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Speaker 1: Welcome to the UP Tech Talk Podcast, coming to you from the new academic multimedia studio on the University of Portland campus. Produced by Academic Technology Services. With your hosts, Maria Erb and Sam Williams.

Sam Williams: Welcome to UP Tech Talk. Today I'm recording in Salzburg, Austria, and visiting the UP Salzburg program at the University of Portland's Salzburg Center. Today we're interviewing Dr. Renee Horcicka, and he is the Director of the Salzburg Center. Welcome to the podcast.

Dr. Horcicka: Thank you. It's a pleasure being part of the academic tech round table, sir. Thank you.

Sam Williams: I've been here for a week now and this is my second trip to Austria and to the Salzburg Center. I have a blast every time I come here, so I thank you for your hospitality. It's awesome; I hope everybody that comes to Salzburg has a wonderful experience like I've had.

After the first visit, I went back and we stayed in contact and I told you about an opportunity at the university for the academic technology round table. That is a project that I have under academic technology services. The idea there is to provide opportunities for faculty to try technology in their teaching, and in the classroom for the first time. You came up with a project and applied. I just wanted you to be able to tell our listeners a little bit more about your project. Can you tell us a little bit more?

Dr. Horcicka: Thank you for offering this possibility. I think this is really great. I'm actually very happy that I can use technology and your sophistication in technology to enhance the learning of our students on ground here in Salzburg. My project is embedded in the course on Human Geography of Central Europe. This is offered to full-year students and one-semester students at the UP Salzburg Center in Austria, as you already mentioned.

The overall aim of the course is to unfold the mosaic of regions, the physical, historical and also especially the cultural backgrounds of the great component elements of Central Europe, and the complex inter-relationships in between these regions from the Alpine Divide to the Northern Lowlands on the coasts of the East Sea and the North Sea.

What the goal of my project is, what I'm trying to do is, I want the students to be able to identify authentic cultural heritage realms in Central Europe, and also enable them to put them into context with industrial cultural tourism and the internationalization of cultural heritage. The central question in regard of technology is in how far can the implementation of digital resources and technology promote cultural learning processes, and enhance creative ways of acquiring and communicating cultural knowledge.

Sam Williams: What is the, so we're looking at putting technology into your classroom. Having visited the center, now my second time, there's quite a bit of technology here at the center, especially now that we have an upgraded network. We could take advantage of a lot more online resources and those things with your teaching. What is the expectation for the students for the project? How are they using technology?

Dr. Horcicka: Now for this project, we just purchased two camcorders, via the academic technology round table funds. I think a camcorder as an audio, and at the same time visual technological tool, the students will have a big variety of options of presenting culture in a lot of ways, for example, by interviewing people-

Sam Williams: Okay.

Dr. Horcicka: ... on the audio side, by presenting tangible cultural heritage, such as monuments, for example, on the visual side, by including typical music of certain regions. Camcorders are a tool which, it provides a right tool from whether students can get something out of culture.

Sam Williams: What are some other thoughts on why you would choose video?

Dr. Horcicka: Well, one other thing that the students should understand when this course is finished, is that cultural heritage is not simply there. It needs to be preserved and it needs to be communicated. Video is a great tool to communicate cultural heritage and at the same time to explore it, on the students' side. The actual outcome of this project should be a series of three to five minute videos on the area's cultural realms that should focus on authentic culture.

Sam Williams: Well, we've talked a little bit about your passion for authentic culture-

Dr. Horcicka: Yeah.

Sam Williams: ... compared to what people might view of Austria. I know we talked; we were going to bring this up in there, but what, when you say "authentic culture," what is an example? When you have students go out, what is an example of that?

Dr. Horcicka: We could, in Salzburg for example, Salzburg is a big tourist place, so we have millions of visitors every year. If you take a look at maybe the two, three, four things that all tourists do in Salzburg, you have a good starting point in identifying tourism, industrial tourism, and from there, students could start to explore authentic culture. Let's take, for example, Mozart.

Sam Williams: Yeah, okay.

Dr. Horcicka: Mozart's birthplace. Mozart's residence among the top visit spots in Salzburg. Mozart balls are everywhere, Mozart chocolate, Mozart liquor, almost everywhere you go you see Mozart. Students could start exploring this heritage, which is in the first respect intangible, in Mozart's music. It's played in concert halls in Salzburg and so on. For example, how much does the image on the Mozart ball really reflect the image of Mozart as a real person? They could do some research on this topic. They will find out that Mozart was not the biggest fan of Salzburg for several reasons.

Sam Williams: Okay.

Dr. Horcicka: He was not as pretty as he's presented on the Mozart balls; many more other things. Then they would dive a little bit deeper into Mozart's life and Mozart's thoughts and feelings and character that actually then created the music, and the way how he lived, the way how he traveled, the way how he financed his life, how he financed his music. Get a different view, actually, by doing so on Mozart. Another example though, is the Sound of Music that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Sam Williams: The last time I was here, the Sound of Music was having its anniversary, and when I told everybody I was coming to Salzburg, that's the first thing that everybody said. They didn't tell me to go do anything else but to do the Sound of Music tour.

Dr. Horcicka: Yeah.

Sam Williams: In the United States, that's all they could think about-

Dr. Horcicka: Yeah.

Sam Williams: ... when I was coming here. With the Sound of Music, what is your opinion on the Sound of Music and its part of your culture here? Is it not; is it?

Dr. Horcicka: For me it's interesting because it's full of stereotypes in a certain way, and this is basically where the students, where I've had to pick the students up-

Sam Williams: Okay.

Dr. Horcicka: ... and then I have to lead them to the authentic cultural heritage here.

Sam Williams: Okay.

Dr. Horcicka: The Sound of Music is a perfect example of what the students also can do. They could question things that are presented in the Sound of Music. They could get into contact with locals. They could interview locals with the camcorders. Think about certain goals, what they want to know at the end.

How about the music in the Sound of Music? Is this really Austrian music? Is this yodeling actually considered as yodeling in Austria by locals? Do locals know the song, "Edelweiss"? Is the schnitzel with noodles something that anyone would eat here? What do people think about the monarchy, the Austrian monarchy? What do they know about the monarchy? What is their feeling about the monarchy? What do they know about the Sound of Music as a musical movie? Do they know anything about it? Is it important to them?

They could look a little bit behind the curtains. The Sound of Music is of course highly tourist-y excess to this area. It is great in a way as it's providing a big pool of things where you can really do research on. This is starting from this typical dirndl culture and the lederhosen culture here in Austria, and ending up in the music, in the way how people interact, how they live the life of Maria von Trapp, and then look behind the curtains. Explore the authentic cultural realms behind it.

Yeah, I think by the use of camcorders, by doing interviews, by going to certain sites, even by going on the Sound of Music tour, for example, to see if these are authentic places that were part of the von Trapp's family history. They will find out that much is not authentic. They would be able to get closer to how Austrians in Salzburg think, how they live, what type of music they hear, what their relationship to this typical Austrian dresses would be. If they wear them every day; if they have ten of those in their wardrobe, or just one or two or none.

By doing so, they would understand it in a certain way better, what the authentic cultural realms are in the region. I don't want to solely focus them on Salzburg, the Sound of Music, or Mozart. Central Europe is much bigger. The students go on many field trips on their own. My course also aims to provide them the tools to understand and explore cultural realms.

What I'm hoping to get out via the academic technology round table project is then that they also find creative ways to present it to a bigger audience, and attract a bigger audience, so that they also understand culture needs to be communicated. Culture is a living thing and it needs to be preserved. The better, the more creative you can present something and communicate it to other people, the better you can preserve it. Their projects and the video clips that should be presented then also to the class at the end of the project, they ask for a certain feedback via a bigger audience.

Sam Williams: Okay.

Dr. Horcicka: I would also be happen then to present these video projects on a platform and give the broader community the option to, first of all, enjoy the video clips on certain cultural realms, and what the students found out, and what they did in their projects. On the other hand, to see how successful they could communicate their goals.

Sam Williams: At the beginning of your course, you had them do a worksheet where they, you ask them about culture, I believe. Then, you're going to do that again at the end?

Dr. Horcicka: Yes, this is one way for me to see how successful this overall course is, and also, part of the course, the ATR project. I did a survey at the beginning, with the twenty-seven students that are now participating in the course. In the survey, I was trying to figure out where they stand, actually, in culture knowledge. Questions that I'm asking in the survey is for example, "From which place region do you come from and how would you describe, characterize this place region? What makes it special and distinct to you?"

This is related to the students' own culture, cultural realms, and from there, I want to know what does culture mean to the individual students. What elements they would say characterize and define their own culture. Then, we start more or less in Europe, so I want to know from the students what the most impressive culture realms and sites in Europe are that they experienced so far, and in which way they experienced these sites. Did they use any media and technology already to experience and learn about cultural sites, cities, regions, countries in Central Europe?

Sam Williams: Then you're going to, so they've already done the first worksheet at the beginning, and then at the end, you're going to be able to, after they've gone through your course and worked on their project, asking these same questions about their own culture, and see what kind of changes they might have and how they identify their culture. Is that correct?

Dr. Horcicka: This is one part, which is really important. I want to see what changed in the descriptions, also, of students talking about their own culture.

Sam Williams: Yeah.

Dr. Horcicka: What do they include in these descriptions? Do they include also physical features, elements, the weather, landscapes? Do they also include historical aspects? Do they include tangible cultural things, intangible cultural things such as, are they able to talk about culture in the broader context, in more detail and understand also differences between what is industry tourism, and what is authentic.

Sam Williams: I love that you're really diving into this idea of authentic culture, and having people think a little bit about their surroundings and their own culture. I'm super-excited to, one, hear about the students reflections between the two surveys, and I can't way to see some of the projects at the end of the term.

I want to thank you for being a part of the academic technology round table, and being our first international member of the ATR. We look forward to seeing the videos, and I want to thank you for being on the Tech Talk Podcast today and for letting us know a little bit more about your project.

Dr. Horcicka: I want to thank you for coming here and supporting my project by also giving it the structure and the background that it needs, that the students can really perform on good levels, and that the outcome of the videos is then something that we can also present. Yeah, I think in working together with the academic tech round table, we will succeed in our goal in this course. Great working also with you in the team. Yeah, I'm curious too about the outcomes.

Sam Williams: Well, it will be great. This is a wonderful partnership, and thank you so much.

Speaker 1: Thank you for joining us. For another episode of the UP Tech Talk Podcast, just a reminder that we post a new podcast every Friday morning. You can find us at techtalk.up.edu.

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