

Semester evaluation – 4th semester spring 2011

General comments

The overall theme of this semester was MEDiART (Interactive Media Art in Medicine) and students worked in groups creating an interactive art installation to be exhibited for three weeks at Aalborg Sygehus Syd – Medicinerhuset. Through the whole process of the projects the students were in close contact with the hospital. A contact person at the hospital helped to clarify questions. During the semester the students had to present initial ideas for the hospital in order to get the projects accepted at the exhibition. During this semester the students gained important experience on working with an external partner. The results were very different projects such as:

- Interactive colourful chairs
- “Donate a Smile” photo-booth.
- Interactive table.
- An app with focus on vitamin D.
- Silhouettes being morphed into colourful animals.
- An interactive forest.
- An interactive plexiglass mobile.
- 3D animation of body with biological facts.

Generally the projects were very well thought through and fitted the theme MEDiART. The whole basis of the semester project was very well planned. The cooperation with an external partner such as Sygehus Syd puts a healthy pressure on the students. Additionally when the exhibition is being exhibited for three weeks, the expectations of durable and serious projects being developed were even bigger. This could be felt throughout the semester. The students were very serious towards the project. Also a hospital is a sensitive environment, and the students thought about this. More cooperation like this should definitely be planned at ArT in the future!

At an evaluation meeting the hospital expressed satisfaction with the cooperation.

There were some important issues that needs attention, though. At the very first or second day of the semester it was demanded that the groups should be finally decided. It caused a lot of problems, and students were even told that if they did not figure it out themselves they would be forced in a group. Another issue with the group forming was that a certain system was decided upon beforehand. (E.g. 3 groups of 5 members, 4 groups of four members, 2 groups of two members, etc..) This system should **not** be repeated since it creates unnecessary chaos and confusion! Please keep group forming an issue for the students – and give the time needed in order for good and productive groups to be formed. It could be an idea to have a common session of group forming with a teacher present. He/she could then be a helping/supporting link if issues occur.

Another issue arose during the semester group meetings. Since people have problems showing up at these meeting some groups decided to participate with two members – just to be more people at the meeting – more ears to listen, more opinions to be shared. But – the extra students that showed up were banned from the meeting, as this apparently would “produce an unfair result in the case of a vote”. This was very strange as it was nobody’s intention to overrule anybody. The goal was simply to help discussions on the meeting – and to be more people!

Course evaluation

Design and Artistic Methodology 4 – Interaction Design

Well-planned a very useful course. Working at the hospital was a new experience to the students and therefore it was very useful to gain some tools as to understand how to work in the environment. The module included smaller hand-ins, which was helpful in order to structure the working process of the groups. During the module the groups had to begin identifying their design problems and thereby finding their focus. Tools such as body-storming, ethnography/Ethonometodology and diagrams was introduced and was very helpful.

Image and Sound Systems 1

This module was also well planned and very useful. Learning the language of processing is very important when controlling different components. The program has a lot of helpful tutorials and the book provides good

basic knowledge. The module consisted both of lectures and assignments, which was very good. The module was passed through the semester module, which was good, since the newly learned tools could be used during the development of the technical side of the semester projects.

Sensors and Actuators 2

The contents of the course did not match with the title of the course. It was too much about Processing – about how to manipulate pictures or video inputs. The course should have been about physical sensors and actuators. Learning about e.g. motors, PIR sensors, IR sensors and so on. The students need this information in order to develop projects and to gain a better technical understanding.

Perception 3 – Hybrid Spaces and Interaction

This module was too much about the biological development and structure of the eye. The content of the course was way too complicated to understand, and it seems irrelevant to learn about the biological side of the eye. On of the assignments were a lot of detailed questions on the development of the eye, which seemed like waste of time. Besides this the module also presented interesting visual illusions and how to trick the eye. This was very interesting and could be used in projects.

Drawing and Sketching Technique 4 – Graphical Narration

This module was very interesting and inspiring. During the first lecture the teacher showed some of his works. This was good in order to get inspired and to understand this course. During the course students had to think about initial ideas and sketch these and make posters that would be presented in class. It was useful to be thrown into the idea-phase and simply sketch and visualize crazy ideas for the hospital. The module was placed at the beginning of the semester, which was very good.

Digital representation II (CAD II - spatial animation)

This course presented the 3D animation program MAYA. The program is very complex but since the course was only 1 ECTS it was a very short time to get to know the program. It seems it would have been more appropriate to develop on the knowledge of using the 3D modelling program Rhino or introduce Google Sketch Up. These programs are regular 3D modelling programs, which seems more useful for ArT students. Entering the field of 3D animation for such a short time seems irrelevant, since it is a whole education just to learn these skills. *Note the difference of 3D animation and 3D modelling. (Just to avoid any confusion)*

Module 10 'Art in Context 1 - (5 ECTS)/ Art in Context 1 – Art & Culture: Theory & Analysis

This course fitted well with the previous AIC-courses. Different historical and analytical aspects were presented, and readings were on Moodle to support and understand the lectures. Small assignments such as the creation of a manifesto were presented, which was good. Having small assignments and/or small student presentations during the lecture is a great idea – it creates a dynamic in the lecture – and this should be practised more.

The part of the course, where students were presented to The Situationists was very interesting and inspiring. The small student presentations helped clarify and understand the concept.

Module 14: “International Studies” – (5 ECTS)

This course was certainly a very interesting course! The subjects presented were new and very relevant to ArT students. The lectures were inspiring and opened up for thoughts and ideas. This made it easy to find an interesting subject to write about, if the students did not participate in the study trip.

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