



## Technology Puts Xavier University Students on Cutting Edge of Learning Global Languages

In a corner room in the basement of Alter Hall at Xavier University, sit nearly two dozen computer work stations, complete with sleek black components, which are changing the way students learn a foreign language. This is the University's first fully digital virtual multimedia language lab.

The system, which was installed just last summer and employs Sony's Virtuoso and Soloist software, gives students a variety of opportunities to not only test their language skills, but record and evaluate their own voices, complete interactive assignments and engage in conversation with fellow students.



"This system allows the students to work with a language at a level they understand," says Dr. Diane Ceo-DiFrancesco, assistant Spanish professor. "It also provides them with the opportunity to interact with other students in Spanish which is very important since most students want to be able to communicate in Spanish."

During a class the professor, using a master control panel, can pair up students to talk to one another via a headset system. That way many conversations can be going on at the same time.

"The students love the conversation aspect of the lab," says Ceo-DiFrancesco.

Students can also record their voices for the professor to review later and can complete assignments, such as listening to Spanish music and reading Spanish articles. The lab is also available for Xavier's other language classes, which include French, Italian, German and Japanese.

"This is the latest and greatest of language lab systems," says Vincent Vlavisavich, instructional technology services. "It incorporates audio lessons which tests the students ability to not only listen but to respond to what they are hearing."

Vlavisavich says hopes to add a streaming video component to the lab in the near future.

"2005 has been designated as The Year of Languages by the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages," notes Ceo-DiFrancesco. "So it's wonderful that our new lab is up and running in time for this great celebration."

Photo and article courtesy of Xavier University  
Cincinnati, Ohio