THR362 (combined with the THR811 graduate technology course) is designed to train theatre costume students in advanced techniques of costume construction including advanced sewing skills, use and alteration of commercial patterns, flat pattern drafting, draping, tailoring, and use of period patterns. Student performance is assessed by a variety of hands-on projects in each technique area culminating in a final project built from a vintage pattern from museum garments and then made to fit a specific actor. Projects and techniques build throughout the course emphasizing different skill sets allowing the student to become proficient in a variety of methods.
used by costume technicians to create patterns and construct costumes. As THR362 is a hands-on practical course, developing an online component was a challenge for me. With guidance from Scott Schopieray’s Blended Learning Community in spring 2009 and, in fall 2010, film assistance from Sarah DeBoer, undergraduate student specializing in film studies and theatre; I developed video sewing tutorials to supplement a major project component of the creation of a Costume Technology (sewing sampler) portfolio. This semester-long project incorporates both simple and complicated sewing techniques that all costume technicians need to know. Many employers look for these skills and the portfolio gives visual proof of mastery of the techniques. In the past I have encountered problems demonstrating these techniques to more than a few students at a time due to the intimate nature of sewing and patterning. By creating video tutorials, students were able to watch and learn outside of classroom time (allowing more in class time to work on other, larger projects), were able to see the techniques close up, and were still learning my preferred methods (as opposed to finding other instruction on YouTube which I have discovered often uses the same stitch name for a different technique resulting in incorrect samples being included in the portfolio).

II. Learning and Interaction Goals of the Blended Course
(what learning and interaction outcomes did you hope to achieve in your use of technology, why is this an award-worthy course)

Creation of these video tutorials allows what is traditionally an in-person, in-class learning method to become partially online. In the past I have spent large amounts of class time demonstrating techniques to students that are much easier to see close-up and one-on-one. These videos not only allowed for individuals to learn and work at their own pace; they were able to revisit the material at any time to see what was missed and to have their own birds-eye view of the stitching methods. My goal was for the stitch sampler portfolio to improve in quality and to allow the students access to my teaching methods without my presence. The videos also allowed the students to formulate specific questions about the process they didn’t understand and gave both instructor and student a precise frame of reference for discussion.

III. Points of Interest and Innovation
(Please discuss course highlights and including URLs and/or screen shots of key components of the course you want to bring to the attention of the judges. Possible outstanding aspects of the course might include student interaction, rich media content elements, interactive learning objects, assessment, effective incorporation of polling and surveys, facilitated teamwork, peer review, portfolio creation, etc.)

The completion of a Costume Technology portfolio is an important aspect for the class both to insure that they comprehend the techniques needed to become advanced technologists and also to provide them with a portfolio to use when searching for employment or internships as a stitcher, cutter/draper or first hand. In combination with other course projects, the student will leave with an impressive portfolio of sewing and patterning techniques and finished garments.

Originally my plan was to do a simple camera set up, showing only the sewing machine and my stitch sample. Sarah DeBoer was brought into the project with assistance from the College of
Arts and Letters Undergraduate Research Initiative grant. Her research involved watching copious amounts of sewing instruction television (like *Sewing with Nancy* and *It’s Sew Easy!*!) and YouTube videos, and discovering the best aspects from each to incorporate into our own tutorials. She organized a multi-camera set up and full lighting that took the idea from basic to impressive. Individual videos were given a course title page and individual technique title, branding each video as unique to this course.

Each video started with an introduction where I discussed the technique and showed examples from existing garments pulled from costume storage. This allowed the students to see the finished use of the technique before beginning their own samples. In the screen shot below I am showing the proper placement of hook and eye tape on a bodice made in the style of the mid-1600’s.
We also used close up shots of these garments while I discussed the use and placement, in this case showing the hook and eye tape in action on the bodice and how it should look in a finished sample. I also used this introduction to discuss pros and cons of each technique and reasons why they should be used and times where another method may be the better choice. One of the complaints from students in the past had been that they didn’t understand why certain methods were included in the sampler book, by taking time in the videos for a brief introduction I was answering student questions before they arose.

Each video then moved on to a wide shot of me at the sewing machine, further discussing the example and showing a finished product in sample form. I had prepared scripts for Sarah in advance, detailing the steps to take with each technique and allowing her to set up the best shots that worked with each. One camera was devoted to the wide front shot, one to the sewing machine in action and one to the table space where I would mark, pin, and prepare the sample pieces.

The following screen shot shows the “at the table” introduction to stitching a lapped zipper. Sarah cut between camera angles giving variety to the video and showing the best angles to view each from.
Occasionally, a sewing technique requires a change of pressure foot on the machine. We also included close ups of the appropriate equipment needed and, for example (below), showed how to switch from the standard pressure foot to the zipper foot.
The table shots showed layout, pinning, marking, and patterning clearly to the students. These detailed techniques for each sample are the most difficult part to show to the students in a class with more than three or four students. The video tutorials allowed me the advantages of doing a single demonstration for the camera while giving the students the benefit of individual attention and repeated instruction when needed.
Hand sewing techniques were also included; here a screen shot for the pad stitching found in tailored men’s jackets:
When class time was available for the students to continue work on the stitch sampler portfolio, many of them pulled out their laptops to access the tutorials. I was able to answer specific questions while still assisting other students in various stages of project process.

We completed fifteen total videos, and started the filming process with techniques that I had observed as most difficult for students in past classes to grasp on their own. While the sampler book requires a total of fifty-five samples, many of the remainder are basic stitches learned in the introductory course and included in the portfolio merely for reference. Time prevented us from completing an additional nine samples I had on my secondary difficulty list and two more that involve multiple steps and are infinitely more complicated and would require videos in length exceeding 20 minutes.

IV. Accessibility
(It is not a requirement that winning entries be accessible to learners with visual, auditory, mobility, and cognitive disabilities. However, if your course content is accessible, or if it incorporates an innovative approach to accessibility, please describe.)

V. Evidence of Effectiveness with Students
(Please include evidence such as comparative test scores, SIRs results, short student letters of support, your own observations of project or group performance, etc.)

I did observe that the quality of the Costume Technology portfolios in spring 2011 was an improvement over previous years. Students also completed the various sections of the project on time and complaints that they were unable to continue on a certain process without my presence disappeared. Continued use of these video tutorials in future classes will see if this improvement continues.

As part of the CAL-URI research grant, we also developed an ANGEL-based survey for the enrolled students to get their feedback on effectiveness of the tutorials. There was overwhelming agreement that the videos were effective and many students requested additional techniques for this course as well as for other similar theatre technique courses. Students also appreciated that my personality was still seen in the videos and that they were able to have my instruction without limiting themselves to regular costume shop hours (as we all know, many students complete their best work after midnight!).

A sampling of student response is below:

General response:
These were some of the most useful materials provided for this costume class!

Please continue these videos!

What could be improved about the video tutorials?
I found them helpful as is, and cannot think of anything that would help further my understanding in a way that would be practical to a video tutorial.
This was really helpful as I will go back and redo some of my work. The explanations of why things were done were also helpful.

There were a couple points where Karen's hand got in the way and I couldn't see what she was doing exactly. Perhaps another camera angle would have been helpful. But for the most part everything was very clear and I was so thankful to have these video tutorials.

Karen was quite clear and concise

**Would you like to see more video tutorials for this or other Theatre classes? And if so which?**

I had nothing specific in mind, but things like basics in draping (when starting a project) to keep in mind or where to measure for specific measurements (like Muscle to Muscle or Rise, just to know, visually where to measure accurately) would be helpful.

Some of the more difficult hand sewing techniques. Theatre 111.

More of them, even for "easy" stitches. They're great!

**Step-by-step AutoCAD, Photoshop, 3Ds Max, and other computer software how-to videos**

**Draping and different types of pocket stitching. Make up and craft classes.**

**Makeup, crafts, draping classes.**

**Any other construction or design classes (digital, scenic, lighting, etc.)**

VI. Plans for Sustainability

The completed video tutorials are stored on the original digital tape, converted to DVD format and are also on StoreMedia, as well as on ANGEL so I have access to them in multiple formats. I would like to complete the remainder of the videos on my list to eventually have a complete set. These tutorials will be able to be used in the Advanced Construction course for many years and, with completion of the additional easier techniques, can be incorporated into the beginner classes as well. This course is offered as part of the Theatre curriculum regularly and with use of the tutorials can even be offered off rotation as an independent study.

We are also planning to install a live-feed camera in the costume shop above the work table so my in-class demonstrations can be easily seen by a larger class size and will allow students to work along with me on daily projects. The potential for recording these other demonstrations from this camera can also lead to additional tutorials being created to serve as supplemental materials for students working outside of class time.