

Ted's Teaching Tip of the Week for WTONline Faculty

GOAL: Create a printscreen .png for display on an online course page using a Mac.
(Note to PC users: Find a friend who has a Mac.)

PREMISE: My music history textbook says that Debussy's *Nuages* is in an ABA' form. When I think of an ABA form, I'm thinking that the sections are evenly divided. For this ABA' form, however, it's A=63%, B=15%, A'=7%, and a coda (conclusion)=15%. I decided that I would show this as a pie chart in my online class so that the students could see that if they got the A' slice, they were eating diet pie.

PROCEDURE:

1. Excel can create graphs, so that's what I did first. In one column I listed the structural letters (A, B, A', Coda) and in a column to the right I listed the percentages (63%, 15%, 7%, 15%). With the mouse down, drag through the letters and numbers to select (highlight) them. Go to "Insert" in the menubar, drag down to "Chart..." and release. That opens the chart wizard. Follow the wizard to create your graph. When you click finish, the chart is placed on your spreadsheet.
2. I didn't want to have Excel box lines on my pretty graph, so I selected it by clicking on it [only once]. (You know it's selected when there's a solid line around the graph and little squares in the corners and along the sides). I copied it into memory (Apple-C), opened up a blank MS Word document, and pasted it onto the page (Apple-V).
3. I took a picture of the graph. If you want to select the object instead of printing the whole screen, you hit Apple-shift-4. (This is where a Mac is superior to a PC.) That changes the pointer from an I-beam to crosshairs. Carefully, I placed the crosshairs just barely outside the graph at the upper left-hand corner, held the mouse down, and drug it to lower right-hand corner just barely outside the graph. When you release the mouse, it takes the picture of whatever object you've enclosed.
4. Depending on how many times you've done this and not cleaned up your desktop, the new picture is labeled "Picture1" (or "Picture 100" if you already have 99 pictures stored there). You want to change the name of "Picture1," so click it once to select it. Click the name in order to change the name. (If you click it twice too fast, it's going to open in some sort of picture display.) When you change the name, add the ".png" (Portable Network Graphics Image), so that a PC can understand what the file is. It can then be used in an online course, because Angel can display .png, .gif, and .jpg graphics.

SUMMARY:

1. You can create graphic images without having a separate program. Excel and MS Word have graphic capabilities that you can take pictures of.
2. Those printscreens are really .png graphics. (I thought they were .pict files and the .pict extension is not allowed on a PC.)
3. You learned how to make a graph in Excel. You learned how to take a picture. You learned how to change the name of a picture file that's now on the desktop. (Here's a caution: If you save a file in MS Word and go to the desktop to change the name, you'll need to double-click the file from the desktop to open it, because MS Word will not recognize the document from the menubar ["File" dropdown to the saved name] since you have changed the name of that document, so now you learned something else that you weren't expecting to learn.) You learned why you should have a Mac.