Innovations in Teaching Using Technology Grant Application, 2012

1. Title of proposal: Using Student-Driven Technology in a Tiered Approach to Teaching Research Design

2. Course(s) or curriculum affected: PR06310 Introduction to PR / Advertising Research Methods

3. Name of applicant(s): Marilena Olguta Vilceanu, ….

4. Objectives of the proposal:
   a. Innovation – offer students an integrated set of tools to creatively explore and experiment with primary and secondary research design, using iPads. Students will use the iPads (or their own computers and tablets) to record focus groups and interviews; design online polls and surveys; hold individual conferences with the instructor, while conducting research; and integrate readings and research in a final project that replaces the traditional end-of-semester written report with a more dynamic multimedia presentation. In addition, students decide what performance level corresponds to an A for each rubric item. nden

choice" allows students to determine the level of difficulty of their project. It is expected, based on experimentation at other schools (for example Prof. McGann at Nazareth College, NY with Sociology majors), that students will develop projects that reflect and improve their technical skills (iMovie or MovieMaker) and motivation to pursue a particular topic. Research design projects may approach concepts ranging from basic to advanced, depending on students' course-specific knowledge and prior exposure to research design concepts such as sampling, measurement scales, and statistics.

From a teaching and assessment perspective, such projects are rubric-friendly, easy to grade, and scalable across disciplines. Finally, such artifacts can add value to the e-portfolio employers expect from advertising and public relations majors.

Cereal f.a.c.t.s. 2012 (Food Advertising to Children and Teens Score), a report conducted out the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, will be the launching pad for this course. Students will take a topic they all relate to and approach it with a research design focus in mind. Assignment options include multimedia production of surveys, interviews, content analysis, focus groups, and video glossary entries for the research design terminology (ex., random vs. non-random sampling, standard deviation, correlation, etc.). With careful supervision and guidance from the instructor, most of the student assignments could potentially be included into a multimedia e-textbook that meets the goals of this class: to prepare students that understand research, know how to use it, and find it exciting.

The total number of points that can be accumulated in this class adds up to 125, while 100 points represents a perfect score. This challenge-by-choice format is a formal alternative to the extra credit option: it allows students to attempt projects that would be fun to complete and not worry about the grade overmuch. For example, they could attempt to produce a multimedia presentation explaining the concept of covariance and make it extremely entertaining, possibly even resulting in class debates about correctness of terms usage. Even if some or much of the content were wrong, the assignment still contributes a minor part to students' grade – they would compensate by completing another assignment at a higher performance level and with more accuracy. In the end, all materials would be usable for teaching purposes: for example, another group of students, in a future research design class, would take a wrongly conceived example and turn it around.

6. Required Instructional Technology support. IT support needs for the project would be minimal, but ongoing. At the beginning of the semester, an IT consultant would be invited for a short presentation on how to use

iMovie. Students would set up individual consultations as needed throughout the semester.

7. Plans for evaluating and sustaining the innovation – the results of this project, as well as the research and assessment accompanying it, will be submitted to notable and relevant peer-reviewed conferences (such as the National Communication Association and the Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching). Such events are excellent venues for sounding out ideas and receiving feedback from likeminded instructors at other universities. Additional peer review will be solicited during the semester from the Faculty Center (class observations); colleagues (instructor conferences); and students themselves (internal assessment through student focus groups).
A reflection journal will accompany the development of this multimedia project (valued at 20% of the final project grade). The purpose of this assignment is to track student progress and assess conceptual knowledge in context.
Eventually, after sufficient refinement, this approach could be adopted by interested instructors in any of the six sections of Introduction to Research offered in the College of Communication; and in other courses where instructors are interested in tiered instruction.

8. Budget

Item	Price	Subtotal
3 iPad3, 32GB, 3G Wireless enabled	$635	$1,905
3 iPad Aluminum Detachable Bluetooth Keyboard / Covers	$30	$90