

NOC Digital Media Institute Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting 2016

The 2016 DMI Advisory Board was via email. Board members responding to the survey were Craig Woods, Sr. Producer/Director for OSU Agriculture Communications Services; Bryan Murphy, DMLS Designer and Operator, Linear AMS; Micah Westfahl, Lead Animator for CVW Media; and Jimmy Haines, Sr. Interactive Designer, Teamwork Labor Services.

Instructor Brad Matson sent an email on June 21, 2016, which included the following questions; board member responses are listed below each question.

Curriculum	Rate Topic 1-10			
Structure of Curriculum	10	8	6	No Response
Topic Order	10	7	3	No Response
Topic Depth	10	7	4	No Response
Software Offered	10	6	2	No Response
Employability of Graduates	10	7	1	No Response

Relevancy for Local Industry Needs	Rate Relevancy 1-10			
3D Modeling	5	7	10	No Response
3D Animation	4	8	10	No Response
Texturing	8	6	10	No Response
Game Design	9	2	10	No Response
Visual Effects	7	7	10	No Response
Broadcast Design	2	9	10	No Response
Motion Graphics	3	9	10	No Response
Video Editing	1	10	10	No Response
Web Design	6	9	8	No Response
Flash	10	1	2	No Response

Suggestions on Curriculum:

Responses included:

- “I would incorporate Wordpress into Web Design curriculum. Wordpress for beginners all the way up to how to build your own theme/plugins. This would make sure they were employable in this field right out of graduation. You could pick other niches but this is the largest and fastest growing in my opinion. Having a great understanding of CSS/HTML is also a necessity. At the very least when a student graduates they should know how to build a responsive website using CSS/HTML.
- Outdated curriculum:
 - Intermediate Web Design ~ Flash:
 - Possible alternative for this would be some form of HTML 5 training or possibly learning to use Adobe Muse to create HTML 5 content.

- Interactive DVD Authoring:
 - This should be replaced with Blu-ray authoring. DVDs are out of date at this point. It could also happen a bit earlier rather than at the end of the semester when they could better spend their time focusing on their sample work rather than authoring a Blu-ray/DVD.
 - Instead of using the Blu-ray/DVD for their sample work they should be using Vimeo or YouTube. Those are things an employer can pull up super quick rather than the student having to send a disc.

Updated curriculum suggestions:

- Cinema 4D Lite:
 - You have Maya as your 3D software of choice, this is fine but if students are using Adobe CC then they should also learn the basics of Cinema 4D as Adobe CC comes with Cinema 4D Lite. Even just learning the basics of this will help them learn the advantages of Cinema 4D for motion graphics. This will also make them more marketable when looking for a job as they will have experience with multiple 3D packages. I would work this into the Motion Graphics II course.
- Adobe Audition Sound Design:
 - Sound FX make a huge difference in motion graphics. Timing things to beats in music can only take the animation so far and good SFX design can take it over the top. Would like to see the addition of SFX design and music/SFX mixing somewhere within the curriculum.
- Video Codecs and formats:
 - Knowledge of different video formats and codecs. Learn about things like compression and knowing what formats are good for delivery and what formats are good for editing.
 - Video frame rates and resolutions. What is 4K? What are the advantages of using a 59.94 frame rate over a 29.97 frame rate? What is the best way to convert videos to different frame rates?"
- "It appears that the course curriculum and class structure has changed in so many positive ways since I was enrolled. I know that the 3D animation knowledge I gained through the courses at NOC have been invaluable to myself and my career. If there was one suggestion I could make it would be to ensure that the students in 3D know how to generate a "good", water tight, 3D model. This is one of the most challenging aspects of the 3D printing world."
- "Both Flash and DVDs are definitely on the decline in the industry. But I think there is still a need to develop and understand user interfaces."

Suggestions on Relevancy for Local Industry Needs:

Responses included:

- "Freelance is the only thing in Northern Oklahoma."
- "3D printing is poised to become a major manufacturing revolution and is already a very hot industry. Getting the 3D students acclimated to this process and industry should be a priority for NOC and vocational schools. There is great demand for people knowledgeable in 3D printing across the United States."

- 3D Application:
 - The oil and gas industry as well as the energy industry as a whole are big in Oklahoma. They are always looking for talented 3D artist to produce 3D animations to be used as promotional content to sell their products or production processes.
 - Motion Graphics – With 3D becoming more and more accessible the demand for it is also increasing. Even small production houses are taking advantage of 3D animation within their motion graphics for local broadcast/advertising.

Video Editing:

- Video editing is something else that has become much more accessible. To the point that some companies invest in their own video departments to produce video content for YouTube and other social media sites.
- Creating promotional videos to be displayed on social media is a growing field to pay attention to.

Web Design:

- This is also a growing field but it's also one that is expanding into new territories that the current DMI curriculum doesn't explore. Things like web for mobile and HTML 5. In order to stay relevant in this field even locally, these are things that must be focused on. DMI just might not be the place to learn it though."
- "Both Flash and DVDs are definitely on the decline in the industry. But I think there is still a need to develop and understand user interfaces."

Do you see an advantage in continuing to teach Flash in our Curriculum?

Responses included:

- "No. I think it dates the program. You can and probably should include it in a course; I just wouldn't name the course Flash."
- "No, Flash is something I would look to dump in order to fit in something more relevant. If you wanted to stick with something web focused, I would look to something like HTML 5 or Adobe Muse."
- "No. It seems that most of the web is moving away from Flash."
- "No. This is dying technology. Only 2advanced.com would argue against that. I would not teach this."

Other Comments on Program:

Responses included:

- "I really like the program. It taught me everything I needed to be a success."
- "Digital media is so broad. I think the challenge becomes not teaching so much that everything becomes watered down. I like your primary focus is animation. But animation is a small part of my job, so I would use your graduates more as freelancers than employees."
- "First I'm just glad you are looking for ways to improve your curriculum and make sure it's up to date and relevant. If you ever have questions about what is or isn't relevant in today's media, I'd love to help you out. Send me an email and I'll do my best to point you in the right direction."

Web design is a very relevant field to focus on. However, it's also a field that has better avenues to learning outside of DMI. If someone truly wanted to do web design they'd be better off focusing on it entirely outside of DMI. I could see the program moving away from it if possible. If the main focus of having web design initially was so a student could create a site to show off their work. There are many ways for a student to do that without having to create a site from scratch. With things like YouTube, Vimeo and Behance. There just isn't really any reason to focus on it.

That said, I would actually encourage you to dump the current DMI website for something a bit more modern. Something like a Behance page would be great. This would also make it much easier for you to show off the work of your students in turn giving both the program and your students more exposure. The page could also allow alumni of the program to show off their work giving more exposure to the program and help keep people involved with each other. Behance has a web page for leading schools and organizations (<https://www.behance.net/poweredby>) to display their work and information about their school. Here is an example for SCAD portfolios (<http://portfolios.scad.edu/search>). You could setup a DMI branded Behance page like this and that would be a great substitute. If web design does get dropped from the curriculum this could open up more time to work in the Cinema 4D Lite and Audition sound design I mentioned earlier."

What specific skills would you like to see taught?

- "Generation of "good", solid, water tight 3D models. Use of 3D file fixing tools. 3D printing."
- 3D Modeling:
 - Taking reference photos of a client's product and producing a highly accurate and detailed model. Aiming for a photorealistic representation of that product.

Audio mixing

Encoding videos for delivery. (Converting the master render into a deliverable file using Adobe Media Encoder)

Motion tracking and Camera Matching (Camera matching would be extracting camera data from video so you can composite 3D effects into the footage)

Color correction/grading video footage.

File management

Creating a consistent folder structure that can be followed from project to project in order to keep things organized.

Collaboration

Creating a project and focusing on a single aspect of it, then passing on to someone else. Having a clean workflow so the next person can seamlessly take the project over is key when doing a collaborative project."

- "How to start a freelance business. Teach them how to build proper portfolio for the freelance work they'd like to win. Teach them how to win work in the beginning stages and how to maintain that business relationship and turn into more work. Show them how to develop multiple income streams using their skills. i.e. envato author."

- “Understanding color correction is becoming important in my production, particularly with newer cameras. The business of digital media is probably important—or at least how to survive in the animation world.”

What other software would you suggest to be taught?

- Cinema 4D:
 - This is the premiere 3D software when it comes to motion graphics. The ease and speed that you can take a 3D animation from C4D to AE is unmatched. Being able to quickly and easily bring things like camera data and 3D object placement from C4D into AE is amazing. Multipass rendering is a breeze as well.
 - Even if you can't get ahold of a full license of C4D I encourage you to at least use the free C4D Lite that is included with Adobe After Effects CC.

Illustrator:

- Would be good to learn Illustrator for logo design. Knowing how to bring vector logos created in Illustrator into C4D in order to create 3D logos would also be nice. This can be done with the C4D Lite application I mentioned earlier.”
- “3DS Max and C4D”
- “Materialise Magics”
- “DaVinci, Resolve, Fusion, Blender maybe”

Where do you see the industry's focus in 5 years?

- “Depends what specific industry you're talking about but I'll speak to my focus which is motion graphics.
The motion graphics industry is seeing a large influx of new technologies and techniques. It's hard to pinpoint what tech is going to take off to be the next big thing of focus. That said I think the motion graphics industry could look quite different in 5 years. Meaning the best advice that I can give is be flexible. Don't get too stuck in your ways because if you do you're going to get left in the dust. Recently we at CVW Media have been working to stay ahead of the curve. We're still catching up in some areas but we're looking ahead at the possibilities. Things like Virtual Reality are becoming more and more relevant. If Virtual Reality does catch on, then the opportunities to create content for it will be out there. 4K video is also catching on and the need to produce content in 4K is something that will for sure be much more widespread 5 years from now, if not even higher resolutions.”
- “Virtual Reality and Interactive Media”
- “The trend seems to be cameras that can capture more information allowing you more choices in post-production. High Dynamic Range video I think will be very important. Virtual Reality might take off or it might not.”
- “Web development, 3D animation, 3D printing”

Possible Internship Available?

If yes, Position Needed?

Job Skills Desired?

- Craig Woods—“Maybe, primarily an editor.”
- Bryan Murphy—“3D printing designer with knowledge of 3D designs and 3D printing technician for a hands-on and technical in nature position.”

Would you like to be a Guest Speaker or hold a Master Class? If Yes, What is the Topic you would like to present? Possible Dates?

- Micah Westfahl—“Yes, although not sure when or even if it will be possible. Will have to get back with you on it. Cinema 4D to After Effects production pipeline. Would like to show the advantages of working with Cinema 4D for motion graphics. This could be done using the Cinema 4D Lite application you should already have with After Effects CC. Again, would have to get back with you on this. If you end up doing another tour of our facilities this next year then maybe we can have a C4D to AE production pipeline presentation ready.”
- Jimmy Haines—“Yes, Wordpress, AE, and Freelance”
- Craig Woods—“Yes, Production”
- Bryan Murphy—“Yes, 3D printing, available August to December 2016”