Digital Studio Experience Courses

On Monday, April 27, 2020, 16 members of the UMN teaching community convened to discuss delivery of digital studio experience courses. Ideas and effective practices generated during that discussion are documented here. Contact cei@umn.edu to suggest an addition to this resource.

Session Recording
- YouTube video of the session

Facilitators and panelists:
- Facilitator: Alyssa Bonnac, Center for Educational Innovation
- Panelist: Luke Granholm, Theater, UM-Morris
- Panelist: Mike Christenson, Architecture, UM-Twin Cities

Remote Classroom Practices

Panelists and participants identified several ways in which digital studio course instructors can **quickly and effectively adapt their practices** for remote learning.

Course Materials/Virtual Classroom Practices

- **Share your screen while teaching** so students can see what you are doing
- **Post videos/demos** via Canvas, Google Drive, or Youtube
- **Reshape classroom expectations** to reflect the new environment
- **Encourage students** to keep artistic momentum
- **Annotate and discuss** student work in real time
- **Consider using kits or mail** to supply and share projects

Create Community

- **Host synchronous sessions. Recommendations include:**
  - Doing as much live lecturing as possible
  - Asking all students to be on Zoom at the same time while they are working; students can ask the instructor and their peers questions. This also provides some degree of immediacy.
  - Inviting students to have their cameras on if they are comfortable doing so.

Innovative Approaches

- **Upload images or videos of student work for response and critique.** The critique could be done using VideoAnt, Flipgrid, or VoiceThread.
- **Use Sparkocam (fee-based)** for picture in picture viewing on a screen.
- **Use of open source software/resources**
  - BBC archive for sound design
  - The Virtual Theater
  - BlueStacks + inexpensive web cam allows for students to see the instructor drawing, making a model from different angles/perspectives.

Acknowledge Limitations

While much can be accomplished through remote instruction, it's important to acknowledge that there are limits to what can be taught remotely due to a lack of access to specialized resources and equipment and the isolated nature of the student body. Students may:

- miss elements of play and social aspect of bouncing ideas off of each other
- lose the "serendipity of learning"
- miss structure of studio time which is critical for young artists
- struggle with the concept of scale when viewing everything through a screen.
- Find it challenging to tap into their creative drive due to a lack of studio space

Opportunity

There is no better time than to be in a studio course as students are empowered in a different way as they prepare to go into the field. It is important to recognize that things are not going to go back to the way they were and therefore, the skills being learned now will be what students will need in the future. Faculty can promote this new environment as one in which new approaches can be tested out and mistakes made and learned from.