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 [http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2006/03/23/ipod_301_advanced_application:](http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2006/03/23/ipod_301_advanced_application)
iPod 301: Advanced Applications of Your MP3 Player

Ever since I switched to a laptop a few years back, I've wondered how different college would have been if I could have taken notes on a keyboard. My handwriting was [out of control \(http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/family/article/0,2792,DRMN_107_4536159,00.html\)](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/family/article/0,2792,DRMN_107_4536159,00.html) (so were my clothes -- hey, this was the 80s). It's a wonder I could decipher which notes went with which class.

Now it's iPods on campus that make me envious of students today. Not for tuning out a mind-numbing lecture but for tuning in the subject matter outside of class. When the fashionable white earbuds showed up at Georgia College & State University, administrators saw an opportunity for [innovation \(http://www.salon.com/wire/ap/archive.html?wire=D8GF3V280.html\)](http://www.salon.com/wire/ap/archive.html?wire=D8GF3V280.html). They gave iPods to professors who incorporated them as educational tools. And they stocked up on loaner iPods for students who didn't already own one.

One professor has students download historical movies to watch on their own time, reserving class for a group discussion. Another creates a podcast of the most asked questions in class that week. There's

even a group of students and teachers -- iDreamers -- that brainstorms for more ideas (for a terrific list, click [here \(http://ipod.gcsu.edu/iDreamers/index.html\)](http://ipod.gcsu.edu/iDreamers/index.html)). No wonder Apple, which encourages educational iPod use at [ITunes U \(http://www.apple.com/education/solutions/itunes_u/\)](http://www.apple.com/education/solutions/itunes_u/), chose GCSU to host its Digital Campus Leadership Institute last year.

I don't know about college being the best four years of your life, as some folks like to claim. But if this creativity on campus continues, I can definitely tell my nephew Tyler, a freshman, "College is the best four years with your iPod."

Posted by Chuck Salter at March 23, 2006 07:07 PM | Category: http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/cat_.html | [7 Comments \(#comments\)](#)



7 COMMENTS

Posted by: [Stephen M. James \(http://www.smjdesign.com\)](http://www.smjdesign.com) at March 24, 2006 12:58 PM

Just upload mp3s and Quicktime mov's to the college intranet. Profs have been doing that for years.

Who's going to go out on the college quad and sit under the sun and watch a movie of a lecture?

--Stephen

Posted by: Annika at March 24, 2006 07:47 PM

I agree with Stephen. Loaner iPods? Buying a computer for college was a luxury I didn't have as an undergraduate - an iPod-type device would have been a really fantastic Christmas present.

I think professors should first start with taking advantage of what they do have on campus rather than loaning iPods out to students like library books. And instead of buying a load of the little buggers to loan out - and service, fix, and replace - the university could use that money elsewhere.

The cliché rings true - if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Posted by: Rey at March 25, 2006 12:22 AM

In my opinion, handwritten notes can be vastly superior to "typed" notes for two reasons:

1. Greater flexibility - to mind map, illustrate, emphasize and use memory-aiding coding techniques.
2. Paper (usually) is more durable than hard disks or CDs!

Again, I personally feel that interactive classroom sessions would be superior to recorded audio

sessions.

Posted by: roger fulton at March 25, 2006 05:24 PM

..whatever. I teach 4th grade, and computers help the little buggers learn somewhat faster, deeper. Hey, if the gadgets work in college, so the DVD generation gets its kicks instantly, so I understand "takes too long."

Posted by: jaima schiffer at March 27, 2006 12:07 AM

I had a lap top in college and got it to have the flexibility of being able to take my computer home for breaks and to study groups to be more productive on group projects. Had my professors had some type of video or audio of class lectures or even something that was supplemental to the class in aiding for studying for tests or on assignments, I think my notes would have only made more sense and I would have retained more knowledge. I have just purchased my first iPOD, the newest one, and let me tell you this little piece of equipment has been amazing. Not only do I have extra motivation while I am working out in the gym by creating an awesome work out play list, but now I can learn spanish on the commute to work, catch up on missed tv shows on the go without taking TIVO with me as I wait somewhere, as well as be on the cutting edge of new music. Between this and my Treo650 I am set! Technology is great!

Posted by: [kevin williams \(http://www.blink-consulting.com\)](http://www.blink-consulting.com) at March 27, 2006 06:01 PM

Loaning the iPods is somewhat a good and a bad thing. Good because it opens a new avenue for what's being taught. Bad because students are memorizing rather than learning. Keep it old school so they can retain more. Loan the iPod not until the student, in your opinion as a teacher has grasped the concept being taught or shows any remote interest in the class in the first place.

The iPod has changed the way we consume media. Maybe if the teachers offered it as a compliment to their classes (podcasts, video casts, etc.) in addition to the traditional way of teaching. Who knows?

Take it from me, I own a PSP and two iPods, but nothing can take the place of a pen and a pad. It helps the brain function and retain information longer.

Posted by: Peter at March 28, 2006 02:40 AM

I like the idea of professors embracing the potential of technology to enrich their courses. I think the author should not have complained about his/her handwriting, he/she should have learned to write properly in the first place. Don't get me started :-))

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