

## CHARACTER DESIGN

ANI 345 WINTER 2018 | Monday & Wednesday | 11:50 – 1:20 | CDM Room 527

Instructor: Amy Lockhart

My email: alockha3@cdm.depaul.edu

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:45-2:45pm, and by appointment

Office: CDM 516

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Students will be introduced to various methods of creating interesting and original character designs for animated films and games, and then put these approaches into practical use. Methods for creating creative concepts will include drawing, collage, sculpture and 3D mock-ups. Fundamental visual design and color principles will be stressed, along with the basics of caricature. Students will utilize their character designs in an animated short.

**OVERVIEW:** This course is project based, and therefore is time intensive and dependent upon your participation in assignments and critiques. There will be a lot of drawing, as well as an opportunity for you to create a short animatic that depicts a scene using your character designs.

**REQUIREMENTS:** Each student is required to attend class on time, stay for the duration of class, to give full attention to screenings and lectures in class, to produce assignments demonstrating their grasp of technical concepts and ability to think creatively, to participate in discussion and critiques, to write one self-evaluation, and to have a respectful, positive, hard-working attitude throughout the semester.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** All assignments will be submitted on D2L one hour BEFORE class starts.

**PROJECTS**      **It is mandatory to put in 6 hours of work per week outside the classroom.** Those who want to get more out of the class will put extra time toward their projects. During the end of the quarter, you can expect to put in more time, as you will be making your final project.

Images must be submitted as a **multi-page PDF**. Text documents must be submitted as **PDF files**. Video projects must be submitted as **QuickTime .mov files**, created with **H264/AAC compression**.

Files should be labeled as follows: **LastName\_ProjectName.file extension**

**Completed projects not submitted on the due date will be lowered one full grade, and you will only have until the start of following class to hand it in for credit.** If your final project is not submitted in time for critique, it will be lowered two full grades, and you will only have until the next day 5pm to hand it in for any credit.

**RECOMMENDED TEXT:**      *Prepare to Board* by Nancy Beiman  
   *Creating Characters with Personality* by Tom Bancroft

**PARTICIPATION:** Participation is 10% of your grade. Offering thoughtful feedback and incorporating the constructive criticism of your peers into your work are two ways that you can set yourself apart from the crowd. If I do not hear from you all quarter, you will not receive the full 10 points toward your final grade.

#### **EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS & SUPPLIES:**

*External Hard Drive or Flash/USB Drive.* You will need an external, portable hard drive or a USB/flash drive that allows you to back up your media, thereby giving you independence from shared storage space (the computer's main hard drive) where random disaster might strike! The drive should be Firewire 800, 400 or USB 2.0 or 3.0, and compatible with Windows or Mac operating system - all your choice.

*Online File Storage Site Account:* Please sign up for an online file storage site account (Box.net, Dropbox.com). **Always back up your work! Losing a file is not a valid excuse for not completing assignments.**

*Sketchbook and drawing materials.* The sketchbook can be any size, and the drawing media can be of your choice. Keeping a sketchbook and drawing every day is the second best habit you can have, after brushing your teeth.

*Headphones.* Whether working with sound in your project, or simply listening to music while working, you need to be considerate of others and wear headphones. Be aware that if the volume is high enough, others can still hear what you're listening to despite the headphones. I discourage earbuds. Please invest in a good pair of headphones that completely cover the ear.

**LAB HOURS AND LOCATIONS:** Students enrolled in Animation classes have automatic swipe access to 722, 527, and the stop-motion room on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor. Students enrolled in CDM classes have automatic swipe access to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor lab (PC), 4<sup>th</sup> floor lab (PC and MAC), 634 (PC) and the Student Center labs on the Lincoln Park Campus (PC and MAC). Labs are open 7 days a week.

For a complete list of computer lab hours, locations, and machine availability:  
<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/LabsAndResources/LabsandResources.aspx>

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Student absences are not expected to exceed more than 10% (2 absences) of the number of the classes scheduled for the semester. A third absence will result in the lowering of your final grade one full letter. Any student missing 4 classes will be given a grade of "F" for the semester. **You may not miss the final crit. Doing so will result in a one letter grade reduction of your final grade.**

Tardiness is defined as not in the classroom when attendance is called or departing before the class has been formally dismissed by the instructor. Tardiness that exceeds thirty minutes will be counted as an absence. TWO late arrivals or early departures, or a combination of both, are counted as one absence.

**GRADING:**

Project 1: Self portrait – iconic to realistic and cartoony in between	5
Project 2: Building from shapes – redesign proportions	10
Project 3: Frankenstein – redesign style	10
Project 3: Dynamic Poses: structure and redesign	10
Project 4: Drawing animals with accessories	10
Project 5: Creatures Inspiration – concept art	10
Project 6: Cast of Characters – redesign for variety	10
Project 7: Environment as Character	10
Project 8: Final Part 1 - Character Bible	10
Project 9: Final Part 2 – Character Animation	10
Participation	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0

**EMAIL:** I will answer email within 24-hours. Emailing your professor is a great opportunity to practice *professionalism*. Please consider this when you email me with questions and concerns. 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. If I have to ask you to stop texting more than once, there will be a full letter grade taken off your final grade.**

**CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:** If I feel that your behavior is interfering with the professionalism of our classroom (disruption, talking, napping, texting, internet use, 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 office:

Center for Students with Disabilities: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/csd/>

## **SCHEDULE:**

**\*\*This schedule is subject to change throughout the semester.**

### **WEEK 1**

Wednesday, January 3

Go over syllabus and expectations

In class exercise: Character Scribbles

### **WEEK 2**

Monday, January 8

Topic: Self Portrait

What is cartooning? – iconic to realistic and cartoony in-between

In class demo: How to draw a realistic head and facial expressions

Assignment: Self Portrait

Wednesday, January 10

Topic: Building on Shapes

In class exercise: Shape based characters

Assignment: Building on Shapes

Due: Self Portrait

### **WEEK 3**

Monday, January 15

Topic : Building on shapes – redesign

In class exercise: redesigning characters' proportions

Wednesday, January 17

Topic: Frankenstein

In class exercise: Frankenstein and redesigning drawing style

Due: Building on Shapes

Assignment: Frankenstein

### **WEEK 4**

Monday, January 22

Topic: Dynamic poses – structure and redesign

In class exercise: figuring out underlying structure of your 2d character design

In class exercise: drawing dynamic poses

Due: Frankenstein

Assignment: Dynamic poses

Wednesday, January 24

Topic: Cartoon animals

In class demo: how to draw cartoon animals

Assignment: Cartoon Animals with Accessories Before and After

### **WEEK 5**

Monday, January 29

Topic: Accessories

In class exercise: drawing and telling stories with accessories

Due: Dynamic Poses

Wednesday, January 31

Topic: Creatures inspiration – concept art

Class Crit and lecture

Due: Cartoons Animals with Accessories

Assignment: Creatures inspiration – concept art

## **WEEK 6**

Monday, February 5

Topic: Creatures inspiration – concept art – continued

In class demo: working in Photoshop to create surreal characters with colour and texture

Wednesday, February 7

Topic: Cast of Characters

Class Crit and lecture

Due: Creatures inspiration

Assignment: Cast of Characters

## **WEEK 7**

Monday, February 12

Topic: Cast of Characters – continued

In class exercise: coming up with ideas for stories and characters

Wednesday, February 14

Topic: Environment as character

In class exercise: telling a story through backgrounds and camera moves

Assignment: Environment as character

## **WEEK 8**

Monday, February 19

Topic: Environment as character – continued

Class Crit

In class demo: creating camera moves in Animate Flash and Premiere

Due: Cast of Characters

Wednesday, February 21

Topic: Final part 1 – Character Bible

Class crit and lecture

Assignment: Final part 1 – Character Bible

Due: Environment as Character

## **WEEK 9**

Monday, February 26

Topic: Final part 1 – Character Bible – continued

One on One meetings to discuss Final Projects

Wednesday, February 28

Topic: Final part 2 – Character Animation

Lecture: Acting for Animation

Assignment: Final part 2 – Character Animation

**WEEK 10**

Monday, March 5

Topic: Final part 2 – Character Animation

In class exercise: strategies to animate complex movement (i.e. dance moves)

Wednesday, March 7

Topic: Final part 1 and 2 –continued

Working class

Monday, March 12

Topic: Final part 1 and 2 –continued

Working class

Thursday, March 19 – 11:30 to 1:45PM

**FINAL CRIT**

Due: Final Assignment Part 1 and 2 (Character Bible and Character Animation)

**MANDATORY ATTENDANCE!**

**Missing the Final Crit will result in your final grade being lowered by one full letter.**

**Make your travel plans accordingly!**