Animation Course in Lisbon Concludes

UT Austin animation instructor Geoff Marslett is concluding a semester-long class conducted in Lisbon this spring. During the course of the semester, he met with eight students from a variety of professional and academic backgrounds including computer science, biology, and physics, as well as design and story telling. To accommodate the students' diverse experiences and interests, Geoff structured the class to give participants a broad overview of media making modalities and techniques. During the semester, they studied video editing and production, basic sound design, flash animation, and motion graphics with After Effects.

The course was project-based, first challenging the participants to create basic animated avatars using photographic images and flash. Each member of the class then created a short non-fiction piece based upon a family story. At the conclusion of the class, the students employed their newly acquired skills to produce projects that specifically addressed their areas of interest. The range of final projects reflected the students' great diversity, ranging from a story promoting children's fire safety to an augmented reality application for a scientific exhibit on bones.

While Geoff has taught various classes with the UTA-P program in the past, he particularly enjoyed the extended nature of this course. "I have had a wonderful time here in Lisbon getting to spend a little longer with the students. In the past I have had to do shorter workshops here, but I feel like I got better sense of both the students and Lisbon in this full semester format."

UT Austin Portugal Faculty Participate in Major Communications Conference

Several members of the UTA-P Digital Media program faculty traveled to Phoenix, Arizona in May for an annual conference of the International Communication Association, a leading academic, international organization of communication scholars. The conference's divisions and interest groups encompass a broad range of areas including communication law and policy, global communication and social change, and information systems, among many others.

UTA-P Director Sharon Strover and program faculty Joe Straubhaar, Laura Stein, and Karin Wilkins participated in several aspects of the conference, chairing panels, serving as respondents, and presenting emerging research. Strover's presentation, "Immersive Television and the On-Demand Audience," presented with graduate student William Moner, introduced research from the FCT-funded ImTV project. The project addresses emerging dynamics in entertainment media and observes how

viewers actively engage with contemporary television and related visual media, sometimes creating their own content.

Straubhaar presented a range of research, addressing topics including identity construction and media use among families in Austin, Texas, co-authored with UT Austin doctoral student Laura Dixon; Brazil's media exports and cultural presence; children's influence on their parents' media adoption patterns; and the use of media in the construction of cultural geography in Texas. Wilkins' contributions to the conference included participation in a panel that re-examined the concept of cultural imperialism in the context of social change and Stein presented research on law and policy conflicts and activist media. Additionally, Stein and a faculty alumna of the UTA-P program's International School on Digital Transformation, Tanya Notley, presented a paper on transnational communication activism among rights advocates, co-authored with UT Austin doctoral student Stuart Davis. Portuguese doctoral student Cláudia Silva also attended the conference to participate in a special pre-conference devoted to mobile communications.

New Proposal Presented

As the UT Austin-Portugal Digital Media program wraps up this summer, the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology has requested a proposal for renewal. The new five-year plan proposed by the UTA-P program leadership includes support for a component focused on entrepreneurship, and funding for innovative, collaborative research on problems currently facing media businesses. Support for research on videogames has also been requested. PhD student research, internships, faculty and post-doctoral visits, and workshops in Portugal are also possibilities discussed in the proposal. The UTA-P program anticipates a response from FCT in July. In addition, the program in Austin hopes to offer some support to exploratory visitors and a small number of professional interns in the fall. More details are on the program's [website](#).

Summer Institute Commences

The 2012 Summer Institute courses have begun! Professors Rosental Alves and Sharon Strover have been teaching in Lisbon (Entrepreneurial Journalism and Research Methods, respectively), while Stuart Kelban is offering a special writing course to RTP staff in Porto. More UT-Austin faculty will be arriving soon in both locations for additional offerings in Animation, Cinematography, Human Computer Interface, and Screenwriting.