In Fall of 2014, I received a Faculty Development Grant in support of my efforts to advance blended learning techniques at Otis. A blended course is that which delivers 30 to 50 percent of it’s content online. Due to the physical nature of a Product Design studio course, my methods for blending curriculum need to be innovative. The strategies I’m developing require some specific hardware which help me offer a unique and relevant experience to the students in the course. The Faculty Development Committee has awarded me a partial reimbursement for a Macbook Air and Wacom tablet to support my endeavors.
In order to implement an effective blended course and take advantage of the flexibility it offers, it has proven invaluable to be able to set up and work from any location, both on and off campus. Since I only had an Apple desktop computer it became absolutely necessary for me to purchase a laptop to achieve my Blended Learning Goals. The Choice of the Apple Macbook Air allows me to easily sync with my iPhone, iPad and home based desktop while dedicating the laptop to teaching related activities. I also needed a small portable Wacom Tablet in order to enact my Blended strategy. The tablet is used to draw directly into the computer with a digital pen and in conjunction with drawing based applications. In the above insert is an example of some design revisions I am recommending for a students’ model. Each students’ critique is placed in a discussion thread in the class CMS portal on O-space where they can see all the other students’ feedback. Students are then asked to make the design revisions and show the evidence in their O-space portfolios. This type of online interaction delivers typical conceptual content while preparing beginning designers for the types of experiences they will have managing and coordinating projects when they graduate.

Using a combination of screen capture applications, Sketchbook Express drawing application, iMovie, Adobe Illustrator and the Wacom interface, I have created a large body of online content and dynamic feedback for students working online. Thus far, I’ve produced 30 demonstration videos, numerous weekly example drawings and critiqued student work by drawing directly over photos of models and scanned drawings.

“I plan to offer online content with learning objectives relevant for the digitally enhanced art and design professional.”
I plan to continue developing web content for my studio courses. Currently, I am blending 30 percent of my course content. However, next fall I plan to reach the 50 percent mark. With the help of my new tools I plan to offer online content which, instead of trying to replicate the in-class experience, reveals more relevant learning objectives for the digitally enhanced art and design professional.

Please log-in to Ospace on a computer (videos do not currently play on mobile devices) and visit the following links to see examples of the work cited above:

- Ospace Course Portfolio;  
  https://ospace.otis.edu/design_studio_1/Welcome/

- Theoretical Demonstrations videos showing project based content;  
  https://ospace.otis.edu/design_studio_1/Principles_of_Form112/preview

- Technical Demonstrations videos;  
  https://ospace.otis.edu/design_studio_1/Orthographic_sketch/preview

- Jason Burton - Blended Learning Portfolio;  
  https://ospace.otis.edu/jason_burton_blended_learning/Welcome/