Classroom Podcasting:
A View from the Trenches

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American University
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Two Confessions

Traditionalist

Geek

Teaching and Technology

- wrong approach: let technology drive teaching
  - “everybody uses …”
- right approach: let teaching drive technology
  - “what do we want to accomplish?”

PODCAST

- "a media file that is distributed by subscription (paid or unpaid) over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on mobile devices and personal computers" (wikipedia.org)
  - audio *or* video
  - syndication (RSS) is the key

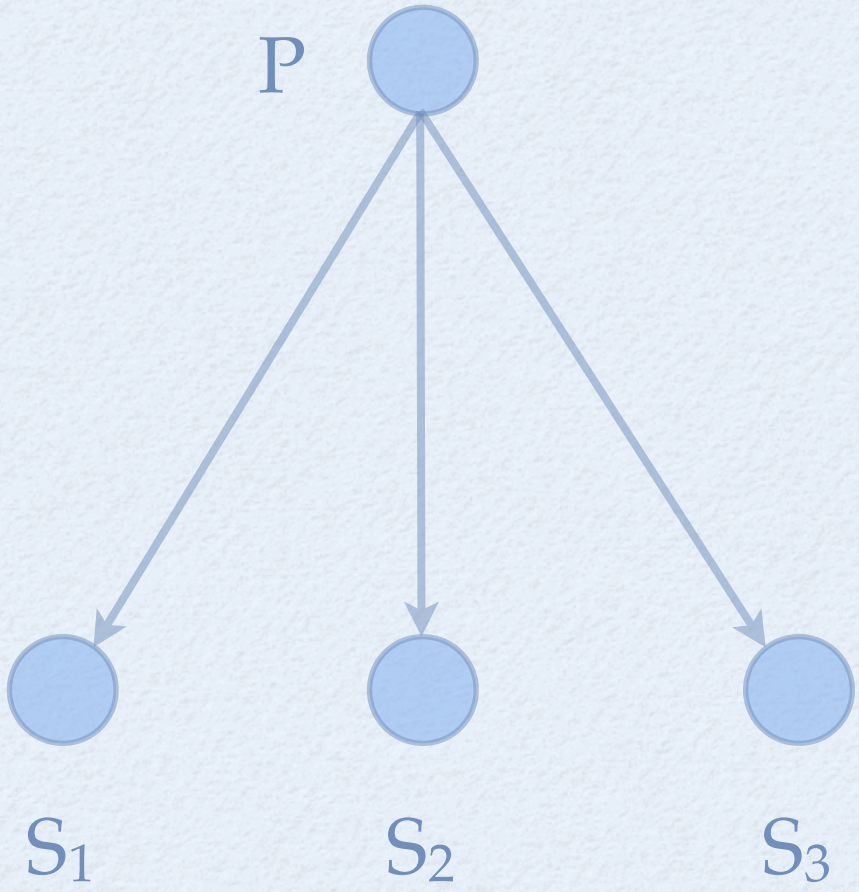
The What

- record lectures for distribution
- *initial presentation* of material
  - distance learning, with a twist
- add audio content to the course
  - publicly available
  - student-produced

THE WHY

- teaching as *pitching:*
  - toss information at students
  - defend against objections
  - same skills as article-writing

THE WHY



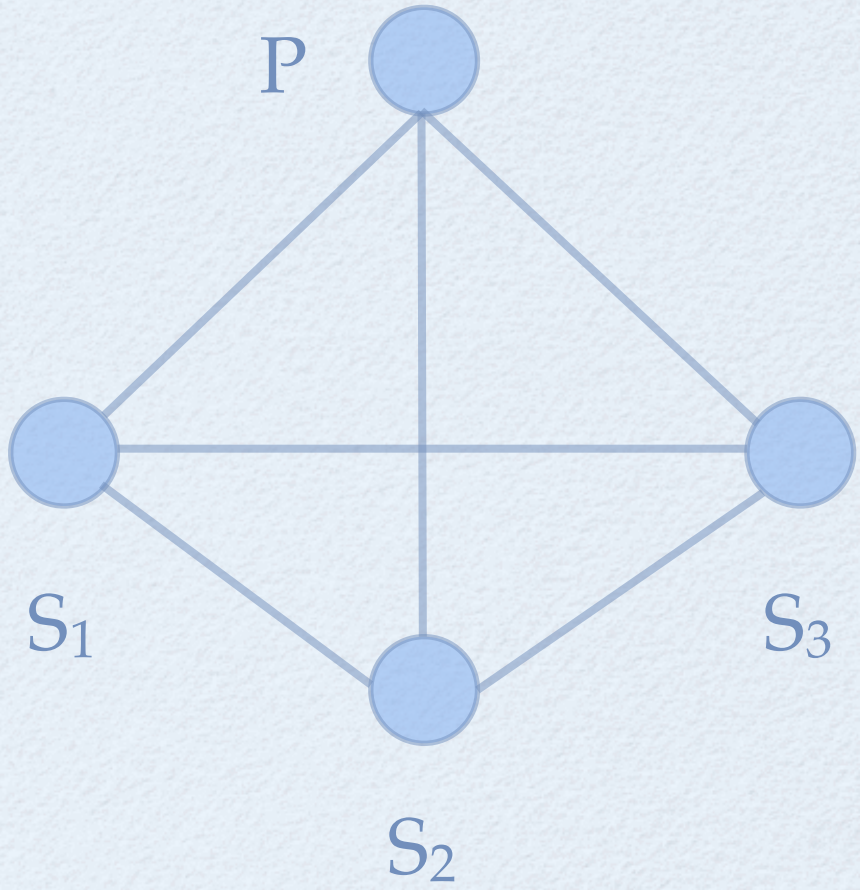
- "sage on the stage" is dying
  - availability of information
  - cynicism about knowledge
  - flawed pedagogy in the first place

The Why

- teaching as *hitting*:
  - hand students the ball
  - raise challenges for their arguments
  - make *them* the pitchers

THE WHY

- better uses for “face time”:
  - discussion and debate
  - craft workshops / case conferences
  - learning communities



WHY PODCAST?

- extends the class beyond the classroom
- participates in student culture
- saves face time for more important things
- enhances interactivity

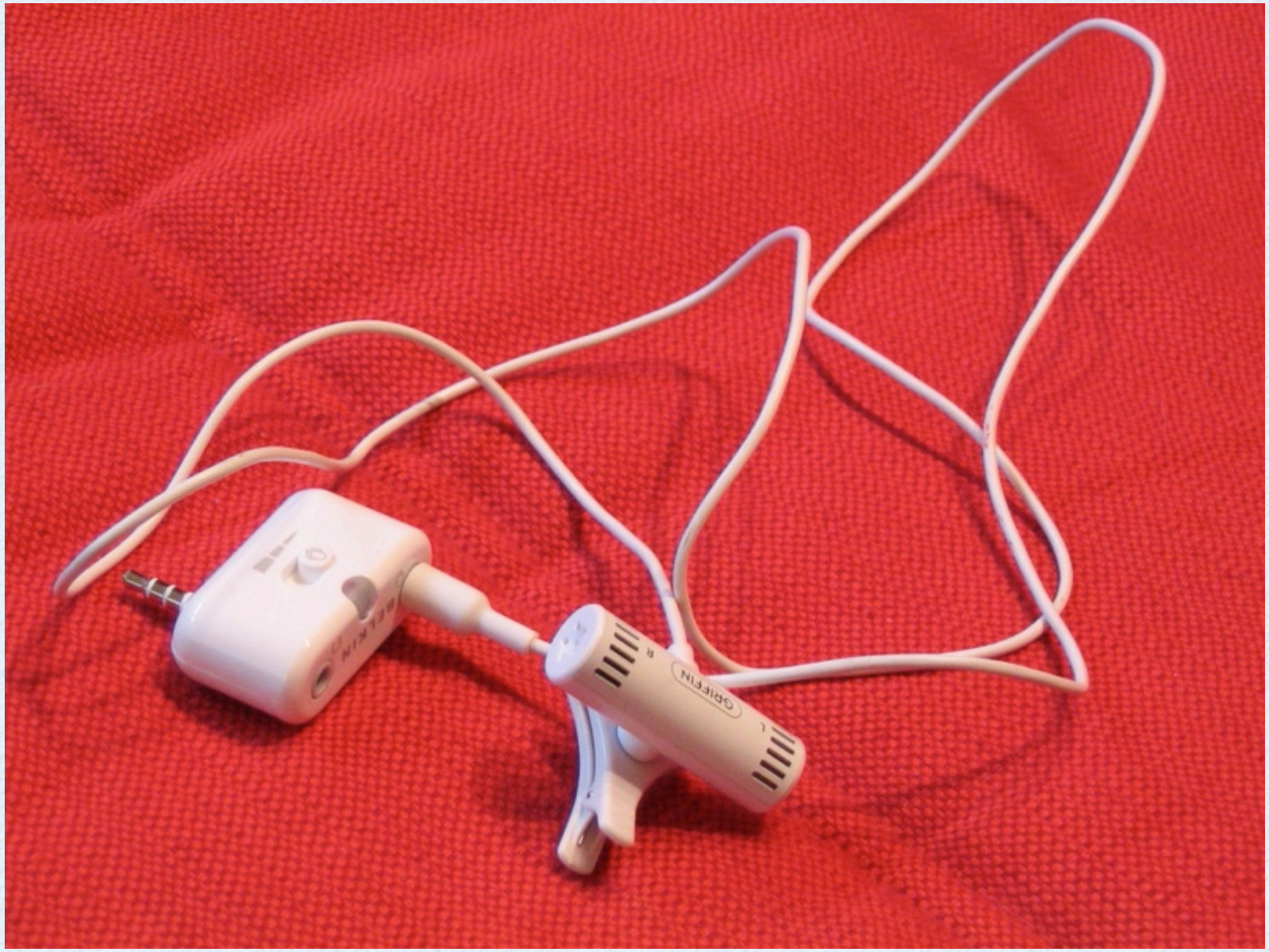
THE HOW: EQUIPMENT

Belkin Universal Microphone Adapter

Griffin Lapel Mic

THE HOW: EQUIPMENT

THE HOW: EQUIPMENT



THE HOW: FORMATS

- mp3 (.mp3)
  - audio only, but plays anywhere
- AAC (.m4a, .m4b, .m4p)
  - audio or “enhanced”; needs iTunes
- video (.mov, .mp4, .avi, and so on)
  - YMMV…

THE HOW: SOFTWARE

RESULTS

- better class discussions
- increased comprehension:
  - ESL
  - kinesthetic learners
- makes the class a conversation

"We cannot learn deeply and well until a community of learning is created in the classroom."

—Parker J. Palmer,

To Know As We Are Known

MAKE THE DARN PODCAST ALREADY!