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**Course:** ANI 201 - 401

**Course Meeting Time:** Fall, 3:10 – 4:40 Tuesdays and Thursdays

**Location:** CDM 722

**Professor:** Amy Lockhart

**Contact Information:** alockha3@cdm.depaul.edu

**Office Hours:** Rm. 459, 2:00 – 2:45pm Tuesdays & 2:00 – 2:45pm Thursdays

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the art, practice and technology of animation. Through weekly assignments and critiques we will learn (and practice, practice, practice) the basic principles of traditional animation. We will apply these techniques to handmade, digital and experimental approaches to animation. A variety of historic and contemporary animated films will be screened in class for inspiration, discussion and analysis. The class work will require the use of *Flash*, *After Effects*, and some *Photoshop*, along with the use of a digital tablet such as *Wacom*. These materials are available in the CDM labs in the Loop Campus. The coursework will prepare the students to complete a final project of 15-30 seconds in the media of their choice, and lay the groundwork for intermediate studies in animation. This is a labor intensive class, where you will frequently animate in class, but will also require a great deal of effort outside of regular class time.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- A strong foundation in the principles of animating movement.
- An introduction to storyboarding and design for animation.
- An introduction to hand drawn animation in *Flash*, puppet rigging and compositing with *Photoshop* and *AfterEffects*.
- An introduction to hand drawn animation on paper, with registration pegs.
- An introduction to experimental approaches to animation, including non-linear narrative and alternative materials such as sand, cut outs, collage, stop-motion and more.
- An introduction to under the camera animation using *Dragon Frame*.

## **MORE**

The weekly assignments and critiques are set up as a way to learn, practice and hone various animation techniques. It is best to approach them as training exercises – which we will critique together, as a team, for the benefit of all. Think of it as practicing an instrument or sport. The limitations of the assignments are intended to both challenge the student and focus their attention on the essential elements of the particular technique being taught. This practice will culminate in the final assignment – a personal short film (15-30sec.). Think of it this way: we are a team, working together, practicing and honing our craft for the big game (i.e. your final assignment). It's about trying, failing, and getting better – not about being perfect.

## **SOFTWARE REQUIRED**

In this course we will animate in *Flash* and *After Effects*. Students will use *Photoshop* to prep

their artwork for one assignment. I will give brief demonstrations of these programs, but students will be expected to learn the technical aspects on their own. Students who want to work at home will need to purchase a monthly license fee from Adobe - student discounts are available.

Those with no experience with this software are encouraged to use the free access to Lynda.com. Access this account and use your campus connect link where noted. These instructional videos are created by professional animators and used throughout the industry. I will be available for individual help that can be scheduled with me during the week. There is also the Adobe help site available online:  
[http://www.adobe.com/designcenter/video\\_workshop/](http://www.adobe.com/designcenter/video_workshop/)

## **EQUIPMENT**

A sketchbook (no smaller than 9"x6", 50pg. minimum) and drawing supplies.

Punched animation paper and a registration pegbar – purchase at the DePaul bookstore

A portable lightbox (optional).

A flash drive/thumb drive for backing up your work (min. 16GB)

Various art supplies on an as needed basis. (e.g., clay, paper, glue, X-acto knife, etc.)

Students are encouraged to work with Wacom drawing tablets and pens. These can be checked out for your use in the 9<sup>th</sup> floor Equipment Cage. The Equipment Checkout Policy is available for download in the Contents section of the Course On Line site for this class. There are also Cintiq screen tablets available in rooms 527 and 722 when classes are not scheduled. We will be using room 722 during the quarter.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

*The Animator's Survival Kit*, by Richard Williams. You can access the lectures and demonstrations of this book through the COLTube link on D2L.

*The Animation Bible*, by Maureen Furniss (Abrams, 2008)

Additional recommended material will be posted on the D2L site after class begins.

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## **GENERAL INFO:**

### **EMAIL**

I will do my best to answer email within 24 hours, often sooner. I expect correspondence to be as professional as possible, even if you are writing me from your smart phone.

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Use of cell phones in the classroom and the lab is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class. Mistakes will happen, but repeated failure to turn your phone off will result in a lowered grade for the class. No texting is allowed during class. If I have to ask you to stop texting more than once, there will be a full letter grade taken off your final grade.

## **USE OF LAPTOPS/COMPUTERS**

Laptops are for class related use only. If I catch you on Facebook, etc., etc., marks will be deducted. You might think it goes unnoticed – but it is very distracting and demoralizing for us all, not to mention just plain rude.

## **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

If I feel that your behavior is interfering with the professionalism of our classroom (disruption, talking, napping, texting, etc.), I will adhere to the following 3 step protocol: warning email and personal meeting, meeting with advisor or Student Advising, action taken to remove you from the class.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Work done for this course must adhere to the DePaul University Academic Integrity Policy, which you can review in the Student Handbook or by visiting:

<http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html>

## **LEARNING DISABILITIES**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the following offices:

PLuS Program (for LD, AD/HD) 773--325--1677, Student Center #370

The Office for Students with Disabilities 773--325--1677, Student Center #370

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is crucial that you attend every class, as there will be demos and critiques, which cannot be repeated after class hours.

More than two unexcused absences will result in a full letter grade reduction for the course.

Any student missing more than 4 classes will receive an "F" for the quarter. If you have any personal or medical issues, you must contact the Dean of Students. They will contact me directly regarding excused absences. Being late to class 2 times counts as one absence.

You are responsible for any missed lectures and assignments. If you miss a class, it is still your responsibility to turn in the assignment on time. We have very tight deadlines that are in place to benefit you and your projects. Lecture notes alone will not make up for missed work. Do not miss the final class and critique; this will result in a reduction of your participation grade (-10%). If for any reason you miss the final class, you must contact the Dean of Students BEFORE the class. Excuses given after the fact will not be accepted.

No incompletes will be given without documented proof of circumstances beyond your control.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Participation includes coming to class ready to work, participating in class discussions, being attentive, not being late or missing class.

## CLASS CRITIQUES

Critiques can be painful – but they don't have to be – so let's work together to make it a good and productive experience. There will be critiques held midway through the assignments in order to provide useful feedback so students can achieve the best results possible, as well as critiques of finished pieces. Students are expected to participate in constructive criticism and discussion of each other's work.

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

This class requires weekly assignments to be completed outside of class. Class time will include lectures, critiques of assigned work, viewing and discussion of historic and contemporary work, and some in-class exercises. There will be assigned reading and discussion from the textbooks or from posted sites.

All assignments will be submitted to D2L one hour before class starts. In most cases assignments will need to be outputted to a QuickTime format. I will specify file formats that may be different. The weekly projects are designed to require about 3 hours of work outside of class. The more significant projects may require more time, and they are spread out over several class periods.

## FINAL PROJECT

The final project will be a finished 10 to 15 second piece of animation in the style of your choice that should demonstrate what you have learned. Special emphasis should be placed on finished frame-by-frame detail. The final project idea will be submitted for review and approval.

## COURSE GRADING SCHEME

Grades for this course will be broken down as follows:

Assignment # 1 – Abstract Animation - timing	10% (1 week)
Assignment # 2 – Bouncing Ball Head	10% (1 week)
Assignment # 3 – Morph and Cycles	15% (2 week)
Assignment # 4 – Photoshop character and After Effects Puppet	15% (2 weeks)
Assignment #5 – Sketchbook and Alternate Materials	10% (2 week)
Assignment #5.5 – Sketchbook (to be handed in at the end of the course)	10%
Assignment # 6 – Final Animation — Proposal	5% (1 week)
— Project	15% (1 week)
Participation	10%

A=100-93,A-=92-90,B+=89-88,B=87-83,B-=82-80,C+=79-78,C=77-73,C-= 72-70,D+=69- 68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0.

**A** indicates excellence, **B** indicates good work, **C** indicates satisfactory work, **D** work is unsatisfactory in some respect, **F** is substantially unsatisfactory work.

Specific grading criteria will be noted with each assignment.

All assignments must be submitted one hour before class begins. Late assignments will not be available for critiques. Grades will be lowered for late submission, per D2L notes.

All assignments will be posted on D2L site: <https://d2l.depaul.edu/d2l/home>

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## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

### ASSIGNMENT 1: Abstract Animation

“Creating animated movement is a triadic process of experience, observation, and description. The animator’s uniqueness comes through selection or perceptual biases from experience and observation in the natural world” – Leslie Bishko (from *The Animation Bible*, Maureen Furniss)

In animation objects and emotions are described with movement rather than detailed still drawings. We must study movement in the real world then translate it into animation by distilling it to its’ essential elements.

Using Flash students will create 3 short animations (around 2-5 sec. each) using primarily movement to describe an object or emotion/personality trait (at least one of each).

In class we will brainstorm possible objects/emotions/traits to animate. Students will then pick an object or emotion/trait to animate – they will then create a 2d simplified version of that object in one colour (i.e. a red rectangle for a car, a brown triangle for a feather, a black circle for a cannon ball). Students will then describe the object by relying on movement rather than visual details.

These short animations will be approached as sketches to be tweaked and reworked. We will critique these works in progress in order to help each other achieve the best results possible. During the final crit students will guess what the objects/emotions/traits are.

Various animation concepts will be introduced – students will be encouraged to use as many as possible.

#### FOCUS ON:

- Timing and Spacing with Motion Arcs!!!
- use of five types of movement (i.e. acceleration, deceleration, constant, erratic, hold), motion arc, anticipation and follow through (if applicable – i.e. if it suits your idea)
- use anticipation (if applicable)
- cartoon physics: use exaggeration and timing to describe weight, flexibility and resistance of object and emotion/trait (i.e. focus on energy moving through an object not an object moving)
- staging = Put some thought into the composition of your scene. For example the arms of a clock would be centered on the screen, whereas a sneaky or shy personality trait might hide by the edges of the frame. Or windsheild wipers would occupy the entire screen whereas a golf ball would be small on screen in order to travel across the frame.
- reducing an idea (i.e. object or emotion/personality trait) to simplified/abstracted shapes and key descriptive movement
- studying and analyzing descriptive movement
- embodying movement or emotion/personality trait (can you feel it – is it effective?)

#### Remember:

- use only one color, and a simple geometric shape created in Flash
- use only one shot (i.e. no intercut close ups, etc.)

- rely on movement to describe object (not visual representation)

DUE: Sept. 22

### **ASSIGNMENT 2: Bouncing Ball Head**

Using Flash and a digital drawing tablet (i.e. Wacom) students will complete a bouncing ball sequence with stretch and squash. Students will then add hair and facial features to the ball to create a bouncing head.

FOCUS ON:

- creating a consistent and believable volume
- animating in passes (i.e. animate the bouncing ball first then use as an anchor to add hair and a face after)
- animating follow through, overlapping movement and dragging (i.e. hair, tentacles, etc.)
- having fun with facial features

DUE: Sept. 29

### **ASSIGNMENT 3: morphing and cycles**

Using hand drawn animation in Flash students will create a collaborative animation where each students' drawing morphs into the next. (Morphing is changing smoothly from one image to another by small gradual steps using animation techniques). The morph must be a minimum of 12 drawings. After completing the morph students will add two cycles to their original drawing. The end result will be a series of cycling images morphing into and out of each other – and hopefully a great little psychedelic short film.

Some examples of morphing in animation from Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94Ixz1YI55Q>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eirxSC3wmY>

PART ONE:

Using the same resolution Flash file students will create one image in the center of their stage. (Considerations might include a drawing which is good to morph/cycle – as a whole or in pieces). They will then export this image and exchange it with another student (we will figure out the order in class – so it creates a daisy chain). Students will then animate their drawing morphing into the drawing they have been given. There must be a minimum of 12 drawings in each morph sequence.

FOCUS ON:

- breakdown/passing position
- using a mix of key frame and straight ahead animation
- motion arcs and flow
- animating your morph in a creative way (i.e. consider morphing certain segments first and having others follow rather than all at once, consider animating a visual gag/detail in the morph – i.e. an eye popping or blinking)

## PART TWO:

Students will then add 2 animated cycles to their original drawing.

One cycle will involve the drawing or a section of the drawing rotating and the other cycle will involve the drawing or a section of the drawing swinging back and forth (like a pendulum).

## FOCUS ON:

- breakdown/passing position
- using key frames with straight ahead animation
- overlapping action
- using previously discussed animation concepts (see Assignment 1)
- smooth cycles

DUE: Oct. 8

## **ASSIGNMENT 4: Photoshop collage character and After Effects puppeting and walk cycle**

### PART ONE: Photoshop Collage:

Students will design a character using elements from exactly three different sources. You can change the features as you see fit, but ultimately you want to design a character where the disparate elements walk that thin line between complimenting each other while still obviously originating from different images. The character will be a sort of “Franken-puppet” but all the elements need to work together, aesthetically and functionally. Source images can be from the internet, digital photographs, scanned found images/objects, and/or scanned original drawings. The character must be in profile and be bipedal.

This will be completed in Photoshop – with elements (i.e. head, hand) resting on separate layers.

DUE: Oct. 15

### PART TWO: After Effects Rigging:

Students will import their Photoshop collage character into After Effects in order to create a rigged puppet – which they will then make walk using tweening and the Bezier tool to create personalized movement.

## FOCUS ON:

- effective character design
- technical proficiency for Photoshop collage (i.e. puppet elements are cleaned up, resting on different layers, proper file format)
- technical proficiency for After Effects puppet rigging (i.e. puppet rigging works, timing is personalized with the use of Bezier tool)
- a walk cycle which demonstrates weight and flexibility (see Richard Williams readings)

DUE: Oct. 22

## **ASSIGNMENT 5: ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS**

### **PART ONE:**

Starting on the first day of class students will acquire a sketchbook (minimum size 6x9 inches) and begin to sketch in it – scenes from real life as well as imagination. Students can also start collecting digital and physical (i.e. paper) reference material (i.e. images they like/find inspiring, animation styles and techniques and animators they are interested in). This will work as a sort of production book for the class – where you gather relevant images/material that you will later use as inspiration.

**THIS WILL BE HANDED IN ALONG WITH THE ANIMATION.** (i.e. Your sketchbook, and any **additional** digital media on a flash drive. Please flag (with post it notes or some other means) the reference material and write a short note (1-2 sentences) on its relevance to your animation).

DUE: Oct. 27

### **PART TWO:**

Using their sketchbook (specifically studies/observations from real life) as inspiration students will create a 10sec. animation using alternative/experimental materials. This can include particle animation (i.e. sand, beads, small aquarium rocks, plastecine), scratch on film, draw and erase on paper or a wall (i.e. Kentridge, Blu), paper cut outs, collage, paint on glass (beware this is labor intensive), and really anything else that can be animated (i.e. stuck under a camera and moved around).

This can be animated using *Dragon Frame* - or some other set up (i.e. a cel phone with good picture resolution) – please talk to me about alternative set ups so we can make sure the resolution/capabilities, etc. are adequate.

### **FOCUS ON:**

- studying real life scenes and movement through drawing (i.e. sketchbook)
- collecting reference material (digital and physical)
- developing an idea from your sketchbook
- research into and use of alternative materials
- professional presentation of final animation (It shouldn't look like you whipped it off or threw it together).
- time management

DUE: Nov. 5

## **ASSIGNMENT 6: FINAL ASSIGNMENT: SHORT ANIMATED FILM (sound optional)**

Students will create a short (15-30sec.) animated video (sound optional) using one or more of the techniques explored in the class. Throughout the semester students will experiment with a variety of techniques and approaches through which they will cultivate a personal theme, be it technical or conceptual, that they will develop into a final piece. Students may use previous experiments as a jumping off point, but the final work presented must be new material created for the assignment.



## PART ONE: Proposal

Students will hand in a storyboard (10-15 panels – made into a power point presentation with a panel on each page), a working schedule, and a short statement describing the technique they will use and any other relevant info (i.e. artists they are inspired by, reference material, etc.).

I will be looking for a clear concept for the piece, engagement with ideas and techniques presented in the course and personal vision.

\*\*\* I will meet with students one on one to discuss their proposal.

DUE: Nov. 5

## PART TWO: Animated film (see above description)

For this assignment, I will be looking for:

Concept: Originality, coherence, relation between content and form, thought given to structure and material.

Execution: Demonstrates technical proficiency, attention to detail, displays a significant amount of work and personal engagement. Overall, the piece reads as a coherent whole.

Statement: Ability to discuss intentions, themes and process clearly, proper language.

Reference artists, techniques and keywords seen in the course.

DUE: Nov. 24

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## DISCLAIMER

Course outlines are planning documents and may be amended as the course proceeds.

Students will be notified and consulted about all changes.

## WEEK BY WEEK OVERVIEW

Week Date	Topic / In-class	Assignment / Objective	Due
1. Sept 10	<b>FIRST CLASS:</b> intro to class/resources/supplies needed. Review Syllabus and D2L Introduce sketchbook Introduce Abstract Animation Assignment Discuss Direct Animation/Draw on film (if time permits)	READINGS: <i>The Animation Bible</i> , Maureen Furniss - Chapters 1-2 <i>The Animator's Survival Kit</i> , Richard Williams - pg. 1-35, 36-40  Buy sketchbook and begin drawing in it.  Study movement in real life (i.e. bubbles rising in soda, a flag fluttering, rat skittering).	Readings due: next class  Abstract Animation due: Sept 22
2. Sept 15	Continue to work on Abstract Animation. Further discussion of techniques	Discuss timing and spacing 5 types of movement Demo on Flash REFERENCE READINGS: <i>The Animator's Survival Kit</i> , Richard Williams pg. 256-272 (weight), 273-284 (anticipation)	
2. Sep 17	In progress Critique Abstract Animation		
3. Sept 22	Critique Abstract Animation and Introduce Bouncing Ball Head Assignment	READINGS: <i>The Animator's Survival Kit</i> , Richard Williams - pg. 92–95 (Getting more movement within the mass)	Readings due: next class  Bouncing Ball Head Animation due: Sept 29
3. Sept 24	In progress Critique of Bouncing Ball Head Assignment and discuss follow through – adding hair and facial features		
4. Sept 29	Critique Bouncing Ball Head Assignment Introduce Morphing Assignment	READINGS: <i>The Animator's Survival Kit</i> , Richard Williams - pg. 285-296 (Take and	Readings due: next class

		accents) - pg. 217-245 (Flexibility/breakdown)  Discuss smears and other “special effects” (Halas)	Morphing with Cycles Animation due: Oct 8
4. Oct 1	Critique in progress Morphing Animation Discuss cycles		
5. Oct 6	In progress critique of cycles		
5. Oct 8	Critique Morphs and Cycles Assignment  Introduce Photoshop Collage and After Effects Puppet rigging Character Design	Readings: <i>The Animation Bible</i> , Maureen Furniss - Chapter 12-13 (Computer Animation and Digital Visions)	Photoshop Collage Character due: Oct 15 After Effects animated walk cycle due: Oct 22
6. Oct 13	Critique Photoshop Collage puppets in progress and demo on After Effects rigging	READINGS: <i>The Animator's Survival Kit</i> , Richard Williams - pg. 102-122 Watch videos <i>Ani Survival Kit</i> <i>parts 5 and 6</i> (on COLTube)	Readings due: next class
6. Oct 15	Continue to work on puppet rigging – in progress critique		
7. Oct 20	Continue to work on After Effects puppets – add weight, arm swing		
7. Oct 22	Critique Photoshop After Effects puppet rigging Walk cycle  Introduce Sketchbook and Alternative Materials Assignment (screening and demo of techniques – including <i>Dragon Frame</i> and animating using your cel phone to animate)	READINGS: <i>The Animation Bible</i> , Maureen Furniss - Chapter 10: Stop-motion Animation: A Survey of Techniques - pg. 278-279 – Cutout Figure Using Paper Pivot Hinges	Readings due: next class  Sketchbook and Alternative Materials Assignment proposal due: Oct 27 Animation due: Nov 5
8. Oct 27	Proposals due for Sketchbook and Alternative Materials Assignment - One on one meetings.		

	More in class demos and studio work.		
8. Oct 29	Critique of work in progress for Sketchbook and Alternative Materials Assignment		
9. Nov 3	Introduce final assignment – discuss storyboards, production paths	<p>READINGS:</p> <p><i>The Animation Bible</i>, Maureen Furniss</p> <p>- Chapters 4 – 5</p> <p>(Consider: How does this affect your approach to your final? What advice do you think applies to your project?)</p>	<p>Readings due: next class</p> <p>Final Assignment proposal due: Nov 5</p> <p>Animation due: Nov 24</p>
9. Nov 5	Critique Alternative Material Assignment Proposals for final due – one on one meetings		
10. Nov 10	Critique work in progress for final		
10. Nov 12	Sound demo and working class, one on one and group feedback		
Nov. 24 2:30 – 4:45	Final Critique!		