Report:

Fine Arts has offered a course in public presentation for several years entitled "Senior Review" that was organized for the seniors to practice and deliver visiting artist-style lectures on their own work. The course was designed as a compliment and companion for the senior thesis, which all students are required to write during senior year, as a way for the students to present publicly the ideas and insights contained in the document. The "visiting artist's lecture" is a professional practice that most successful artists will need to have some comfort or mastery of in mainstream art and academia. Fine Arts, just as most departments at Otis, has made a formal commitment to training our students in practical, professional skills, and this is certainly one of them.

However, the visiting artist's lecture using slides and projector seems by now teetering on the antique and is a rather limited idea of the public presentation of an artist. Our students will most likely have their first public presentation after their graduation show in the form of a website or web portfolio; they may possibly present a video on You Tube or present the contents of their thesis on Blogger or My Space long before they have a chance to either exhibit in a gallery or video screening, or to give a visiting artist lecture.

I spent the term and the summer researching the tools for the successful realization of online or mobile presentation to demonstrate and guide the students through creation of digital portfolios and websites, as well as began discussion of the styles and methods of public presentation. The main focus of the class was not actually be the how-to instruction these technologies but was more geared to mastering the ways artists can employ these technologies to support and reflect the different styles and structures of their own work in its presentation. I considered it immensely important for the class to consider that there are different “publics,” and to refine their presentations to that awareness.

I adjusted the curriculum of my section of the Senior Review class to address the creation of websites, Wikis, digital portfolios, and whatever were the best means for students to create a mobile carrier for visual and textual material from which they presented their artist’s lecture required for this
course. We also a look at Podcasting as a possible artist's lecture format. After completion of all of the student lectures, I conducted the final session of the class in Second Life, where each of the members who hadn’t entered before adopted avatars and we met for a virtual artist’s presentation.

Heather Cleary gave us a presentation on how to use the digital portfolio space provided by Otis at the first session of the term, and most students chose to use this format. Two students worked with outside designers to develop their own websites, and one student conducted a very competent Power Point presentation of their work.

Each week I spent part of the session discussing my research and assisting students with the development of their own. We started a Wiki for the class to exchange news and information on their projects, and we also made extensive use of the O-Space website to communicate with the class.

I believe these skills will begin to be used in a variety of classes, but most certainly instruction in them fulfills our expectations for both the tech-savvy student and the professional practices component of many of our classes. The results of our class presentations this term are viewable online at the Otis e-portfolio site.

Finally, Felipe Gutierrez and his Academic Computing Department installed Second Life on ten of the computers in the Galef computer lab, and I was able to conduct the last class of the term "virtually," as each of the students adopted an "avatar" and interacted with each other in the virtual environment. In future I hope to be able to hold meetings of this class online and watch students make their presentations in Second Life, as well as in "real life".

During the term I became a member of the New Media Consortium in Second Life and attended the virtual Best Practices in Education Conference in May of 2007. In addition, for the sake of planning for future classes, I took the 33-hour course in Dreamweaver over the summer available through our library at Lynda.com, and developed my own website at www.danaduff.com.

I plan to present a report of my work for the Otis Technology grant specifically as it pertains to our Senior Review course to my colleagues in Fine Arts at the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester.

--Dana Duff (/faculty/dana-duff)
Fine Arts

Student links [some links may no longer work]:

- Christine Curry Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/christinecurry/) and Website (http://www.christinecurry.com/)
- Alfredo Guzman Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/fredart/Home/)
- Elizabeth Lopez Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/elizabethmlopez/Welc)
- Mark Matsuzakin Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/markymark/Home/)
- Kristi McKnight Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/kristo/Home/)
- Anna Kostanian Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/annakostanian/Home/)
- Mikarts on MySpace (http://www.myspace.com/mikarts)
- Mika Revell Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/annakostanian/Home/)
- Mekenzie Kay Schneider Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/mekenziekay/Home/)
- Justine Serebrin Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/justine/Home/) and Website (http://justineartist.com/home.html)
- MASTER V & QUEEN J Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/masterqueen/Home/)
- Mayuka Thais (Portfolio deleted by student)
- Minerva Torres Portfolio (http://ospace.otis.edu/mtorres/Home/)

Screenshot of Mika Revell’s e-portfolio

Screenshot of Minerva Torres’s e-portfolio
Screenshot of Christine Curry's e-portfolio