

Colleges frown on online music file swapping

by Christine Laue Omaha World-Herald

Despite efforts to educate students about copyright laws, illegal online music swapping persists on college campuses.

In recent years, many universities have worked with the recording industry to combat piracy. But the Recording Industry Association of America says such efforts haven't curbed the problem.

Colleges have high-speed Internet access, so students can download songs in seconds rather than the 10 to 30 minutes with dial-up access.

That makes computer labs and dorm rooms havens for online music file-sharing, which eats up the universities' bandwidth, or Internet capability, creating technical headaches.

"We pay for our Internet access based on the amount of bandwidth we use," said Debbie Schroeder, assistant vice chancellor for informa-

tion technology at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

"We don't want to spend our money so that students and people across the world can share files." Universities also don't want illegal activity on campus, even though the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 limits universities' liability.

To teach students about copyright rules, Nebraska and Iowa universities have used fliers, posters or computer messages.

When the RIAA notifies a university of suspected illegal file-sharing, officials talk to the student and either shut down the computer immediately or soon after the student is notified. Once the student removes the file-sharing software, computer access may be reinstated.

Kent Hendrickson, associate vice chancellor for information services at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said that one student threatened to sue the university after it cut off computer access but that about 95 percent of students comply.

Opening doors to the future, in Spanish



KRT PHOTO BY MEL EVANS/THE RECORD

Deborah Gonzalez, director of the Gateway to the Future Program, talks to college students interested in courses to be taught entirely in Spanish at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Hackensack, New Jersey.

by Patricia Alex Knight Ridder/Tribune

Fairleigh Dickinson University next month is kicking off a new associate's degree program in business, which will be taught largely in Spanish.

While many American colleges and universities offer select courses in foreign languages, the "Puerta al Futuro" (Door to the Future) program is unique in offering a degree program taught in a language other than English, educators say.

In the first year, intensive English-language training is combined with college-level coursework that is taught entirely in Spanish. In the second year, students continue the English language studies while taking courses in both English and Spanish - taught by bilingual faculty. In the final year, all courses are conducted in English.

The three-year program allows students with limited English skills to jump into college level coursework. Typically students have to take up to two years' remediation before beginning the course work needed for their degree.

"This offers a light at the end of the tunnel," said Kenneth Vehrken, dean of the college of continuing studies. "People can begin their degree program while strengthening their English skills."

Gena Avila, 19, had begun her degree work in Colombia when she found out she would be able to join her mother in West New York. At Hudson County Community College, she was able to take only one college-level course each semester while studying English. She says she likes the idea of being able to continue college-level work and hopes to become a graphic designer more quickly.

Her mother likes the idea of the FDU program as well. "I told her you have the opportunity in your hands - you're young, you're legal, you can do anything," said her mother, Clara Blanco. Avila's aunt is also considering the program. Isabel Blanco was a systems engineer in Colombia, but has had a hard time finding a job in her field since arriving here a year-and-a-half ago.

Deborah Gonzalez, director of the program, said Puerta al Futuro is a good option for people like Blanco, who may have been professionals in their native countries and are anxious to obtain credentials here.

The program initially is geared toward area residents with limited English skills; later, it will be marketed to international students, FDU officials said.

The courses will be taught at satellite locations in Hackensack, Paterson, Newark, and Morristown, Gonzalez said. The per-credit cost will be half the usual \$637 charged for on-campus courses. Gonzalez said her office was flooded with 400 calls after a snippet about the program aired on Spanish-language television. "The response has been amazing," she said. Seventy-five people are now enrolled. The popularity of the program points to pent-up need in the area's large Spanish-speaking population, university officials said.

Academic courses will be taught by full- and part-time faculty at FDU, as well as new adjunct faculty recruited from the Hispanic professional community. Two Internet courses are also part of the program, which was developed in cooperation with the Bergen Hispanic Business Association and the Institute for Latino Studies.

Language instruction will be provided through the university's partnership with ELS Educational Services Inc., a division of Berlitz International Inc. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings plus Saturdays. Students in the Puerta al Futuro program will attend classes as a group and develop their English writing and speaking skills while earning the Associate in Arts degree.

Students will start with a traditional 15-week fall semester, followed by two 12-week winter and spring semesters. While there is a break in degree studies during July and August, students will continue their English immersion courses year-round during the program.

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