Chapter I

Teaching Computer Graphics and Multimedia: A Practical Overview

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ABSTRACT

This chapter defines and examines situations, problems, and processes faced by teachers of technology. Based on experience teaching at three colleges with different economic, academic, ethnic, and financial attributes, this chapter provides stable and practical approaches to solving common issues. Each school environment and student population presents different technical and interpersonal challenges. Real experiences involving setup of college laboratories, development of digital curriculum, and creation of accredited programs are highlighted and transferred into tangible strategies. If you are new to teaching digital subjects, this text may help you get started. If you are an experienced teacher, this may bring you a new strategy or perspective. Ultimately, this chapter aims to assist

student teachers, experienced teachers, artists, information technologists, and computer scientists in becoming stronger in transferring knowledge and skills in the digital realm. In addition, the chapter hopes to invite scholars and educators to explore teaching computer graphics and multimedia within the context of their own disciplines.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of technological output requires every student to get value from his or her experiences within the laboratory environment. The coursework and laboratory work that challenges a student should simulate real conditions. Course problems should present both conceptual and technical challenges to students. As a digital design professor, I feel that all “digital teachers” have a great responsibility to students. We must transfer knowledge and skills at the highest levels. We must be thorough in our approaches and precise in our criticisms. We teach what we know and must know what we teach. We must teach using real-world materials and techniques. Although we may have varied control over curriculum directions, we do have control over our success or over that of our students. We must encourage participation, communication, responsiveness, and critical thinking about design and final output. We must always encourage and never insult. We must facilitate practice — and plenty of it. We must be lifetime learners. We must have a personal technology budget. We must be empathetic toward the problems of the individuals we teach. We must take responsibility for the success of the students in our courses. We must care and commit to excellence.

MOTIVATION AND CONFIDENCE

Clear Your Mind and Prepare for Intense Mental Challenges Ahead

Go into the teaching environment with a clear head and focus on the task at hand. It is nearly impossible to communicate effectively when you have worries or problems on your mind. You can use concentrated breathing right before class to free your mind and body of negative energy. Here’s how:

1. Sit down (preferably on the floor or on a comfortable chair)
2. Raise your arms and breathe deeply with big inhales and exhales for seven to 10 repetitions
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