WebCampus Studios

The Academic Recording Studio and SmartClassRoom for Stevens

- Instructor Presentations
- Course and Program Introductions
- Demonstrations
- Marketing Materials
- Special Events (Recorded or Live-Streamed)
- Student Projects

WebCampus Studios is a facility for on-campus instructors, online instructors, and administrators to create videos for courses or institutional sites.
I. Introduction: WebCampus Studios

WebCampus Studios, located on the 5th floor of the Altorfer Academic Complex at 610 River Street, is the academic recording center of Stevens Institute of Technology. At WebCampus Studios, faculty and staff members work together to create a wide variety of videos to enhance course content.

WebCampus Studios consists of two main production areas. The first is the Academic Recording Studio for Stevens, also known as the Podcasting Studio, which is equipped with a SMART Board and high definition cameras that are hooked into the EDUcast recording system. This setup allows faculty members to create podcasts of lectures and presentations that can be easily linked to their Canvas course shells.

The second production area is referred to as the SmartClassRoom (Altorfer 501.) This space serves as a test bed for lecture capture technologies that may eventually be built into other classrooms around campus. The SmartClassRoom is also used to test procedures for conducting specialized academic operations such as hybrid classes and live-stream events. It has a capacity of 25 seats and is equipped with advanced audio and video equipment.
II. Process: Steps to Creating a Podcast

**STEP 1: Generate the Idea**

The first step to creating a podcast is deciding what you want to accomplish with your recording. Even if you don’t have a project in mind, visiting the studio or the SmartClassRoom might help you generate ideas.

Besides capturing lecture content, you might want to create a welcome message for your students, film interviews with guest speakers, record a homework review, or prep for finals. You might even have existing Blackboard Collaborate sessions or webinars that you held that you want to splice together with your new podcasts.

Not only do videos make content more engaging, but recorded videos can make on-campus classes more resilient: in the event of campus closings due to inclement weather or other emergency, faculty can still hold class by simply uploading content to be covered that day.

Other departments on-campus might consider using the studio to create marketing materials for their web sites.

Whatever the purpose, WebCampus can guide you through the process. We can offer examples of previous video projects and provide advice for what might work best in your class. (See Section IV for project examples.)

**STEP 2: Determine the Layout**

With your input, we’ll design a layout that best suits your needs. You may choose a one-, two-, or three-screen format as shown below:

- **One Screen Layout**

- **Two Screen Layouts**

- **Three Screen Layout**
We will use your chosen layout to create your personalized USB “key.” This key will recognize your specs and produce each recording with your one-screen, two-screen, or three-screen layout.

Illustrated below is the two-screen layout and the various ways you can configure each podcast to work best for what you are trying to achieve. (Figures 4A and 4B).

Fig. 4A - Professor Rouse opted for a PowerPoint slide in one screen with his image in the next.

Fig. 4B - Professor Besser chose to show his image in the first screen and use the second camera as a doc-cam.

The material needed for the podcast can either be brought in the day of the recording (with a USB) or sent to us beforehand. The EDUcast recording system accepts all PC and MAC laptops.

If the content you want to show requires a specific program that we might not have; it would be best to bring in your laptop on the day of the recording.

While in the studio, we will find a comfortable location, lighting scheme and backdrop that works best for you. We’ll equip you with the microphones and setup your layout with the appropriate feeds.

Now you are ready for your presentation. Presenters are encouraged to use as many takes as needed since editing can occur in post-production.

Once you’ve finished your lecture, follow-up with us regarding any parts you might want removed or edited. We can then discuss the various ways you can receive your video (as shown in Section III.)

When you are ready to record, please give us a week’s notice. The best way to contact us is listed below:

E-MAIL: webcampus@stevens.edu
PHONE: (201)216-5602

Fig. 4C - The personalized USB key that we mentioned in STEP 3 will be plugged into a port on the podium. As soon as you are ready to record, you’d insert the key as shown in the image above. This will activate the recording. In order to stop filming, you’d simply remove the key from the port.
III. Post-Production: Deployment of Videos

You’ve Recorded Your Video... Now What?

Once you remove the key to end the recording, the recording is sent to an Internet server. Several things could happen at this point:

**Option A:** The podcasts you create can show up in an RSS feed. This feed can then be plugged directly into your Canvas course (Figure 5A). This means that the recording will automatically post to your course shell and be instantly available for your students to view.

![Fig. 5A - The RSS feed can be placed within a page in Canvas. This way, students have instant access to videos as soon as you finish making the recording.](image)

**Option B:** WebCampus can assist if basic edits need to be made to the final podcast. Once the product is finalized, we can deliver you the video in several ways:

- **B-1.** You can save a copy of the MP4 on a USB for future use.
- **B-2.** We can send you the direct link to the recording from the EDUcast’s server site to add to your Canvas shell. Students can click on that link and view your recording as a simple HTML page (Figure 5B).
- **B-3.** We edit your recording and upload the MP4 into our *NJVID service (Figure 5C). Everyone has access to NJVID through their MyStevens account or can use the NJVID Video Browser within their Canvas course (Figure 5D). As soon as you upload this MP4 into your Canvas shell, a security setting gets placed on that video so only those students in your course can view your podcast.

*NJVID is a repository service like YouTube, but was created specifically for preserving academic videos for higher education.*
IV. Examples:
Different Ways to Use the Studio

1. Record Lecture Content

First, introduce your content face-to-face; then switch to voice-over format. This way, you can appear on screen, but you don’t have to be filmed the entire time. You can appear at the end to provide any closing comments (Figure 6A), or at any other point in the recording.

The voice-over feature will capture anything projecting from your computer. If you prefer not to be on camera,

2. Use a Document Camera

A secondary studio camera provides additional options to record content. You can use it to show worksheets or perform demonstrations.

This approach is especially useful for instructors who wish to manually write out and talk through equations (Figure 6B).

3. Capture the Whiteboard Space

Filming the whiteboard allows instructors to emulate how they’d teach in traditional classroom settings (Figure 6C).

This approach is also useful for professors who want to review complex problems that were discussed in class.

4. Create Interactive Content with SMART Board Technology

The SMART Board technology lets you annotate slides during the presentation, highlighting key points to make the discussion interactive (Figure 6D).

If you’d like a product key to test out this SMART Board option, please e-mail us.
5. Make a Personalized Welcome Video for Students

Professors can introduce themselves with a welcome message and a brief description of the course. They can add this recording on the home page of their Canvas course (Figure 7A).

Program directors can use this same method for institutional sites to provide in-depth information about their programs.

6. Build Rich Media Content for Departmental Web Sites

Academic and staff departments can create messages or marketing materials to use on their departmental web sites (Figure 7B).

They can bring in guest speakers to record interviews, record student testimonials for marketing purposes, and go over programs and procedures in greater detail.

7. Stream Live Events

The existing EDUcast system used for podcasts can now also be used to stream live events.

This is ideal for events occurring in the SmartClassRoom (Figure 7C). The same equipment used to record instructor presentations is used here, but streaming gives a large group of remote participants the ability to attend in real-time.

Although there is no chat box available on the landing page, a Twitter feed can be setup so those online can still send in comments.

8. Record Meetings or Class Lectures

The SmartClassRoom is ready to go with built-in cameras and microphones. It is great for lecture capture, live streaming, or real-time web conferences.

Whether you are holding on-campus events or giving a lecture, filming an event will allow you to provide a link to the recording to those who were not able to attend on-campus (Figure 7D).
Enhancing the Teaching Skills of Faculty: The Stevens TaLK Group

Several divisions within Stevens that conduct or sponsor professional development opportunities for faculty members are now coordinating their efforts through the Teaching and Learning Knowledge (TaLK) committee. Training faculty to excel in the use of educational technologies is a core part of the TaLK mission. Other TaLK initiatives include:

- Engaging faculty members to investigate, innovate and experiment with research-based instructional tools and practices.
- Providing professional development opportunities to enable new and current faculty members to maximize the effectiveness of their teaching.
- Supporting recognition of successful teaching and learning scholarship and practices.
- Fostering a university-wide culture and infrastructure to support effective teaching, learning and assessment.
- Promoting Stevens as an innovation leader in teaching, learning and assessment.

To learn more about the activities coordinated through TaLK, visit the website at: www.stevens.edu/sit/talk.

TaLK’s Core Teaching Modules

The core teaching and learning professional development modules to be held annually by the TaLK group cover: How People Learn, Lecture Classes, Blended Learning, Online Learning and Assessment.

Using Blackboard Collaborate and Podcasting for Business Continuity

When Hurricane Sandy struck in October 2012, it flooded half the city of Hoboken, forced the evacuation of hundreds of residents, and halted on-campus operations at Stevens for 10 days.

The lesson from the Sandy experience was clear: Courses with online resources were more resilient than those taught by instructors who were not. This guide is not only intended for instructors who teach online courses, but also for on-campus faculty in the event of another emergency.

The key for on-campus instructors - many of whom will never teach a fully online class - is to learn how to use basic online teaching tools, such as Blackboard Collaborate, at the new WebCampus Studios before the next campus emergency. The best and most productive way to do this is for each instructor to explore how online teaching tools can be used to enhance on-campus classes.