

## Using Multimedia to Teach Consumer Economics and Personal Finance

Multimedia can be a very effective method of presentation for consumer related classes. Recent advances in technology have made it possible to replace standard black and white overheads with colored images including graphics, animation and photographs. Students response to this presentation method is very positive and quiz scores have increased.

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### Why Use This Method?

As teachers we are continually looking for ways to attract and retain students' interest and increase their learning. Since summer school, 1994, I have been using a multimedia presentation method in personal finance and consumer education courses. Most students are used to the standard lecture and black and white overhead format. Continual use of this method can result in lagging attention and decreased participation in class discussions. Using a creative, state of the art presentation method has many advantages that make the additional time spent in class preparation worthwhile.

### Advantages of Using This Method

- \* It attracts and holds students' attention through the use of color, movement, and graphics. Most students equate high tech with important or current information.
- \* Students learn about pedagogy as well as course content.
- \* Software options are available that are user friendly and of a reasonable cost.
- \* It is easy to change content and order of a presentation as course materials are updated or the flow of information is changed.
- \* You can progressively disclose items rather than having to use paper to cover part of the overhead.

### Disadvantages of Using This Method

- \* Cost for the LCD and notebook computer is about \$7,000.
- \* It initially takes about ten hours of preparation time per chapter.
- \* Equipment may need to be carried to the classroom, and time needs to be allowed to set it up before class and to take it down after class.

- \* Security, shared use, and storage of the equipment must be planned.
- \* Some classrooms do not let you limit the amount of ceiling light on the screen.
- \* Unless you have a remote control you need to stay where you can touch the spacebar to advance to the next overhead.
- \* Copyright issues must be considered if you use pictures, cartoons, and the like.

### Other Considerations

- \* Use high contrast colors.
- \* Use consistent fonts and font sizes of 28 pitch or greater.
- \* Visuals should have a limited amount of text.
- \* Choose graphics that enhance your point.
- \* Prepare handouts students can purchase with the graphics and note-taking space so they can listen and discuss rather than copying what is on the screen.

### End Note

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