Equity and Diversity in Multimedia

In multimedia, students are encouraged to discuss and share their thoughts on the ethics of the video game industry and movements. This is an area that can be uncomfortable for students but is a positive way for students to share their thoughts and hear other perspectives. Additionally, I provide students with my background memories of living through many of the events. Topics include the understanding of ethics, Gamergate, personal observations, COVID's ramifications and the movements of identity and representation in games. This is probably one of the most crucial of discussions for MMC students as it prepares them for a constantly evolving industry, and how they can contribute and be a positive impact.

Please see the following examples of how we tackle these in my courses. Overall, I applaud my students who are professional and feel confident enough to share their thoughts with their classmates. Everyone has a voice that is heard. In the following Google Slides, students are introduced to ethical concepts and examples of how equity and diversity are represented and developed in video game design. With video games being considered an artform that is protected by the first amendment in the United States, game developers can create positive and negative diverse situations for players to experience. During these discussions the students and I also examine how these types of game interactions can spill into real-life and the game industry.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1dlaPjs64XeH2sl3xQKn6DL5MaDwc0pOpsgPmhmanSM4/edit?usp=sharing>

Equity and Diversity in Teaching Multimedia

Prior to COVID-19, the multimedia communications discipline was only available to students who had access to the North Campus. In March 2020, we were forced to shift to online remote learning. This opened a door for Multimedia Communications, being able to become accessible to students from all the campuses. Overall, this has caused a growth in the program and enrolled students, but has also brought new challenges for an equity experience for the students

Multimedia Communications is a hardware intensive discipline. Utilizing hardware like a Chromebook, baseline laptops, etc. is not an option for students. To address this, I have added to courses during registration notes that a high-end computer is necessary to be successful in the course. Furthermore, the Adobe software package that multimedia creators and companies rely upon is required for many courses, and not covered by financial aid.

I continue to work with the college examining and determining potential ways to make Multimedia Communications more equitable to students, including potentially offering rental laptops, working with ITS to have methods to remotely log in to computers. While a huge challenge right now, I cannot wait till we find the answer, because every student should have the opportunity to make robust and mind-blowing games, graphics and 3D models; not to be held back by the type of hardware they can afford.

The video game industry is changing, and our students are not only part of it, but the future of it. Creating a classroom where everyone is equal is what I continue to strive for in diversity. My students who are part of the LGBQTIA+ community are finding their voices, and more students are respecting chosen names and pronouns. As a woman who has fought in this industry through her career to be treated like a human being, if I can make my classroom an inclusive space where people can grow and are treated as human beings, it is something I will continue to instill and emphasize. I hope that is something that students see me doing, they take it with them into this industry, and help to make the industry more inclusive, welcoming to diverse backgrounds and creating a better culture than how my generation shaped it.