

## USING A MULTIMEDIA SYLLABUS IN THE CLASSROOM

The purpose of this project was to design a multimedia syllabus for an education class and a history class at Hendrix College. The course syllabus should serve as a teaching/learning tool, and the use of multimedia technology makes this possible. Multimedia technology elevates the course syllabus from the status of a reference document to a learning tool that plays an integral role in the classroom instruction that occurs each day.

The project started with visits to several sites to examine the use of multimedia technology in the classroom. In particular, Northwestern University and Vanderbilt University were visited. Both of these institutions have been involved in special projects related to multimedia technology in the classroom. In addition, a community college in southern New Jersey was visited. The community college was featured in a technology journal because of its progress in this area. In many ways, however, the use of multimedia technology is still in the initial stages of planning, development, and implementation.

The final product is a modification of the initial proposal. The overall objective of the project was to design electronic courseware that would allow students to engage in higher levels of analysis. Furthermore, the courseware needed to have authoring capability in order to promote interactive learning. A web page was created that provides the syllabus, a timeline from 1865–1919, and a contributions page. The availability of a syllabus on a web page is fairly common on many college campuses.

The interactive timeline, however, provides the student with the option to explore a particular event in African American history in greater detail through an online PowerPoint document. For instance, a student can click on the entry regarding Booker T. Washington's 1895 Atlanta Compromise speech and have access to other websites related to this event. The interactive design, however, is enhanced by the "contributions page." As students engage in research concerning a particular event, they can share their findings on this page. The information is emailed to the professor, and the professor is responsible for posting it on the web site. As a result, all students will have access to the research findings of their classmates. In addition, the professor can share a particular contributions page with the class during a classroom lecture and/or discussion, or even by electronic mail. The timeline for this project was delayed by a number of factors including a conversion from a term system to a semester system. As a result, all courses were revised. The links to the actual websites will be added to an updated version of this timeline. The course will be taught in January 2003.

<http://www.hendrix.edu/education/jennings/Afamhistory1865Present.htm>

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