



## An Exploration on the Reform of Teaching in Graduation Design for the Major of Animation

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### Abstract

Graduation design is an important course to cultivate students' comprehensive capability in teaching. Focusing on the features of graduation design and the practical situation of students, this paper discusses lots of issues concerning with the teaching and the practice for the major of animation, such as how to reform the teaching way by optimizing the content structure of graduate design and adjusting the content system, and how to form unique teaching features surrounding two aspects, namely solidifying the specialty techniques and improving the ability of practice. By this way, the final goal of graduation design may be realized.

**Keywords:** School education, Graduation design, Reform of teaching, Talent cultivation

The major of animation emphasizes on practices in special. And the graduation design is a necessary practice for the teaching of animation. And it is a comprehensive course in realizing the goal of specialty cultivation. It is also an important mark to evaluate the teaching quality of the major. The graduation design can not only cultivate and test students' ability of using the learned theories, the specialty knowledge, and the basic technologies to analyze and solve common engineering and technological problems, but also have irreplaceable effects on the improvement and cultivation of students' comprehensive quality, abilities of design and practice, and spirits of innovation. Moreover, the graduation design is the professional training before students enter the job market. And the grades serve as important reference for students' graduation and quality of master degree. However, in recent years, many students are hunting for jobs or in practice at the last term, preparing for the professional job after graduation. Therefore, the graduation design becomes nothing, which greatly affects the design level of graduates and the application of normal graduation design.

By means of teaching reform, we should emphasize on cultivating students' abilities of practice in choosing the subjects of graduation design, training them for further jobs. The subjects of graduation design include the three-dimensional animation design, the two-dimensional animation design, the composition of film, the digital video, and the stop-motion animation. At the same time, as a new major, the teaching of graduation design is short of experiences and students' abilities of design need to be improved further. Besides, it faces up with lots of problems, such as the acceptance of the society, and the competition of similar majors in other universities. Therefore, it is urgent to reform the graduation design for the major of animation.

### 1. The problems existed in present graduation design

#### 1.1 In the aspect of selecting the subjects of graduation design

The selection of the subjects of graduation design is not proper. And most the subjects are normal. For example, the subjects of graduation design are all the same for many years. Besides, the subjects are different in the degree of difficulty. And some subjects have not practical contents, separating from the reality. Students do not have motives to work for them.

#### 1.2 In the aspect of faculty advisor

Faculty advisors have different abilities of practice. And some are short of practical experiences. Therefore, it is impossible for them to provide with better guidance for students in graduation design.

#### 1.3 In the aspect of specialty quality

Many students neglect a deepening research on the subjects' background and relevant materials, and similar foreign subjects. They do not have strong theoretical base.

#### 1.4 In the aspect of test and assessment

The test and assessment mainly focus on the “soft” aspect, such as the rules and requirements but neglect the application. The test and assessment are usually superficial, what cannot drive students to do better.

### *1.5 In the aspect of thesis defense*

At the stage of thesis defense, the requirements are loose. Most students can pass. The process of graduate design is always anti-climax.

Therefore, the goal of the teaching reform should follow two points: firstly, as the final ring in the teaching and the practice, the graduation design should emphasize on the comprehensive application of theoretical knowledge and the evident improvement of design ability; secondly, the major of animation extremely emphasizes the practice and the teaching should focus on cultivating students’ abilities of applying theories into practice and solving practical problems. Establish the goals of teaching reform: enhance theoretical knowledge, cultivate practical ability, improve students’ comprehensive ability, train complex talent, and meet the social need. It is better to construct the unique features graduation design teaching and make it catch up with the advanced level in the field of domestic animation design. The teaching reform can begin from two aspects, namely to solidify the specialty techniques and to improve the practical abilities. Optimize the content structure of graduation design. Adjust the content system. Reform the teaching methods and the management measures. Enhance the practical teaching and improve the teaching quality. Cultivate unique teaching features. And reach the final aim of graduation design.

## **2. The exploration of teaching reform**

### *2.1 The reform of the content structure of graduation design*

The project team mainly adjusts the traditional mode of graduation design, emphasizing the combination of design and practice. According to the nature and the features of graduation design, and the specialties of faculty advisors, the project team arranges the content of graduation design. Besides, the team aims at helping students to apply the theoretical knowledge into graduation design, enhancing their abilities of application.

### *2.2 The update and improvement of teaching methods*

Considering the features of graduation design and the situation of students, the project team constructs a teaching system that is composed of the selection of graduation design subjects, the report of preparing for the design, the middle check, the introduction of the design, the demonstration of the design, and the thesis defense.

Emphasizing on practice, comprehensiveness, and innovation is the pre-condition of graduation design with high quality. Connect with advisors’ design practices and establish the subjects and write the task arrangement. In the university, there are many teachers who have rich experiences and practices. And it is better to invite other engineers who possess rich experiences as advisors. The dual advisor system serves as a technological guarantee for the high-quality graduation design. Providing with advices and suggestions for students during the whole draft drawing process, and assessing the quality of design at the middle stage of the design are the procedure guarantee for the graduation design. To design a demonstration scheme and to compose an introduction of design according to different subjects of students and to complete the thesis defense process are the final guarantee for the high quality of graduation design.

(1) The selection of subject is the key for the success of graduation design.

The selection of subject should follow three principles. The first is the practice. Extend the graduation design into the design practice and the scientific research. The subjects must come from the front of practice, which can inspire students’ responsibilities and spirits of innovation. The second is the comprehensiveness. During the process of graduation design, students can make best use of learned knowledge. And the subject can help to enlarge their knowledge scope. Besides, the subjects of graduation design should change every year. These subjects should include all aspects of animation design. Students can select certain subjects based on their interests. The third is innovation. The innovation of subjects is an important factor that guarantees the quality of graduation design. No matter where the subjects come from, design practice or scientific research, they must be innovative and indicates the uniqueness of designers. The innovation can enlarge and enrich students’ knowledge and improve their professional abilities.

(2) The team of advisors is the technological guarantee for high-quality graduation design

The team of advisors includes: teachers in the university who have rich experiences in teaching and practice can shoulder the responsibility of guiding graduation design; top designers outside the university who have rich practical experiences can also shoulder the responsibility. They can not only help to extend the content of graduation design but also help students gain more professional experiences.

(3) Reports of on-the-spot teaching and relevant materials are the theoretical guarantee for the high-quality graduation design

At the first stage of graduation design, advisors will perform the on-the-spot teaching. In this process, students will research on the practical cases of design, combining with their subjects, and make comments on these cases and point

out the advantages and disadvantages. At the same time, by retrieving relevant studies at home and abroad, students must write their reports in which they will advance their ideas of the subject, providing with theoretical and material foundation for the next stage.

(4) The initial design and the middle check are the procedure guarantee for the high-quality graduation design.

Emphasize on tutorship and suggestion. Be strict with the check on work attendance. In the process of teaching, advisors can provide with guidance for students and direct them to find out problems in their designs by means of self-introducing and mutual discussion. At the same time, students can check the feasibility of their designs and understand the distance between design ideas and technological possibilities. Without this step, the design will stray away from the technology. Meanwhile, advisors should inspire students' motives, cultivating their abilities of self-checking, independent thinking, and problem solving. And advisors can encourage students to break through the initial thinking frame and input more innovative ideas in the designs. This teaching process can not only improve students' ability of appreciation, but also help them taste the interests of innovation in the design.

The middle check is also the key for the graduation design. At the middle stage of the graduation design, the lead team and the advisors should check student's designs respectively. The check should include these aspects: students introduce their designs; advisors evaluate these designs; the lead team makes the final check. The middle check should focus on the schedule, the quality, and the initial design of the graduation design. By this way, it can drive students to work hard for their graduation design. And it can further guarantee the quality of design.

(5) The thesis defense is the final guarantee for the high-quality graduation design.

The final grade of graduation design should take several factors into consideration. In specific, it includes the workload, the design level, the thesis, the ability of independent work, and the thesis defense. The thesis defense is to test students' ability of analyzing problems, verbal expression, and answering questions. In order to meet the social need for talents in animation specialty, it is the advisors of students and the top designers in specialty companies who master the thesis defense. They help students to demonstrate their designs, aiming at improving their abilities of practice.

### *2.3 Combine with the practice of design and achieve progresses together*

The graduation design is a kind of practice course. Therefore, it should focus on practical designs. Advisors must possess relevant practical experiences related with the subject. And in the teaching process, advisors can combine theoretical teaching with practice. Meanwhile, by inviting top designers who come from companies and have rich practical experiences, it can enlarge the sources of subjects and provide with more options for students to make choice.

By the teaching reform that emphasizes on fundamental knowledge, basic design training, and practical ability, the graduation design for the major of animation lays more stresses on the combination of specialty teaching and design practice. By this way, students' abilities of practice and comprehensive qualities have been improved obviously. This improvement is not only in the aspect of graduation design, but also in after-school research, graduation survey, and social practice. Students majored in animation participate in social practice and specialty practice, step into the grass roots, contact with the society, and understand the social needs. They use specialty knowledge to solve social problems, which meet the social needs and gain praises from companies. Besides, more and more students choose to join in a series of competition out of school and win rewards. By this way, students' comprehensive qualities and abilities have been exercised and displayed completely.

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