

## ArT 6<sup>th</sup> semester 2011 final assessment

Associate Professor Dan Overholt, and Graduated Bachelors Pernille Kofoed Madsen

### General overview

This year was the first ever graduating class of Bachelors students from Art & Technology. General evaluation of the semester: Despite some confusion and lack of information at the start of the semester, the students felt that they liked the direction that the semester ended up going. A part of this was due to the fact that this particular group of students had become accustomed to being the “first semester” for 3 years, which meant that they had developed a professional relationship amongst themselves (where they helped each other as much as they could). Another part of this was due to all of the efforts made by the staff (teachers and TAP personnel). For example, students commented that it was good to have the extra support provided by the technical-advisor, Lars Knudsen. He was very helpful. What follows are the individual courses offered during the 6<sup>th</sup> semester:

### Installation Technology and Design III

- A very good and useful course, with inspiring theory, and a new perspective on “designing” art. Some concerns about the practical lecture portions were raised, where students said they would prefer more hands on work and fewer examples. During this course, it was found that there was a need for a better solution to the Art-lab in terms of keeping it running smoothly. It was discussed that someone should be hired to get things organized and help keep it that way - maybe a daily schedule where someone could be hired (staff or student) to keep track of what equipment is there and for what projects the students need it. NOTE: we have since rectified this, situation by hiring Jesper Thorup Nielsen.

### Digital Representation IV

- A solid course, very useful in many contexts, as it focused on building professional websites. This may not have been viewed as the most exciting topic for all students, but they nonetheless acquired skills / competences in the field that will most likely prove useful in future endeavours of all sorts. Well-received.

### Realm and Figure/Character Creation II

- A good course, but to many students, the course seemed irrelevant in relation to their project work. many students did not find the class relevant. They feel that the 3D modeling courses should be relevant for their projects, and many would rather continue with Rhino 3D software (from past semesters, instead of learning Maya), thereby having just one 3D program developing through the semesters. Students also felt that the software Maya is too advanced. NOTE: if any groups had chosen to use virtual characters in their final semester projects (e.g., with user interaction driven by the Kinect camera), then this course would have been much more relevant to the projects – and there was no good way to know what the students would choose to do for their semester projects during the planning process (before the semester started). Finalte comment: Instead of learning scripted animation techniques, future versions of this

course could be combined with live input-data and parametric animation, which would correspond better with the other technologies that allow interaction (for installations).

### **Image and Sound Systems III**

- A good course. The teacher is well-prepared and clearly presents the concepts needed for programming in the Java-based Processing language. However, some students felt that instead of (or in addition to) the powerpoint/screenshot lectures, they would like to see actual live-coding in the Processing language, where the students can all follow along on their own laptops. They mentioned that this could improve the course in their eyes, but it was good already as it was offered. The teacher is also helpful outside of course time.

### **Narrativity, Drama and Media II + Manuscript II**

- A combined course on pervasive gaming techniques, and manuscript. The students felt that it was a nice workshop-style course, which was taught during the course of one week. They learned how to cooperate with each other in the topic areas of the courses, and overall felt it was worthwhile towards their studies.

### **Aesthetic Communication and Marketing – Market and Experience Design**

- This included both Marketing Communication and Aesthetic Communication. The course was offered in the form of a workshop. Students agreed that the teachers did a good job, and they enjoyed the links between this course, and the rest of the semester (other courses and the theme of the semester: Experience Design).

### **General comments to semester**

- Overall, the semester functioned well. However:
  - There were many discussions centered around planning for a study trip to California, which never happened (this study trip was cancelled, in favor of a more affordable trip for the students to Oslo and/or Copenhagen). The price of getting to California was too much for most students to afford. But the Oslo and Copenhagen study trips worked very well, in conjunction with the NIME conference / Art.On.Wires Festival, and the Re-New digital media festival and conference respectively. Students enjoyed these and learned a good deal.
  - The final version of the study guide came later than it should have, and the uncertainty that this created in the student body slowed some of the processes in the project work near the beginning of the semester. There was also a need to have the venue for the final exhibition in place earlier, in order to move forward with project planning. Responsibility to find the location(s) was left up to individual groups. This actually worked very well in the end.

### **Students planning groups**

It is now standard to form 3 planning-groups- PR, Curation, and Industrial Relations. These are a very good idea to continue using in the future. However, in the course of this particular semester these groups were unfortunately almost completely non-functional.

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- PR group – Promotion of the final exhibition by organizing the event and making posters, etc.
- Curator group – help organize the overall use of the spaces used for the Bachelor's exhibitions, and resolve any issues that come up when one group's desire for lighting or use of sound might interfere with another group's project.
- Industrial relations group – Attempt to procure sponsorships (materials and/or money) from sources external to the university.

**Comments for the ArT-studienævnet**

The semester was an overall success. The semester-project theme of Experience Design focused on creating experiences that were 'engaging' for the user. Students searched for ways to understand what aspects of an interactive installation can make it 'engaging', and went on to build their own installations and document their work – many achieved a good level of 'engagement' with users in their projects, and felt good about their results. In terms of course work, some of the courses unfortunately suffered from a lack of student attendance. However, the final projects and the students' documentation (reports and video documentation) generally showed that they put a lot of effort into their Bachelor projects.

Document written by Assoc. Professor Dan Overholt, and Pernille Kofoed Madsen