**Professional Reflection**

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This experience was a great learning moment. It was less learning a new skill and more applying what we learned in a more thoughtful approach. The entire course led me through stages that did allow me to produce a brand identity, create a new website, and allow myself to create a portfolio, despite not feeling like I’m ready, only to realize that I may have more than enough to show. It pushed me to do things that I was more reluctant to do because of the monumental task of trying to get everything together. ”Obstacles compel us to turn our weaknesses into strengths, instead of cowering from them. They exist not to be surrendered to but to be overcome, for in overcoming do we gain the inner conviction and resilience to succeed.”(Fahkry, 2018). Sometimes the pressure of knowing how big something is can be a hurdle to overcome. So having this built into the lessons helps prepare for the future.

The capstone has a direct relation to the SNHU program. It feels as if almost the program was built around this moment. We need to make a portfolio so what skills do we need in order to build the portfolio designated to the career path desired. A lot of the classes led into one another and almost seemed redundant at the time. Though it was that redundancy, that is repetitiveness ,which allows everyone who takes the class the opportunity to practice the skills needed in the future. The capstone takes everything we learned in those classes and frames it in a way for you to be able to use the materials you produced in previous classes towards the end goal. Though that message was unclear in the beginning, if you paid attention to what you were doing every goal was achievable.

I feel like some of what I learned was significant. There were several classes that introduced a new tool such as Auto Desk Maya. “Maya is the premier application for creating compelling 3D digital content, including models, animation, visual effects, games, and simulations.“(*Maya Help | Basics | AutoDesk*). Though a lot of the classes for me were just an affirmation of my own skills. It seemed that I already possessed a lot of the knowledge and skills needed to do well in these courses, it was just a matter of proving it. The capstone allowed for the use of previous materials but wasn’t required. It allowed freedom to choose the best of your own work in order to present the best of you. Though some of the skills for some jobs are not necessarily the same as others and may be a bit harder to translate directly the way that the school had intended. Much of the material and goals set were achievable and all direct towards this end goal.

A lot of the feedback that I chose to incorporate was based on what felt right to me. Obviously no one likes giving up their own identity just to fit a model that is the class, but sometimes it's necessary in order to help focus the end product. I think that every point of the pipeline allows for improvement and getting feedback from others is helpful in many ways. It allows us to see things from an outside perspective and if we allow ourselves to hear what someone is saying, rather than get defensive like we naturally want to, we can grow as a person.”Construction criticism is also clear and direct. It provides the recipient with steps they can take immediately to fix an error, problem, or concern and make positive changes. This type of feedback cannot be vague because if it is, the individual will not be able to make the appropriate changes.“(Lorioswald, 2023). I think this applies to all parts of life and really helps us put the bigger picture together, but sometimes pride takes us and it's tough to see past our own nose, especially when being criticized for something that was personal to us. This is something I believed well before taking these courses, and are values I have tried to incorporate daily.

I think this is important and has allowed me to progress in many ways. I know for instance that my typography was not the best. “A typeface is a collection of letters. While each letter is unique, certain shapes are shared across letters. A typeface represents shared patterns across a collection of letters. Typefaces that are selected for their style, legibility, and readability are most effective when following the fundamental principles of typographic design.” (*Material Design*). Instead of taking it personally I allowed myself to make mistakes and create things that although may not have been what I liked at the time, after receiving other people's views, my opinion had changed and that allowed me to progress a piece further. This has happened many times throughout the courses, whether it was a direct comment form a teacher or another student, or even just seeing someone else's work and trying to adapt something you liked about them. Sometimes even the reading materials will suggest an idea that you may not have considered simply because of a narrow view. Though when allowed to open up and see things from different angles it allows us to build. The logo design was a direct result of this. I used what I learned in typography class, applied it to the logo class in which I created a brand that worked well for me and allowed me to express myself in a way that I couldn’t before. Although things aren’t perfect, I am and will always be learning, even if it isn’t in the confines of school.

Everything that was learned here was in pursuit of a professional life. I wanted to be able to translate these skills into a new field, but knew that I needed help along the way. Auto Desk Maya is an industry standard that has been around since 3D modeling became a thing. Adobe products have dominated the market for what seems like an eternity already. “The U.S. firm Adobe Inc. is one of the largest software companies in the world. Best known for the file format PDF and the graphics editing solution Photoshop and Lightroom, the company provides a diverse line of products and services across three segments: Digital Media, Digital Experience, and Publishing and Advertising.“ (*Adobe Inc.* (2024, January 10). These programs have so much implication on a person's success in a professional setting so being as familiar with them as possible is a big help. Though, as a poor person looking to break into these fields, it can be a little daunting with the subscription fees hanging overhead. It is easier to work on projects when a part of a company because they would provide that for you, hopefully, but on your own these tools can be a bit out of reach. So being able to have them at my disposal because of the classes is a big help in being able to learn the way the products operate.

Maintaining a positive ethical reputation is an absolute must. Being able to properly disclose tours sources or being able to say where you located a piece of information is absolutely vital. Obviously when creating we all use references. It is almost impossible to go through life and not be inspired by something you see, especially as a creative person. Life is inspiration and everywhere we go has a new opportunity to see something in a new light.”When drawing from life, observation is the visual artist's source of inspiration. The more sensitively you can observe, the more inspired you can become by everything around you.”(*Drawing From Life).* So being able to make sure you give credit to where credit is due is important. Blatantly stealing another person's work, like copying it exactly, is obviously wrong, and yet there are many stories, shows, movies, games that all have the same concepts of storytelling. They all use a base but yet are able to take some bit of information that was learned elsewhere and transform it into their own personal adaptation of it.

Though in today’s day in age it can seem even more important due to AI. The ability for people to create works of art in minutes is a game changer . Obviously skills like being able to draw, or create things manually will never truly go away, it is scary how fast the tech seems to be rolling out. The problem I see with it , that keeps being pointed out and discussed is copyright infringement. This is because these programs were developed and trained using the work of other people. So anything that they create was technically “learned” from someone who may have spent years developing and honing their craft, now someone can come and make exact replicas of their work. ”Creating works using artificial intelligence could have very important implications for copyright law. Traditionally, the ownership of copyright in computer-generated works was not in question because the program was merely a tool that supported the creative process, very much like a pen and paper. Creative works qualify for copyright protection if they are original, with most definitions of originality requiring a human author.”(*Artificial Intelligence and Copyright*). Even modeling and animating, there are already dozens of sites that offer free and paid models and animations that anyone can use. It seems that people are creating things easier and easier, but if it is done by just telling a computer to do something, art really loses a lot of its meaning. Sure artistically it looks ok, but sometimes looking at AI you can almost feel the empty soulless void that is filled when you know an artist really put their heart into it.

My goal for later in life is to own a Production Company. I want to be able to work for myself and be ale to enrich the people I have come to value and appreciate in my life. I would love to be able to work with the people I have connected with or will connect with and be able to make things that are truly inspiring to us or that we can all feel good about. Corporations seemed to have sucked the life out of everything we value today. Prices skyrocket for less value, and money goes to the people who don’t do any of the work. So my goal would be to be the person at the top to ensure that the people working with me to meet our goals are treated fairly. I would love to be able to create a Co Op company worker owned company, in order to really give the employees a chance to give it their all for something they believe in and reap the benefits. “Cooperatives are businesses owned by “member-owners''. Co-ops are democratically controlled by their member-owners, and unlike a traditional business each member gets a voice in how the business is run. Services or goods provided by the co-op benefit and serve the member owners.``(*What Are Cooperatives? | Business Enterprise Institute | University of Alaska Anchorage*). Or at least that’s the dream.

In the meantime though I told myself I wanted to become an Animator. I have always loved animations and loved video games, and have always been impressed by the visual beauty that is brought to us and is taken for granted by so many. I love the process and want to be involved in any way I can. I know I am not the best creative artist, but I know I can replicate and follow instructions. I know that I can fit myself into any role that is needed, but for the time being I would like to be in Storyboarding, or character rigging/ animating. I really want to be involved in a baseline production in order to learn how the whole system operates, really be able to see the workflow, and then be able to grow and adapt into what I want or need to achieve. I am the kind of person who likes to be involved in all aspects but am capable of letting others I trust to take over as well. I really would love to work and be proud of what I do and say that I did it for me, and was successful. Hopefully the skills I have learned here will let me achieve those goals.

***Citation***

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