

Creating multimedia trial presentations

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Abstract

In general, studying different trials and trial institutions is a dynamic and complex affair, which makes it difficult for anyone facing it for the first time to theoretically comprehend. For this reason, as part of this project the students doing outside practices in law offices get an overall grasp of the process of a trial and are able to convey these contents by using the multimedia resources and knowledge with which they are provided.

The students generate a teaching resource based on their experience at the court and develop new activities: choosing the case with the aid of the mentor and the support of the professor, studying the trial institution chosen, preparing and handling the necessary materials, using the new technologies and drawing up the public oral presentation of the results.

Unlike in traditional classes, in this learning model the students themselves are the one who create an original, unpublished, transversal teaching resource with multimedia support that can be disseminated online.

General area of interest of this innovation

This project has a broad area of interest as it could be applied to all external practices that are conducted in the different degree programmes offered at the UAB, and it helps to combine the use of ICT, cooperative work and skills-based training while also developing new, transversal teaching resources.

1. Objectives

1. To foster group work in the students participating together in the practices at the same court.
2. To take advantage of the possibilities offered by the new technologies in learning and creating teaching resources.
3. To make students more familiar with Law as legal operators of the new technologies as necessary instruments in the world of law.
4. To interconnect areas of learning such as trial law and the use of multimedia resources when implementing the European credits.
5. To make better use of the academic resources and to make the most from the teaching materials developed by the students by using them in other courses.

2. Description of the project

The teaching innovation project presented in this article was part of the practicum course that is coordinated by the Trial Law area. These practices consist of a stint in a court where, under the supervision of a mentor (the judge or the clerk of the court), a group of four students track the activities taking place there. Once the practice is over, the students have to write a report outlining the conclusions they have reached. At the same time, the mentor evaluates the degree to which each student profited from the experience, and the professor coordinating the practices determines the final mark. The individual written report is an outstanding means of evaluation in the sense that the students who have undergone a given experience in a court are empowered to generate creative, original, unpublished material that leads to better academic performance for not just the student who wrote the materials but also the other classmates, who can use this material in their own education.

3. Methodology

The feasibility of a project like the one we are presenting means that you must have both the technical equipment needed to create a multimedia product and institutional cooperation. The first requirement was met by cooperation with the Multimedia Lab headquartered in the UAB's Faculty of Law. The second requirement was met via a cooperation and practices agreement between the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the Higher Court of Justice of Catalonia.

3.1. Selecting the trial

Once the court has been assigned, the trial that students will work on is chosen with the advice of the mentor. In this phase, the group holds several meetings with the coordinating professor in order to set forth the contents of the initial proposal, plan the work and set each student's goals.

3.2. Gathering the material

When dealing with a civil trial, the judge him- or herself provides the students with a DVD copy of the oral statements that the students have sat in on, as well as the most important written statements. When dealing with criminal trials, the trials must be recorded.

3.3. Preparing the final product

Once the students have studied and understood the case, they have to decide which contents they want to use in their multimedia presentation and draw up a working plan for the sessions they will hold in the Multimedia Lab.

3.4. Editing the multimedia presentation

In the editing phase, students assemble the recorded material.

3.5. Public presentations

Una vegada acabats i avaluats els projectes, els estudiants fan una presentació pública del seu treball.

4. Results

The students have acquired noteworthy skills in different areas: they have had to choose a topic or case in a group with the help of the mentor and coordinating professors; they have had to learn to use different computer programmes for video editing, image processing and multimedia presentations; and finally they have had to make a public, oral presentation of their project.

During the first two years the students of this project, have produced enough high quality teaching material that for the next year we plan to basically focus on using and disseminating this teaching material within the educational and institutional framework of the UAB Faculty of Law.

This year the goals are as follows:

1. To keep producing more high quality teaching material with the students. This will be accomplished following the methodology that has been used in the past two years (RIBA TREPAT et al, 2007).
2. To use these materials: the multimedia presentations of trials can be used as a teaching resource in the classes taught by the professors in the Trial Law area.
3. Restricted dissemination: the presentations are housed in a dedicated space in the Multimedia Lab on the website of the Institute of Law and Technology (<http://idt.uab.es>).

The protocol for accessing the multimedia presentations of trials made by the students is as follows:

Step 1:

- Enter: <http://idt.uab.es>
- Then check the section of the Multimedia Lab (IDT LAB): <http://idt.uab.es/idtlab/idtlab.htm>

**Step 2:**

Enter the IDT Lab section and check: MQD2006-2007. You will be asked to enter a user name and password, as mentioned above. Enter them to access the teaching material.



Step 3:

You are ready to see the material available. The presentations are organised chronologically, and you can open them by clicking on the file twice.

**Step 4:**

By placing the cursor over the title of the different presentations, you can see a brief summary of each one. The authorship by the students is visible, as is the site on the external practices and the students' mentor.



Step 5:

Finally, if you want to see one of the presentations, click on it and its contents come onto the screen.

**5. Conclusions**

This task of dissemination underway is a work in progress, meaning that over the course of this academic year changes will be made in how the contents are presented (we are in the first phase now). We also want to measure the use and experience of using this material by the professors accredited to do so. This evaluation be either quantitative (we will measure the use statistically) or qualitative (by means of semi-structured interviews with users, either professors or students), which will give us useful information for assessing this experience.

References

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Interesting link

- <http://idt.uab.es/> [2008]

Keywords

Multimedia presentations, civil and criminal trials.

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Supplementary materials on the CD-ROM

Demonstration of the contents of three presentations on the subject of gender violence.

Project leader

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