

Audio Feedback
INSYS 449: Video & Hypermedia in the Classroom
Spring, 2004 World Campus (Online distance education course)

Background:

My decision to use audio for feedback was largely a logistical one. The course management system used by Penn State's World Campus (Angel), did not allow me to post feedback on the same screen where student projects appeared. The constant screen swapping grew tiresome, so I began recording my verbal comments while viewing student videos and reading assignments. I found that in doing so, I provided far more feedback, in terms of greater detail and sheer volume, than I had been giving in writing.

By the next day, I had 4 emails in my inbox directly lauding my use of audio feedback. Within a couple more days, over half the class had responded in like manner. In this distal learning setting, I had definitely struck a chord with students by using audio for feedback—a phenomenon worthy of further research.

The following represent largely unsolicited student comments on my use of "audio feedback" in the online course.

"...It takes a special person to be a professor with an online course and get the quality that one expects from it. I think you did a great job. I really had fun with the course, the projects were a blast and I really enjoyed being able to see the products that others produced...Also thanks for keeping it light, I think a good sense of humor is sometimes lost within an online course but feel that you were able to weave that in and keep everyone on their toes. Once again, the audio file feedback was great, a very unique and creative way to get your students to hear you. I plan to utilize this as well for teachers and students."

"First, how incredibly awesome that you sent an audio file...wow...I am still impressed by that. I will never cease to be amazed at technology. All excellent comments...thanks for the feedback."

"Joel,
Just wanted to take a minute and say what a creative way to give feedback for project 3/4. Personally I enjoyed having the opportunity to *listen* to it rather than *read* it, since most of the online work revolves around reading and responding. I really liked this idea and think that you should continue this in the future."

"Hi Joel,
Thanks for the feedback - love the audio format, it's almost like we are having a [one way] conversation. Anyway, I agree with your feedback"

“Hi Joel,
Thanks for the excellent feedback on both Projects 3 & 5. I like the audio format which conveys a sense of personal immediacy”

“Joel,
Thanks for the feedback. The audio definitely gives you a chance to respond more! I was able to listen with no problem.”

“Joel,
The idea of using audio for the grading was great. I really enjoyed listening to your comments and it was a nice way to wrap up the class.”

“...on a side note, I enjoyed the audio feedback. It was more personal and let me know what you sound like!”

“Joel,
I now have your feedback on all the projects. Thanks for taking the time to construct such detailed comments/suggestions.”