

Welcome to the UP TechTalk 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: Thank you for joining us for UP TechTalk. And we have with us today Jose Velazco, Digital Initiatives Coordinator for the Clark Library on the University of Portland campus. Thank you Jose for joining us today.

Jose: Thank you for having me.

Maria: Jose we're so glad you're here today and you are head of the digital lab, which is a brand new space in a newly renovated building. It's such a wonderful space to be in. It's contemporary, it's bright, it just feels like a lot is going on in there. And I know that you've got a new piece of equipment in there, a very large, shiny, nice looking printer. What can you tell us about that?

Jose: So we just acquired a Epson 7900 wide format printer. It prints 24 inches by 36, 48, what have you. You're able to print large exhibition quality prints, graphics, posters and we sort of look at that as a model to help students really gain access to professional level software and tools in order to make those sorts of graphics and presentations.

Maria: Has the printer seen a lot of use lately?

Jose: I think so. I think we've done a couple different graphics for the library. We've also done a few posters for students and we've also done some exhibition quality images for students who are trying to boost their photo skills and so, I think it's coming around, and I think we're going to get a lot more use out of it towards the end of the semester.

Maria: And in addition to the new printer, you've also done some work on the audio room in there. Yes, so I used Lynda.com, I watched a tutorial on setting up your own acoustic sort of space, your own studio and I watched a 3 hour class over the summer, and we were able to sort of, design and get the materials for panels. We installed them, and now when you walk in there I think there's a greater sense of, this is a recording space, the studio is more robust in terms of the offerings that it has. We also put our monitors on stands. And so, I think when you start to use that space now, you're going to get a greater sense and greater appreciation for the quality of sound that you're going to get when you record in there and when you're mixing. So it's a great value add that we have to our facility.

Maria: It almost feels like a small recording studio.

Jose: Yes I mean it's, when you, you walked in there, let's say last year, I think we were still trying to figure out the setup of that space. But I think now, with that sort of, the panels on the wall I think it makes it feel a little bit more authentic in a way.

Maria: It does. And that video space, has that gotten any face-lifting in there too?

Jose: So the image production studio, we've done some small things. I think the thing that we're working on the most is trying to update our documentation to make sure that we can get a greater sense of what the opportunities are for students when they want to use that. So not so much in terms of face lift, as much as a greater sense of, you know what the space can offer students as it is right now. So for example, next semester we'll be teaching a digital video and movie media class through the performing arts department. And there, we're going to use, a section of the course will focus on experimental video. So, we could use the green screen and kaleidoscoping techniques in that room in order to get it to sort of open up the, you know the idea of what that space can do. So, those of sorts of things that we're kind of looking forward to using it for.

Sam: And you had a, this past year also received additional equipment that students can check out.

Jose: Yes, so we've requested some more digital cameras. What this allows us to do is, it allows us to put the cameras into the hands of people who really need them. So for example, if you're a digital photography student, and you really need to get those images in for class, you can certainly take those, use our cameras and get raw uncompressed file from those cameras. On the second, thinking about it in a different context you can also use the cameras for video. And they shoot HD video, high definition video, and so a variety of classes can use those cameras. For example, we have a business class that's coming in and they're doing personal brand statements. So a student says, this is what I'm about, this is my professional practice, here is a 45 second summary of what I do and who I am as a professional. And so, that's just 1 of the many ways that those cameras can be used.

Sam: So when students check out the cameras, and they capture all this great content, you also provide them training on, you know how to capture good audio, how to capture good video, and then they can come into the space to work on their projects, is that correct? So they have stations they can actually work at?

Jose: Sure. So we have 6 stations, 6 single user stations that we offer in the facility. But we also have a collaborative station where groups of 2, 3 or 4 can sit down and sort of look over the span of 2 screens that are rather sort of generous to see their projects, whether they be photo based, design based or video based. So we offer, not only do we offer one on one instruction, but we offer workshops. For example this semester we offered 12 sessions of workshops from learning how to use digital cameras to if you checked out a camera and you wanted to say, how do I use this piece of equipment? We went into the studio, we set up a still life and then they looked at that and learned the basics of how to use that camera. But we also offer one on one instruction, so people come to me and ask for appointments and we certainly accommodate as best we can. And then we offer, for faculty we offer workshops that are available, tailored per class. So a faculty member will ask, is

there a way that I can get from concept all the way to completion, this particular assignment that I want to assign in my class, and then we can sort of build out what structure they need to accomplish that in their course.

Maria: I think this is an amazing resource for faculty. In fact, we've certainly heard from several of them that pulled off major story telling projects with your help and with the help of being able to work in the space with their students. So I think that faculty just knowing that you're available, knowing that the space is there and equipment is there for it's students, really kind of opens the door wide for them to be able to put some of their ideas into practice.

Jose: Yes, I think that one of the things that I envision for the facility is that it is a teaching space, as opposed to a service bureau model where people come in, they drop off a file and then it comes back to them in a completed fashion. We're here to sort of service the learning and the growth of multimedia technology, not only within the classroom, but beyond that. If you have a personal interest in doing something and you say, well I'm really interested in doing this in video, but I don't know how. That's where we can come in and sort of aid in how you get, again from the concept to completion of a self directed work.

Sam: And this definitely has worked well with a lot of the initiatives that have come out of Academic Technology Services. And so, we do thank you for the partnership and working with faculty. And just as an example, Dr. Alice Gates, who had the digital story telling project within her curriculum. You know, she stated that the library was essential and the services within the library were essential for her to be able to pull off that kind of project. So, we definitely are hearing the positives on campus.

Maria: Right.

Jose: Yes. So with that particular project by the way, to give you some idea how we started that, she said, well I had this idea of making a video but I don't know how to. This is a new technology to me, how do I get it to you know, be incorporated into the syllabus? And so we started with a timeline, a framework that I had used for other courses, and we sat down and we brainstormed, what is it that you need the students to learn in terms of best practices with video and audio, and then also, how do you incorporate that within your own discipline. And so we set a timeline, and then we actually had the class come in over a span of the entire semester really. And then, at the end, they had a screening and I think, I would say that she learned a lot from, you know making that particular piece because, you know there were some challenges but I think there were some successes in how the students sort of were able to communicate their ideas via the multimedia.

Sam: And so that brings the attention to the customized workshops that you do offer. And so if somebody wanted to, they had a particular idea, how would they

contact you or, what does some more information around these customized workshops?

Jose: So if you're interested in learning more about how to conceptualize an assignment and get it to work within your curriculum, you can email me or you can come by the lab, and I'm here Monday through Friday's. And definitely I'm open to taking the time to customize it where you want a simple tutorial for one session of class where I come and visit. Or, where we sort of create this whole sort of mini curriculum within your class. So for example, if you wanted the class to come in and have a day on how to do an interview properly, or how to edit within iMovie, or any sort of different thing that you might think of, we can do and customize that within the scope of your timeline, within the course.

Maria: What a tremendous resource for faculty. You know, I think a lot of times they feel on their own when they've got some new ideas. But, just getting the word out that there is a wealth of resources available for them, I think will certainly really help things for them.

Sam: Yeah. And Maria, being the instructional designer, for Academic Technology Services, has been working in collaboration with yourself. And I know she will be getting a lot more requests on, you know designing online hybrid courses. And so I definitely see a collaboration between the 2 divisions, but we're very happy to see, you know the advancement and the attention on video, and the use of video within higher education. I know it's a passion within our division as well.

Jose: Sure, yeah. I think it's an ever-evolving medium and it can bring a lot of different ways of thinking and communicating ideas, in a way that wasn't perceptible a few years ago. So I'm interested in collaborating with faculty and students to see how far we can take the medium.

Sam: And it's definitely a wonderful space and I know another project that we're working on, just to put a plug-in really quick, and that is for the, I can remember how we renamed it yesterday...

Maria: The Kate Reagan Short Film Festival.

Sam: Ok, so the film festival, and so, I know that's a project that's near and dear to everybody's heart. And, is there anything you guys want to bring up really quickly? I know we're still in the planning stages of that, but I think this is a good opportunity to plug.

Jose: Maria do you have anything? I mean I can interject if you like but go ahead...

Maria: Well I think that it's important to get the word out there. We're going to be providing as many resources for students as possible. We want all the projects to

have their début on the big screen and we want everybody to have a wonderful celebration at the film festival.

Jose: Yeah I think this is a really great opportunity to find, you know, hidden talent across the university community, because sometimes you are in course and you're doing things that are for, you know sociology or business, or what have you like we've talked so far. But this night sort of lends itself to, you know those hidden creative talents that may not always necessarily come out across the university community. So it really is a great way to explore those across campus.

Sam: And, coming around, sometime in February you'll be able to do some pre-screening with people, so that way they can kind of get some feedback from yourself, Jose in the library, and others. But, get some feedback so they can possibly better their project design, is that correct?

Jose: That's correct. So if somebody has made something, and they want some, advice as to how to make the sound better, how to sort of color correct the picture, if there any additional things that need to be done in order to sort of make the project a little more viable for public presentation then we can certainly do all those things. But yes, we offer, sort of what we're nonchalantly calling an early-bird feedback sessions where people can sort of come in and if they want to, have some advice on how to make the picture better or how to sweeten the sound in the project, we can certainly do that.

Sam: Very nice. So, any upcoming workshops that you definitely want to highlight, that are in the library.

Jose: So workshops for the semester, we're sort of planning for next semester now. We just finished our workshops on iMovie and Photoshop and poster making. So what we're trying to do next semester is, we're trying to see if we can get a little bit more in depth with each software. So for example, it was suggested to me that we may want to consider, how does one just take a picture, you know well enough, and how does one work within iMovie and just sort of get a simple edit in iMovie to fruition. So, we're trying to think of ways in which we can sort of expand what we offer. So for example, next semester we're hoping to do 3 days a week of workshops for about 5 weeks in the semester. This semester, and in previous semesters, we've done 2 days a week. So, we're trying to up the quantity of those offerings that we have.

Sam: Very fun. And where do we find out about the workshops?

Jose: For those that are interested in signing up for a workshop, you can visit our site, wordpress.up.edu/dlab. And you can not only find out about when the newest workshops are posted but you can also register for them as well.

Sam: Very nice.

Maria: Well thank you so much Jose for being our guest today. We're really glad that you came to talk with us and it's so happy that so much is going on in your space.

Jose: Yes, I look forward to it. It's a really exciting space and we're just trying to open up the offerings that we have to a greater constituency across campus.

Sam: Definitely. Well thank you so much for joining us today.

Jose: Thank you.

Sam: Thank you for joining us for another episode of the UP TechTalk Podcast. Just a reminder that we post a new podcast every Friday morning, and you can find us at techtalk.up.edu.