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# EFFECTIVE USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA

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## What Are The Benefits?

*The use of digital media in an academic setting is not a new teaching strategy. However, the increase in availability of digital media content on the web, the ability for almost anyone to create digital content with the use of commonly available hardware from computers to cell phones, as well as the increasingly simple ways to share content with the world through venues like YouTube and Vimeo, make digital media an essential component of a 21<sup>st</sup> century education.*

*Some of the benefits to incorporating digital media into your courses include:*

- ❖ Digital media is an engaging way to present ideas and concepts that will increase the interest and motivation of students to participate in a given topic.
- ❖ Using digital media for academic purposes will increase the ability of students to view media for more than just entertainment value alone. Working with students to develop the skills necessary to evaluate, critique and interpret digital media is an important component to consider when designing course with media. These skills are commonly referred to as digital media literacies.
- ❖ The use of digital media is one strategy to create an experiential learning environment where students feel emerged in the events or situations they are learning about. This technique lends itself to a variety of learning styles, including both visual and auditory learners.

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## What Types of Activities Should I Use?

### Pre-Viewing Activities

- ❖ Explain to students why you are using the chosen media component and what they will benefit from the experience.
- ❖ Discuss with students the theme and what they expect it to be about.
- ❖ Prepare students with any vocabulary or terminology from the media component they may not already know.

### Viewing Activities

- ❖ Provide a list of question for the student to answer to highlight key information.
- ❖ Ask students to follow a specific character, discuss from their character's perspective following the viewing.

### Post Viewing Activities

- ❖ Ask students to compare and contrast a character with themselves.
- ❖ Discuss both sides of a controversial issue as a group.
- ❖ Discuss theme, message and meaning of media component. Evaluate film from the filmmaker's perspective. What were they trying to say?

## Where Can I Find Media to Use in My Classes?

There is a wide variety of media available on campus. Lavery Library provides access to two rich online media resources:

### ❖ Films on Demand

### ❖ Alexander Street Filmmakers Library Online

You can find both of these databases here:

<http://www.sjfc.edu/library/resources/databases/index.dot>

You can also borrow any media including VHS and DVD resources available in the Library to use in your class or place them on reserve for your students to view on their own time.

**Note:** To ensure the success of students accessing digital media resources available through the Lavery Library from an off-campus location, please remember to add the Library proxy to the beginning of any URL's you post or send to students.

- Proxy Prefix is <http://pluma.sjfc.edu/login?url=>

Contact your Library Liaison for additional help finding media for your classes.

<http://www.sjfc.edu/library/contact/mylibrarian.dot>

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## How Are Fisher Faculty Using Digital Media in Class?

*"I find that the use of films has been invaluable in terms of engaging students in learning. I use mainstream films like, for example, Little Miss Sunshine, to help students see how sometimes quite complex ethical theories (in the case of this film, existentialism) are relevant to contemporary culture and to their own lived-experiences. This then opens their mind to the value of philosophy in general and makes studying it more interesting."*

**- Barbara Lowe, Associate Professor, Philosophy**

*"My survey on Modern and Contemporary Spanish Literature is focused on written texts. However, I strongly encourage students to take advantage of several documentaries available online from Films on Demand. Particularly, I am posting on Blackboard clips from some high-quality series, which blend dramatizations and scholarly interviews with images of manuscripts, maps and artwork, so that students may use them as a visual encyclopedia of Spanish history. Student feedback so far has been very positive, and it persuades me to keep exploring audiovisual materials as educational tools."*

**- Francisco Plata, Assistant Professor, Modern Languages & Cultures**

*"I believe in using films in class because some individuals, including many very smart students, connect with movies more readily than texts. Films, in particular, allow students to see concepts like ideology, propaganda, stereotyping, poverty, war, and violence in ways that are very accessible and stark. Finally, films are useful because they are "snap shots" of particular eras and they provide a meaningful way for students to compare and contract their own experiences, in the contemporary world, with previous periods."*

**- Wesley Renfro, Assistant Professor, Political Science**

*"The library has a wide range of films that are useful for English literature classes. I use film, for example, in my course The Arthurian Legend. Showing clips from films from Excalibur, First Knight, and King Arthur are very useful in showing students the way different screenwriters and directors interpret aspects of the legend of Arthur. Guinevere in Excalibur is a pampered princess; in First Knight she's a strong ruler of her own kingdom; in King Arthur she's a Celtic warrior. Talking about these 20th century versions helps the students see that the writers' interpretations in medieval, Renaissance, and 19th century retellings of the legend come from the same desire to make the story relevant to their own time. Films on Demand has allowed me to show segments of documentaries and other types of film in class easily without schlepping DVDs around. The films are available in full or in segments, so it's easy to find and use just a 2-minute clip of my choice."*

**- Deborah Vanderbilt, Professor, English**

## Embedded Video in Blackboard

**1** Locate the Embed Code for the video you would like to use within your course. When embedding a **YouTube** video, this will be located under the **Share** button and then click on the **Embed** button. When using **Lavery Library's Films on Demand** service (found on the Library website – <http://www.sjfc.edu/library> under **Find Articles and More**), you can find the embed code under the video by clicking on **Embed This Video**. From either source, copy the embed code to your clipboard.

**2** Within the **Text** area of the content item in Blackboard, toggle on HTML mode using the **< >** icon. Then paste the embed code into the window.

**3** Click **Submit** and check that your video now plays directly within the Blackboard content item.

**Note:** Embedding videos from Alexander Street Filmmakers Library Online will not work. Insert the direct link in Blackboard instead of embedding the video.



*Digital Media can be broadly defined to include a variety of formats including video, film, audio recordings, simulations, animations and beyond.*