Animation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Hosts:

1. Nicholas Garcia - Professor of GAD and Animation
2. Dean Priscilla Lopez - Dean of the Humanities Department

Committee Members

1. Jessie Seely – Bento Box
   a. Color Artist/Background Artist
2. Jesse Lopez – Freelance / Electronic Arts
   a. Consultant
3. Miguel Puga – Nickelodeon
   a. Director of Animation
4. Ruben Morales – Santa Monica Studio (Sony)
   a. Environment Artist/Cinematic Destruction Artist

Part I - Challenges within the Industry

Start: 11:00 AM

- The conversation revolves around the challenges and strategies in the animation industry, particularly regarding production efficiency and skill development.
- Topics discussed include the importance of efficiency in production, the role of AI in animation, the balance between artistic passion and practical skills, the value of trade school education, and the necessity of adapting to industry standards.
- Participants share insights on various software tools used in production tracking and the importance of being familiar with industry-standard software like ShotGrid.
- There's also discussion about the need for clear communication between producers and artists regarding project estimates and the balance between achieving perfection and meeting deadlines in a production environment.

Key Takeaways:

- Efficiency in production is crucial for meeting deadlines and maintaining profitability.
- AI technology is increasingly utilized in animation production for tasks like rigging and animation, but its effectiveness depends on how it's implemented.

- Balancing artistic passion with practical skills is important for success in the animation industry.
- Trade school education focusing on practical skills can provide a clear pathway to entry-level positions in animation.
- Familiarity with industry-standard software like ShotGrid is essential for aspiring animators seeking employment.
- Clear communication and understanding between producers and artists regarding project estimates and expectations are vital for successful project execution.

Part II - What are the "needs" of the industry?

- The conversation shifts towards the importance of completing projects efficiently in the animation industry, emphasizing the need to prioritize delivery over perfection.
- Participants discuss the value of teaching students to approach their work with the same passion for completion as they do for perfection.
- The importance of teamwork and accountability in project completion is highlighted, with suggestions for incorporating group projects into the curriculum.
- Software tools vital for students to learn in order to have a fair chance in the industry are discussed, including Harmony, ShotGrid, Auto-Rigger, Unreal Engine, and others.
- The significance of mastering motion capture clean-up and animation techniques is emphasized, as it is a skill in demand in the industry.

Key Takeaways:

- Prioritizing project completion over perfection is essential in the animation industry to meet deadlines and move projects forward efficiently.
- Teaching students the importance of teamwork and accountability prepares them for collaborative work environments and enhances their employability.
- Mastery of a variety of software tools, including Harmony, ShotGrid, Auto-Rigger, Unreal Engine, Maya, and Motion Builder, is crucial for students to remain competitive in the industry.
- Proficiency in motion capture clean-up and animation techniques is a valuable skill set sought after by animation studios.
- Continuous learning and adaptation to industry trends and technologies are essential for staying competitive and employable in the animation industry.

Part III - How can LAHC fulfill those needs?

- The conversation focuses on refining the curriculum for animation students and discussing potential internship opportunities and entry-level positions in the industry.
- Participants explore the idea of creating short films as a capstone project for students, allowing them to apply their skills and create portfolio pieces.
- The benefits of short film projects include providing practical experience, fostering creativity, and potentially leading to industry recognition and opportunities.
- Suggestions are made to integrate short film projects into the curriculum, offering students the chance to focus on specific areas of interest such as animation, backgrounds, or storytelling.
- The conversation highlights the potential of short films to serve as a launchpad for students' careers and the importance of building a supportive community and culture around filmmaking.

Key Takeaways:

- Refining the curriculum for animation students involves considering the balance between fundamental skills and practical experience.
- Short film projects offer students valuable practical experience, encourage creativity, and can serve as portfolio pieces.
- Integrating short film projects into the curriculum can provide students with opportunities to explore different aspects of animation and storytelling and foster a supportive community and culture.
- Internship opportunities and entry-level positions such as production assistants, script coordinators, and revisionists are important avenues for students to gain industry experience and launch their careers.
- Collaboration with industry partners and outreach programs can provide students with valuable internship opportunities and connections within the animation industry.

End: 12:44 PM

Final Takeaways

The conversation revolves around refining the curriculum for animation students, discussing potential internship opportunities, and exploring the idea of incorporating

short film projects into the program. Participants share their experiences and insights regarding the animation industry and offer suggestions for enhancing the educational experience for students.

Initially, the discussion centers on the importance of balancing artistic passion with the practical aspects of completing projects on time. Participants emphasize the need for students to develop skills in meeting deadlines and delivering completed work, even if it's not perfect.

As the conversation progresses, the focus shifts to the curriculum itself. Participants discuss the structure of the program, potential courses, and the balance between fundamental skills and practical experience. They explore the idea of integrating short film projects into the curriculum as a way for students to apply their skills and create portfolio pieces.

Additionally, the conversation touches on internship opportunities and entry-level positions in the animation industry. Participants highlight the importance of internships in gaining industry experience and launching careers, and they discuss potential internship programs and partnerships with industry partners.

Throughout the conversation, participants share personal anecdotes, insights, and suggestions for improving the educational experience for animation students. They emphasize the importance of practical experience, creativity, and collaboration in preparing students for careers in the animation industry.

Main Takeaways:

1. **Balancing Passion and Practicality:** It's essential for students to balance their artistic passion with the practical aspects of meeting deadlines and delivering completed work on time.
2. **Curriculum Refinement:** The curriculum for animation students should strike a balance between fundamental skills and practical experience, potentially incorporating short film projects to allow students to apply their skills and create portfolio pieces.
3. **Internship Opportunities:** Internships play a crucial role in gaining industry experience and launching careers in the animation industry. Establishing internship programs and partnerships with industry partners can provide valuable opportunities for students.

4. **Practical Experience:** Practical experience, creativity, and collaboration are essential aspects of preparing students for careers in the animation industry. Incorporating real-world projects and fostering a supportive community and culture around filmmaking can enhance the educational experience for students.

Jobs:

1. **Animation Revisionist:** This role involves refining and adjusting animation sequences based on feedback from supervisors or directors. It serves as an entry-level position for storyboard artists.
2. **Production Assistant (PA):** PAs support various aspects of production, such as coordinating schedules, organizing paperwork, and assisting with on-set tasks. It's noted that there is typically a high demand for PAs in production.
3. **Entry-Level Rigor:** Rigors create the animation objects functional in a 3D program. They work closely with 3D artists and animators in constructing assets and ensuring rigs are up to production standards.
4. **Script Coordinator:** Script coordinators assist in managing scripts, including formatting, revisions, and distribution. They often work closely with writers, directors, and producers.
5. **Assistant Editor:** Assistant editors support the post-production process by organizing footage, syncing audio, and assisting with editing tasks under the supervision of the lead editor.
6. **Design Positions:** Design positions, including background design and character design, are mentioned as potential entry-level roles in animation production.
7. **Internships:** Internship opportunities are highlighted as valuable for gaining industry experience and potentially securing future employment in animation studios like Nickelodeon.

Proposed Certification to Advisory Board:

Media Arts Animation Certification of Achievement

Semester 1

1. ANIMATN212: Character Animation and Design (3 Units)
2. ANIMATN218: Fundamentals of Animation (3 Units)
3. ANIMATN219: Animation Process and Design (3 Units)

Semester 2

4. ANIMATN221: Advanced 3D Animation (3 Units)
5. ANIMATN225: 3D Character Animation (3 Units)
6. ANIMATN227: 3D Animation Project (3 Units)

Conclusion:

The advisory board believes the current curriculum is feasible and would help fill high demand jobs within the Animation Industry,

Status: APPROVED