Minutes of 3D Modeling & Animation Advisory Committee Meeting

Recorded by Clay Atchison
Time: 6:00-7:00pm
Date: Friday, March 22, 2024
Place: Zoom

Members in Attendance: Eloise Fouche, Michael Hazen, Jeff Reynolds, Desiree Walker
Faculty in Attendance: Clay Atchison

Was there a quorum __X__ Yes (50% plus one) ____ No

1. Secretary Clay Atchison called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

2. Clay Atchison reviewed the minutes of the last meeting. The minutes were approved as read.

3. Program Review & Update

A. SOFTWARE & LAB UPDATE: New software is being added to the Lindley Hall computer labs: Autodesk Maya and Adobe Substance 3D Painter. Maya lessons will be added to the beginning course in the near future, and Substance is being considered for use in the modeling & rigging course.

Clay Atchison is currently studying Maya online at one of the VP Academy colleges while simultaneously developing PBR exercises using Arnold materials.

VMware Horizon - the remote lab interface software, is being discontinued after the spring semester. As a result students working remotely will need to install software on their own computers. This isn't an issue for Autodesk products as a free student license is available. For Adobe Creative Crowd products (e.g. After Effects & Media Encoder) students will need a student license at $20/month which expires after one year and is non-renewable.

The committe voted unamiously to approve updating lessons requiring Photoshop the additioal option of using open source Photoshop-alternative GIMP as an option.

Adobe is currently offering students a free 12 month Substance license with the option to renew. but for how long is unknown. An initial search is under way for open source or free alternatives. Armor Paint 3D looks promising, but is just in Version 1.0 Alpha.

The committee voted unamiously to delay action on Substance alternatives until Armor Paint is out of alpha.

B. Next August marks the completion of the first year of the 3D Modeling and Animation program's two-year Revitalization process. The following strategies are being pursued for increasing course and porgram completers.

I. As discussed last meeting. this revitalization will remove the *APTECH 168 - Intro to Virtual Reality* class from the certificate and major. Initially, Department Chair Robert Grandmaison was hopeful that the VR class could continue. The course was cancelled last fall semester due to lack of enrollment, and this spring semester it was cancelled again with its lowest enrollment numbers since it was introduced in fall 2019: six students.

This is after a break of three semesters since the course last proceeded - and that semester it had only 10 students. This is in stark contrast to the usual dynamic of increasing enrollment after each lapse in course offering.

At our recent department meeting Robert agreed that this was unsustainable, and that the course should be removed from the program. Ironically, we are currently awaiting the arrival of 30 - Meta Quest 3 VR headsets and accessories to update the VR Lab in Lindley 141. Going forward, these will be used by students in Revit and Arch History courses. The headsets were ordered on 3/14.

II. The *APTECH 162 - Intro to VFX* class is being shifted online. Before doing this, we are exploring the

possibility of increasing the two unit class to three units. These two changes would put it in alignment with the other five campuses three-unit VFX courses in the Virtual Production Academy.

Unanimous vote to approve changes in VFX course.

III. A third strategy for increasing class fill rates is being considered: offer only one second-level course per semester while continuing to offer one section of the beginning class per semester. So for example the lineup could be: Fall 24: AT64 - Char Anim; Spring 25: AT63 - Model & Rig; Fall 25: intro to VFX; Spring 26: AT 64.

This would provide a pool of three semesters of beginning students for eachsecond-level class, instead of the current two semesters.

Unanimously approved.

IV. Finally: In keeping with our strategy for aligning coursework with the six-campus Virtual Production Academy, reference to specific software has been removed from the course description for APTECH 43. This will allow us to include Maya lessons in the class.

Unanimously approved.

4. Virtual Production Program:

The Virtual Production Program is now active and the first *CS77.11 Intro to Virtual Production* course was offered this Spring 2024.

Unfortunately it had only 2 students enrolled, and was thus cancelled. It was decided in concert with Ethan Wilde of CS to remove the prerequisites: APTECH 43 and CS 42 (the beginning game coding class).

The course was scheduled to be taught by Shawn Nelson, who was also slated to teach the *Intro to Virtual Reality* class. As he had lost both assignments for this semester, CS offered to let him team-teach two Photoshop 2 classes with Mike Starkey. One of these was cancelled for low enrollment, and the remaining class proceeded with only 14 students out of 40 available seats.

5. Computer Studies - Future Planning Meeting Summary:

Clay Atchison met with key Computer Studies players in the Virtual Production Academy program multiple times during Fall 2023. Initially, future programming and curriculum was explored, with an eye toward a potential full-time position for Virtual Production. but it was subsequently determined that any future fulltime position should focus on a new UX program.

The college's Digital Media Program Coordinator had expressed interest in assimilating the animation program into CS, but after the cancellation of the Intro to VR class no further meetings were held.

6. New STEM Building Update:

Although the *Intro to VR* and *Intro To VFX* classes were scheduled to be held in-person this Spring at the new 95,000-square foot Lindley Center for STEM Education, low enrollment forced the cancellation of both classes.

7. Date set for next meeting: Friday, October 11, 2024 - 6pm.

8. Adjournment at 7:30pm