Teaching Exploration on Project Planning Course of Digital Media Art Specialty

Lu Geng

College of Sino-Korea Multimedia Design
Shanghai University of Engineering Science
Shanghai, China
genglu@sues.edu.cn

Abstract

This paper analyzes the shortage of traditional teaching method for the Project Planning Course. Through the training objective of Digital Media Art Specialty and the vocational requirements on creative planning position in digital media industry, it makes practical exploration on the teaching method for the Project Planning Course offered by Digital Media Art Specialty based on case teaching method and project teaching method, so as to efficiently improve students' awareness of project planning, capability of independent inquiry, collaborative innovation and project practice.

Key words: Digital Media Art Specialty, project planning, case teaching method, project teaching method

1 Status Quo and Analysis on Project Planning Course of Digital Media Art Specialty

Nowadays, the fields in Chinese digital media industry with the fastest growth include virtual reality, games, digital animation, films and television, digital publishing, which are commonly based on digital media technology to provide digital contents products and services for the society. In respects of planning, design, production, marketing and other processes of digital media products, whether a digital product can be successful largely depends on its creative planning. Some survey shows that talents specialized in digital media industry are lacking and the problem of creative planning talents must be taken in consideration by colleges when cultivating talents in digital media industry. The National Standards for Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Specialties in General Institutes of Higher Education that was promulgated in 2018 lists "cultivating students' capability of planning" into the training objective and skill requirements of talents in Digital Media Art Specialty.

The course of Project Planning is a specialized course offered by China and Korea Multimedia Design Institute of Shanghai University of Engineering Science for the second term of junior undergraduates in Digital Media Art Specialty. Before studying this course, students have learned such basic courses as Creative Methodology, Survey of Industry Forefront, Protection and Inheritance of Cultural Heritage. This course, as a core specialized course closely combining theory and practice, is centered on cultivating students' systematic and creative thinking, as well as abilities of planning and project practice, improving their market sensitivity and innovation awareness in digital creation industry, and helping their build abilities of organizational management and team cooperation.

The status quo of the course is analyzed as follows: There is now no textbook for the course; Teaching content is overly theorized and lacks practice; The method is monotonous and lacks interaction between professors and students; The assessment is single, focuses on conclusion-based assessment and lacks process-based assessment.

2 Construction of Teaching System of Project Planning Course

To solve the problems above mentioned, the author starts from talents requirements of Digital Media Art Specialty and actual projects to analyze the capability requirements for the positions in digital art industry so as to determine the course system. On teaching philosophy, we should focus on cultivating students' skills in practical application with students as subject and professors as dominance to provoke student's energy about leaning through project-oriented, task-driven teaching mode. We should take project to drive theoretical exploration, improve learning effect by interaction, examine practical ability through actual practice, inspire cultural confidence with planning contents, and promote professional ability improvement through occupational planning.

The first line is to divide theoretical knowledge into four chapters and introduce one or two project cases into each of them, allowing students to have a director understanding of teaching contents. The professor and students interaction steps of "proposing problems – students' thinking and discussion – professor giving explanation – knowledge conclusion" is adopted to provoke students' inner desire of study and digest of theoretical knowledge.

The second line is, by project-driven method, allowing students to build their teams and finish a practical project planning. To standardize the management of project process, the implementation steps are made as follows: Project objective making → project work tasks breakdown → project knowledge preparation → project scheme survey → project scheme planning → project evaluation. During the project process, students are taken as the core to give full play to their initiative and exercise their abilities of communication and teamwork, so as to construct a knowledge system through project practice.

The third line is taking advantage of a series of planning for Chinese Dream, Development Plan of Shanghai Creative and Design Industry, as well as the college's specialty development planning to bring students more knowledge about the talents requirements for national emerging industry development, shanghai digital creation industry and the college's

development, and lead them to learn and think of the importance of planning. Through a series of self-evaluation process inside and outside the classroom, it also aims at helping students review themselves, formulate a short-term goal and action scheme for their study, and take active efforts to plan their occupational development.

3 Practice of Teaching Method for Project Planning Course

A. Case teaching method

As a planning course, it should allow students to be aware of the basic knowledge about project planning, thus it cannot go without the analysis on a great number of cases. Case analysis can be conducted by many means so that only introducing case background, project planning process, and reasons and results is not sufficient to inspire students' interest and thought. Therefore, the author adopts two types of case teaching method in this process to motivate students' thinking and initiative.

One is that the author prepares teaching cases and follows the professor and students interaction steps of "proposing problems – students' thinking and discussion – professor giving explanation – knowledge conclusion" to cultivate students' interest and provoke their thought. Such method poses a higher requirement on the cases selected by professors. At first, professors must have a thorough grasp of the syllabus and knowledge system and must pay attention to accumulate cases so as to introduce them combining with the chapters of teaching contents. Next, the cases selected should have close relation and freshness to improve students' interest. Close relation means the cases should be closely related to students' actual life and had better to be experienced or cared by them. Freshness has two meanings. The first meaning is that the cases must take place in the near past because such cases can inspire students' passion about thinking. Thus, professors should pay much attention to industrial trend and forefront information and be able to sensitively grasp the hotspot issues in the digital creation industry. In the chapter of "Project Marketing Planning", the author introduces the marketing case of Roastery, an experience store of Starbucks Shanghai Baking Workshop, which can enable students to learn about new retails, experience store, user experience design and other hotspot nouns, and to discuss how to use digital media art and technology to make marketing planning in such cases. The second meaning is that the cases can be displayed by the new method of visual and audio combination. For example, when teaching the chapter of "Concept and Procedures of Project Planning", professors can take the movie *The Italian Job* as a case, posing a series of problems to student before screening the movie and telling them to see the movie with the problems. Then through discussion, students answer these problems and digest the knowledge during frequent interaction between professor and students.

The other is making students seek for cases within a given scope and share them with others in class. In the chapter of "Digital Media Project Planning", the author introduces the case of "The Forbidden City series apps", cultural creative products of The Forbidden City. The author focuses on the introduction of The Forbidden City's investigation process before making these cultural creative products: they learn the demands of the social public through study on people's lifestyle and living conditions, for example, learn and analyze what cultural elements people favor in their daily life, by what means they can accept the cultural information, how do they spend their fragmented time, and what different cultural requirements exist among audience at different ages. Combining classroom, the author allows students to investigate the excellent planning cases which combine traditional culture and digital media. Students have gained a large amount of information by searching on Internet, reading and collecting materials, thus improving their consciousness about the importance of user investigation before making digital media project planning, and enhancing their market sensitivity and innovation awareness in the cultural creation field.

B. Project teaching method

Project teaching method is applicable to learning a variety of knowledge and skills with higher practice and operation characters. Professors can integrate the knowledge system of the course as target task into project practice, and students, driven by project, understand the teaching content, explore knowledge construction, and use all kinds of methods to complete the project, so as to realize the highest goal of cultivating students' knowledge and ability. For learning evaluation, the mode is characterized by focusing more on learning process rather learning results.

The author adopts the project teaching method in the course, and, based on the theme of "improving the interactive experience design of museum", lead students to think that museum as a public cultural institution is an important carrier for social, historic and cultural inheritance. How can we use design to make the public willing to enter museums and play museums' role in cultural inheritance and communication? How can we design a more intelligent and personalized museum? How can we inject new vigor into traditional culture through innovative design and digital media technology with the demands of the social public oriented? According to project planning and management scheme, the author makes work tasks, which is divided into three steps, including finding a problem, researching the problem, and solving the problem, and allows students to complete the whole project planning process step by step. The professor plays the role of organization, guidance, inspiration and conclusion in the process and conduct extracurricular discussion and classroom presentation guidance in parallel.

Task One is making groups with 2 students in each, and every group selects a museum from 125 museums in Shanghai to make field survey and user investigation. Students need to take photos or videos to record the experience in the whole visit line during their investigation process and then make an experience trip map and mark the pain points and satisfying points in experience. Students can choose to work at two or three museums as interactive experience project for investigation and make interview to the working personnel and visitors there to know about user demands through face-to-face communication and drawing of user profile.

Task Two is making discussion in groups after investigation, in which they need to collect and analyze the data sourced from Task One and make deep research in the pain points. In this stage, students need to complete the preliminary concept of the

design scheme through brainstorm, collection and analysis on excellent interactive cases, and material survey. They may make a superficial scheme in this process and even feel it is hard to go ahead. So at this time professor should encourage them to seek for problems and help them to brave difficulties.

Task Three is solving the problems. They should make feasibility study on the contents and form of their design schemes and select the best scheme to demonstrate design effect through design sketch or concept map.

For the whole project practice process, students need to finally make planning copywriting, PPT and poster to make demonstration in class. Writing in planning process and presentation are both important parts for cultivating planning capability. What's more important is allowing them learn from each other through presentation. During this process, professors must propose problems continuously to guide the students to think and improve. The project planning course changes single way of final examination to evaluate students' ability, rather, it uses the method integrated with process and result evaluation, knowledge and skill evaluation to focus on the evaluation of students' learning attitude and practical ability.

Fig. 1 These two are posters for project planning completed by students.

4 Conclusion and Thought on Teaching Practice of Project Planning Course

The paper achieves the result through improvement and teaching method and practice. From students' project practice results and after-class feedback, they have higher recognition to such teaching method of the course and produce many high-quality planning schemes during practice. The course of project planning lays a foundation for students' graduation design and brings their planning consciousness and project planning ability to a higher level.

The author also finds some problems contradictory with the real conditions in this process, which focus on the following two aspects: One problem is during the project teaching process, the time is insufficient for presentation in classroom and communication and interaction between professor and students due to the great number of students, so professor cannot ensure every group has the opportunity to present their result and get professor's guidance. Thus, it is recommended that the course of project teaching can be offered in a small

class size. The other problem is the class hours are also too inadequate to demonstrate all excellent project cases or to share them with students. Thus, the author thinks it is necessary to establish an online assisted teaching platform to share with students the outstanding industrial project planning cases online and guide them to make independent learning and discussion.

The practice of a new teaching method also raises higher requirements for professors. It not only requires professors to enhance their own theoretical foundation and practical skills, but also asks for them to put much energy and patience into the teaching, get a comprehensive understanding of students' learning process and give them support and guidance immediately.