggestions and guidance for teaching online. This eight-week program is offered entirely online through the Blackboard system.

For this initial offering, a total of nine scholars successfully completed the course and 'graduated' with their official "Certificate". This certificate qualifies individuals to receive additional compensation for the development of future online courses. For additional information on the policies governing the development of online courses, please see the panel "New Policies for Online Learning" on page 1. During the course, faculty experienced with teaching online shared their own experiences and tips for success with professors new to the online experience, fostering a small 'learning community' within the electronic course environment. The content of the course was selected to appeal to both the experienced and novice online instructor alike.

Since the program is offered completely online, participants were able to gain valuable experience as 'students' in an online course, encountering many of the same fears and frustrations faced by students new to the online learning experience. The course also provided the scholars with strategies for effective time management during the development of an online course as well as an opportunity to develop their own unique 'e-Personality'.

A primary goal of the program is to allow each participant to create their own online course "template," which includes an online syllabus, personal introduction and policies on online learning/teaching along with their first two lectures, assignments and assessments. The program also focuses on the successful management of online courses, while providing guidance for the participants each step of the way while they work to actually create their template.

We received very positive feedback from the first cohort of participants including the following testimonials:

- "The course was fantastic!"
- "The course actually exceeded my expectations..."
- "...after this online course I think I will be preparing my traditional courses differently..."
- "Excellent course! I am very grateful for the opportunity to be part of it. I learned a lot."

We are pleased to announce that we will be offering the course again in the Spring. This offering will run January 30th through April 3rd. If you are interested in participating, please refer to the information provided in the panel below.

Apply NOW for the Spring Session of the Digital Learning Teacher Certificate Program!

The Digital Learning Teaching Certificate Program is an 8-week online course delivered through the Blackboard system. The Spring session starts on Tuesday, January 30th and continues to Tuesday, April 3rd. If you are interested in participating in this program, please apply online at http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/DLTCP. The deadline for application is Friday, January 26th(by 3:00 p.m.) Don't miss this opportunity!
Flash Based Video Helps Business Students
by Christopher Neidig

This summer during the ITC Faculty Workshop, the OIT was approached by Professor Alan Trippel about integrating a video into his online course. Prof. Trippel wanted to be able to interact with the students at certain key points of the video he currently uses in his traditional on-ground course to teach his students certain business scenarios and how they are handled. Class discussion and participation are vital to ensure students understand proper business ethics.

A dilemma faculty encounter when teaching online is creating interaction among students. Our strategy included combining the presentation of short video segments within Blackboard to the Discussion Board. After viewing a video segment, audio prompts direct students to answer two questions about the segment. The student is then provided with a direct link to the discussion board to discuss the questions with their peers.

Using the adaptive release feature in Blackboard we were able to restrict students from proceeding to the next video segment, until they have viewed the previous video and discussed the questions provided by the instructor. This project proved to be successful as students on two continents were able to follow and learn the importance of the concepts conveyed in the video.

This project was recently accepted for a Poster Presentation at the 2007 NERCOMP Annual Conference, An EDUCAUSE Affilate, in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Upcoming Spring Workshops

Below is a partial list of the workshops currently offered through the Office of Instructional Technology. For a complete listing or to learn more about any of these workshops, please visit http://OIT.sacredheart.edu/workshops.

Strategies for Teaching in the Digital Age
This workshop will present current and emerging 'Web 2.0' and 'social networking' technologies such as blogs, wikis, Facebook and podcasts. Participants will discuss and explore the potential of these tools for enhancing the classroom experience by offering additional opportunities for peer collaboration and research.

Pedagogy & the Blackboard Course Management System
This workshop will discuss the 'Seven Principles' for success in leveraging technology in the classroom. As the use of Blackboard has become commonplace in higher education, the 'seven principles' have even greater meaning for educators seeking to make the most effective use of this system.

Assessing the Impact of Technology on Learning
Does technology improve student learning? While this question may seem relatively simple, it is, in fact, quite complex. This workshop will offer a discussion of technology assessment strategies, including methods and expectations.

Using Advanced Blackboard Features - Assessment Tools
This hands-on workshop will provide an introduction and overview of the electronic assessment tools available in the Blackboard environment. Participants will explore various options for producing their own quizzes, surveys and assignments and discuss options for deploying assessments as well as the benefits and drawbacks of each.

Creating Basic Animation with Flash
Flash is the program which introduced animation and interactivity to the web. Over its lifetime, Flash has evolved into a robust application capable of creating standalone demos, simulations and interactive applications. This workshop will provide an overview of the Flash authoring environment and the program's animation capabilities.

Podcasting: How to get started
This workshop will provide participants with an overview of 'Podcasting,' including its use in higher education. Examples of education-related Podcasts will be presented and participants will learn how to 'subscribe' and listen to Podcasts using widely available, free software. Participants interested in producing their own Podcasts will be provided with examples and information on resources available through the Office of Instructional Technology to support their efforts.