View From The Hill   
(10/22/09)   
  
IVS - 25th Anniversary

For the past 25 years…WKU has reached out to students across the state using Interactive Video Services.  
  
In this week’s “View from the Hill”…Amy Bingham shows us just how far the technology has come.  
  
Distance learning has come a long way from the early days of just using a speaker phone to communicate with students in other cities.   
  
But that was way back in 1984.  Now, in 2009, taking an interactive course gives students a real classroom experience. Owensboro, you got the exam?  
  
Dr. Jack Thacker is getting ready for class and getting ready for his close-up.  
   
“It’s just like they were on campus, it’s real time, they can ask me questions and I can answer just like I was in class.”  
  
For nearly 25 years, Dr. Thacker has taught history to students far beyond the Bowling Green campus.  Interactive Video Services reaches Owensboro, Glasgow, Elizabethtown, Fort Knox and Radcliffe.  
   
“Faculty can teach and get that content out to place bound students across the state who can’t travel because or work or other family  obligations.”  
  
IVS Director Tamela Smith says there is a total of 37 interactive video classrooms across WKU and all the regional campuses.  More than 100 classes are offered that give distance learners unbelievable access to the teacher.  
   
“There are mics at all the student desks, the professor has are cameras…able to talk to professor…it’s a classroom experience without the travel.”  
  
Dr. Thacker says it’s a far cry from the early days.  
   
“It was audio only for us..they got video…we did send out a video signal but we didn’t get a return video until we put in Glasgow.”  
  
And the technology continues to grow…IVS is now capable of providing desktop video conferencing…another time saving wave of the future.  
To commemorate the 25th anniversary of Interactive Video Services…a Technology Expo is planned for one week from today, October 29th, from 9 am to 5 pm in the lobby of Mass Media and Technology Hall.   
  
With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.