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GAP ANALYSIS REPORT
for the Digital Media cluster

Introduction

This analysis will make use of the data returned from the two Market Analyses that I conducted. One interview was with a Web designer from Microsoft, the other with the Webmaster for the City of Kirkland.

In reviewing the gaps between what industry needs and what we are teaching in the Web Multimedia Authoring program, it became apparent that while we were generally on the right track, we were also missing several key elements in our curriculum that industry deemed vital.

It seemed a good idea to focus on one or two gaps, analyze them, address them, and then return to the data to find the next gap to close. For the first area of focus, I chose two Key Activities that shared some basic concepts and showed up as "important" in both Market Analyses, but were missing from our curriculum and therefore not listed in our Curriculum Crosswalk. The first is A5 (Research Content) and the second is C8 (Ensure media productions and acquisitions meet legal and copyright requirements). The responses from industry are described in detail below.

Key Activity: A5. Research content

As noted above, this element was not significantly taught in our program. The industry interviewees however were quite explicit that entry-level workers would need this knowledge to be a contributing member in their organizations.

The designer from Microsoft stated: *"Research and copyright law knowledge is critical in an entry-level worker for this design team."*

The City of Kirkland Webmaster was equally as clear: *"Researching, acquiring and creating content would be a big part of the job for an entry-level worker in the Web department for the City of Kirkland."*

Here are the skills within A5 that each interviewee noted as necessary, and the level of importance assigned to those skills:

	Microsoft	City of Kirkland
Employability Skills		
Ability to use word processing and editing tools.	Important	Important
Ability to select/obtain data relevant to task, identify the need for data and contrast conflicting data.	Important	Important
Ability to analyze, synthesize and summarize research results.	Important	Important

Technical Knowledge		
Knowledge of research techniques and tools.	Somewhat Important	Important
Knowledge of writing and editorial processes and procedures.	Important	Important
Knowledge of organizational and departmental practices.	Important	Important
Ability to analyze readability and usability of content.	Important	Important
Knowledge of rights of usage, intellectual property rights and legal issues related to the ownership and use of information and copyrights for content.	Important	Important

Key Activity: C8. Ensure media productions and acquisitions meet legal and copyright requirements

Again, as noted above, this element was not significantly taught in our program. And, again, the industry interviewees were clear that these were skills necessary for entry-level work in the field.

The designer from Microsoft stated: *"While Microsoft has an extensive legal department, it is very very important that an entry level worker be well-versed in intellectual property right law and copyright law."*

And once again, the City of Kirkland Webmaster was equally as explicit: "*A critical skill for the entry-level worker in this environment is the knowledge and application of copyright and content acquisition laws*."

Here are the skills within C8 that each interviewee noted as necessary, and the level of importance assigned to those skills:

	Microsoft	City of Kirkland
Employability Skills		
Ability to follow company policies, procedures and standards.	Important	Important
Ability to identify and resolve conflicts.	Important	Important
Ability to analyze information and consider risks/implications.	Somewhat Important	Important
Ability to organize and present complex information.	Important	Important

	Microsoft	City of Kirkland
Technical Knowledge		
Knowledge of requirements and procedures relating to clearances, usage rights and licenses.	Important	Important
Knowledge of copyright and intellectual property protection issues.	Important	Important
Knowledge of ethical issues relating to acquisition and use of intellectual property.	Important	Important

Conclusion

Our graduates will obviously need to be well versed in the areas of copyright law, intellectual property rights and the issues surrounding licensing and fair use. They also will need to be able to write clearly and accurately, to research content efficiently and thoroughly and work within the policies and guidelines of the organization for which they work.

As a first step at including these topics more explicitly within our program, I reconstructed an existing project from the foundation course for this track. I added several elements to the project that required a significant amount of self-directed research within some very specific guidelines. Additionally, students are now instructed in the basics of copyright law and plagiarism and are asked to construct and publish a self-statement regarding the content included in this particular project.