BRINGING TEXTS TO LIFE THROUGH PORTABLE AUDIO AND VIDEO

DEB REISINGER
French Language Program, Department of Romance Studies

OVERVIEW
During the spring semester 2006, Professor Deb Reisinger and the teaching staff of French 76 (fourth semester Advanced Intermediate French) used iTunesU and 5th generation video iPods to enhance the listening component in their course. Approximately 100 students participated in the program, which was designed to advance listening skills by exposing students to more authentic (and more compelling) oral materials outside of class. Since the course focuses on both text and performance, students used the iPods to listen to recordings of plays and poems and also to view cinematic adaptations of short stories. Students also downloaded an iMix of 20 French songs related to course themes, which they were able to listen to while reading lyrics on iPod screens. This portable twist on traditional listening comprehension exercises was especially popular.

TECHNOLOGY USED
- 5th generation video iPods
- iTunes U

SPONSORS
- Duke Center for Instructional Technology

OUTCOMES
- Students exposed to significantly more language outside traditional classroom setting, improving listening comprehension and increasing vocabulary acquisition
- Students more engaged in technology / iPod assignments
- Students seek out additional audio materials on their own

Listening to audio content via iPod and iTunes has DEFINITELY helped improve my listening comprehension. I can now pick up on words/meanings quicker, and without having to translate them into English in my head. Also, it has helped with my writing because sometimes in French, the rules are hard to remember, but knowing how words/phrases are supposed to flow based on listening activities makes writing much easier.

- Student of French 76