UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON
FACULTY RESEARCH GRANT
FINAL REPORT

iPod for Education: Teaching Resource for the Future

Jennifer A. Polack-Wahl
A summary of non-stipend/course release budget expenditures

I used $495 to buy a membership to Lynda.com. Using several courses and tutorials I became an experienced developer of web applications.

Summarize the nature of the project

My summer research grant allowed me to create a website consisting of both a forum and a database built in order to promote the sharing of ideas and knowledge as they pertain to educational iTouch application development. The website provides a way for students and the teachers in the classroom to review the applications, keep others informed about the status of new applications, exchange ideas about how to include iTouch applications in school curriculums, and to share sample assignments using iTouch applications.

Review How the Completed Project Achieved Its Proposed Goals/Objectives/Anticipated Results

Goal 1: Develop an Online Database That Will Allow Other Educators to Search and Upload iPod Curriculum-Related Materials

I created a website where collaboration can occur pertaining to iTouch Apps in Education. Users of the system are now able to access the system through a web interface created using HTML, PHP, and CSS style sheets. The users are able to add input using mouse clicks, text fields, and uploading files. Users are able upload a variety of files including Word documents, PDF files, text files, pictures, Power Point files, and Excel files. If users do not have a file readily available they can type information into a text field and click submit. The system will then generate a basic text file from the user's input. Each user can add and edit iPod materials including how-to guides, surveys of apps being used, designed curriculum using the iPod, and images and/or videos that may help other educators improve their use of iPods in the classroom.

Goal 2: Develop a Database That Will Allow Students Creating Apps to Upload Ideas, Progress Reports, and Design and Development Materials

This goal was met through the use of a website created elsewhere that successfully met the needs of my research students. The website contains the same type of material that I was planning on developing and my research students find it very useful and refer to it frequently.

Goal 3: Provide a Venue to Share Current News about iPod Development at Other Universities and Practices of Using iPods in Elementary Education
Over the past year I have made 3 presentations at local public schools about the apps my research team has created and I have provided information on how to contact us with ideas for future research. I presented at curriculum nights at Grafton Elementary School, Hartwood Elementary School, and Ferry Farm Elementary School. In addition, I have had communication with Radford University about pursuing a future grant for our research work. Unfortunately, the Virginia Department of Education did not conduct an app contest this year, as they have in years past, so I was unable to further expose our efforts in apps for education.

**Anticipated Results 1: Providing Outreach to the Education Community**

My students that are conducting this research continue to ask for support and now they have access to information that it is organized and centrally located. All documents related to our research is in one location and can be accessed by current and future research students. The one aspect of this program that has not been as successful and I had hoped is that it has not reached the level of visibility off campus that I would have liked.

**Anticipated Results 2: Serve as a UMW Computer Science Portfolio for Students Involved in the Project**

The students continue to submit all sample code, examples, all electronic communication about design, development, implementation, or testing, and video demonstrations of the final production software. This information is now stored in a central location and provides them with a portfolio of the work they have done while researching education applications for the iPod.

**Anticipated Results 3: Materials Collected through the Portal Will Help Educators to Incorporate iPod Technology into Education**

The iTouch Portal supports elementary school teachers in becoming informed educators about iTouch technology. The iTouch Portal can host customized learning spaces with educator-designed resources intended to get students using iPods in an education environment. The challenge that remains is to find a way to generate interest and support for the iTouch Portal in multiple school districts, outside of the limited Stafford and Charlottesville schools that have participated thus far.

**Assess the adequacy of the project’s procedures, approaches and dissemination.**

While I believe my procedures and approaches were strong, I have been less successful than I had anticipated in my attempt to incorporate the iTouch Portal on a larger scale. During my scheduled spring 2013 sabbatical I will be writing and publishing several articles pertaining to the results of my research. With this publicity I anticipate increased visibility and, therefore, expanded use of the iTouch Portal.