**ANI 101-603: Animation for Non-Majors**

Spring Quarter 2013

MW 1:30-3:00 pm

Loop Campus, CDM rm. 206

Instructor: Jacqueline Smessaert Brennan

[Email:jbrennan@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:Email:jbrennan@cdm.depaul.edu)

Office Hours: MW 11:45 am-1:15 pm CDM office 615

W 3:15 pm- 4:45 pm CDM office 615

**or by appointment**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Course introduces a variety of basic animation techniques for cinema and gaming, such as hand-drawn,

stop-motion and (very basic)digital, with an emphasis on the use of computer technology. Examples of diverse animation genres and styles (experimental, cartoon, anime, special effects, computer games) from different cultures will be screened and discussed. Students will explore the unique qualities of the medium through a series of hands-on projects that can be adapted to their own personal interests. They will learn about professional animation process (storyboard and animatic) during the production of a final project that encourages them to consider the role and potential of animation in our society.

**This is a hands-on class with a weekly assignment**, some written and some practice oriented. Animation is a field where you will learn by doing so be prepared to devote a bit of time each week to these assignments. The digital assignments will be done using Adobe PhotoShop and After Effects which are available in the student labs of the CDM building. Again, make sure that you allow time in your schedule to access the labs so that your assignments may be completed on time.

**ANI 101 is included in the Liberal Studies program as a course with credit in the Arts and Literature Domain.** Courses in the Arts and Literature Domain ask students to extend their knowledge and experience of the arts by developing their critical and reflective abilities. In these courses, students interpret and analyze particular creative works, investigate the relations of form and meaning, and through critical and/or creative activity to come to experience art with greater openness, insight, and enjoyment. These courses focus on works of literature, art, theatre, or music as such, though the process of analysis may also include social and cultural issues. Students who take course in this domain choose three courses from such choices as literature, the visual arts, media arts, music, and theater. No more than two courses can be chosen from one department or program.

PREREQUISITE(S): None

Course Objectives: After completing this course, students will have:

1 An understanding of basic concepts and principles of animation

2. An understanding of various animation techniques and styles

3. The ability to create a short piece of animation independently

4. The proper terminology and analytic abilities to discuss an animated piece in an educational pr professional environment.

Textbooks:

**Required:** ***The Animation Bible*** by Maureen Furniss

**Attendance**

Student absences are not expected to exceed more than 3 absences. A fourth absence will result in the lowering of your final grade one full letter. Any student missing 5 classes will be given a grade of “F” for the semester.

The student is responsible for any lectures or assignments missed. If an assignment is due a week that you are absent, it is your responsibility to make sure it still arrives on time. This is for your benefit. A good portion of our class time will be spent doing tutorials, screening films, and critiquing work. Lecture notes will not make up for these missed learning experiences.

**You may not miss the final**. Doing so will equal an automatic two letter grade reduction of your final grade. If for some reason you cannot make one of this date you must contact your instructor BEFORE the class that you must miss. Excuses given after the fact will not be accepted.

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

**Tardiness**

We cover a lot of ground every week and try to pack a lot of info into each class. Late arrivals are not only detrimental for the student but a distraction for the rest of the class as well. Three late arrivals will be counted as one full absences. As stated above 4 absences result in the lowering of a grade. If something comes up or you have a scheduling conflict let me know. Otherwise please do you best to arrive at class on time.

**Participation**

One of the best ways to learn in a classroom environment is through active participation in discussions and critiques. In general, we will be following a pattern of creating animation and then discussing it in critique in the following week. When I open up the floor for you to speak, please make the effort to voice your honest and constructive opinion. This more than anything will help you learn from your mistakes and progress in your animation skills.

You’ll also noticed that, in addition to be encouraged, class participation is also something that will be graded. It is worth 50 points total. Everyone starts the quarter with a baseline of 25 points. If a student has more than 2 unexcused absences (medical excuse and/or approved by instructor) or does not participate in class discussions **on a regular basis** **throughout the quarter** can expect to have points deducted. Conversely, students who do actively participate in discussions every week will earn points up to a maximum of 50 (equivalent to half of a letter grade).

**Class Work**

Assignments

\* Must be handed in on time. Late assignments will be accepted on teacher discretion only. On time is submitted through ColWeb one hour BEFORE class starts. Written assignment should be printed out and handed in hard copy form so that I can make notes in the margins. Unexcused late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 1 point deduction per day of lateness

\* BACK UP YOUR WORK AND SAVE OFTEN WHILE WORKING ON DIGITAL ASSIGNMENTS: Computers crash, systems go down, power goes out. Having to start from scratch is painful so back up your work often.

**Critiques**

Due to the large size of our class, and the limited class time, not everyone’s work will get a full review during class. I generally try to pick a few project each week and insure that every student has their time on the big screen during the course of the quarter. I do try to give fairly in depth reviews of the work in the grading section but if you’d like more feedback, arrange to discuss your work with me during my office hours. We will view and discuss everyone’s final project during the final exam.

Assignments:

Week 1: Reaction Paper 1 (1.5-2 pages) 50 5

Week 2: Flipbook 50 5

Week 3: Reaction Paper 2 (1.5 -2 pages) 50 5

Week 4: Choice of Stop Motion or Hand Drawn 100 10

Week 5: Bouncing Ball Digital Animation(After Effects) 100 10

Week 6: Comparison Paper (4 pages) 100 10

Midterm February 20th 100 10

Week 7: Jointed Character Cycle 100 10

Week 8: Final Animation Project Pitch (1 page + storyboards) 50 5

Week 9: Rough draft 50 5

Week 10: Final Project 200 20

Participation in class discussions 50 5

**Total 1000 points**

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

Standards for Achievement:

Grade A:

Student performs in an outstanding way. Student exhibits achievement and craftsmanship in all work. Design criteria is exceeded and student challenges him/herself in project design. Student exhibits commitment to expanding ideas, vocabulary and performance.

Grade B:

Student performs beyond the requirement of the project. Student exhibits above average progress and craftsmanship. A design criterion is exceeded. Student exhibits above average interest in expanding idea, vocabulary, and performance.

Grade C:

Criteria of assignment is met, and all requirements are fulfilled. Student shows average quality work and minimum time and effort on projects. Student shows moderate interest.

Grade D:

Student performance is uneven and below average. Requirements for projects are only partially fulfilled. Minimal interest is shown and attendance, participation and involvement are inadequate.

Grade F

Student fails to meet minimum course requirements and shows no interest. Levels of participation and craftsmanship are extremely poor. Student’s attendance is inadequate.

Requesting an incomplete grade:

An incomplete grade may only be assigned to a student if the student has experienced an extenuating circumstance near the end of the term, the student is in good standing in the class, and the request is made before

Cell Phones

Use of cell phones in the class and the lab is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class. Mistakes will happen (to me too), but repeated failure to turn your phone off will result in a lowered grade for the class. All phone conversations should be conducted outside the class – don’t disturb those working in the lab and put others in an uncomfortable situation.

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. Inconsiderate behavior will result in a lowered grade.

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.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements, should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Materials and Supplies

A pack of 4 x 6 index cards for the flipbook

A flash drive to back up files and keep your work on. This is very important for all non-digital assignments and for those that are too big to fit on COLweb.  
Optional art supplies (will depend on your choice of materials and the assignment): modeling clay, Xacto knife and blades, various coloring supplies such as paint, markers or colored pencil, a digital camera.

Papers: You will be asked to view a film in class and write a brief reaction paper to that film. It is very important that you read the guidelines for writing these in the COL Documents section. If after reading your first paper it is evident that you could use some assistance with your writing, I will require that you visit the Writing Center. (Make sure I get the confirmation note or email that says you've done this.)

**Schedule**

This schedule is subject to change throughout the semester, and will be adapted to fit the needs of the students. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments will be submitted in digital format online 1 hour prior to class. Assignments may be submitted earlier. Specific reading assignments and handouts will be posted weekly in the documents section of the ColWeb.

**Week 1 (1/7 and 1/9)**

**Topic:** Animation in our world today /Visual Communication

**Lecture/Discussion:**  We will start out with an overview of the class, review of syllabus and objectives we would like to achieve by the end of the quarter.

After the ground rules are set, we will jump right in and discuss the prevalence and many uses of animation in our world today. We will also discuss general film terms and talk about the elements that go into making a successful piece of animation. The idea is for you to learn how to look at a piece of animation and dissect how the animator uses a particular, media, style, mood, sound , etc. to communicate a particular message.

**Assignment: Reaction Paper1 due on Monday**

Write a 1.5- 2 page paper regarding your reaction to one of the animated pieces screened in class. Write about how the various elements (syle, sound color) were used to tell a story or convey a message and the impact that these choices had on your perception of the piece

**Week 2**

**Topic: Where (and how) it all began**

**Lecture:** We will do a quick historical overview of animation starting with the earliest optical toys that paved the way for the animated film. We will also view a number of short early animated pieces and discuss the variety of styles and uses for contemporary animation.

**Assignment:Flipbook**

Make a flipbook animation consisting of at least 20 images on 4 X 6(or 3x5, something in that neighborhood) notecards, held together with a metal clip

**Week 3**

**Lecture/ Discussion: Stop Motion Animation**

We will view and discuss a number of stop motion animation pieces. This genre includes clay , cut paper and puppet animation. We will further our study of the principles of animation with particular attention to techniques used in this particular medium. We will also get hands on by having a stop-motion palooza day in the stop motion lab in which every student(time permitting) gets under the camera to try their hand at the technique.

**Assignment**: Reaction paper 2

Write a 1.5 – 2 page paper discussing your reaction to one of the animated pieces screened in the last 2 weeks of the class.

**Week 4**

**Lecture/Discussion: Hand Drawn Animation**

Now that we are familiar with the very basics of animation, we will begin to study various techniques individually. This week we will study hand drawn or “traditional” 2d animation . In addition to viewing a variety of samples from this genre, we will also discuss, from a technical standpoint, the process of creating hand drawn animation and how that process has evolved over the years. We will also be discussing the animation principles of pose to pose animation, eases, beakdowns and squash and stretch.

**Assignment** Stop Motion or Hand-Drawn assignment

At this point you will have been exposed to both stop motion and hand drawn animation techniques. Now it is time to try your hand at one of them. You will create a short piece (3-5 depending on which medium you choose) of animation by either shooting a piece of stop motion animation in the 8th floor lab or creating a series of drawings that will animated when shown sequentially.

**Week 5**

**Lecture:** **Digital Animation**

A look at the impact that computers have had on animation. We will study a variety of pieces that include varying degrees of digital assistance. We will then get “hands’ on and begin exploring the world of digital animation by using Adobe After Effects to create our own digital animation. You will learn how to set key frames and adjust eases to get a more realistic feel for the bounce of your ball.

**Assignment:** Create a bouncing object and becoming familiar with the tools of the program to reinforce the principles of animation

**Week 6**

**Lecture:** We will study how to create a multi jointed character in PhotoShop, bring the file into After Effects and create a rigged character to animate. The basic concepts learned in this exercise should give you a very basic understanding of animation concepts used in Flash and 3d computer animation. Animation concepts to be discussed will be hierarchical animation, follow through, secondary action, overlapping action.

**Assignment**: Comparison paper due next Monday

**Week 7**

**Lecture:** Continue working on our jointed character. Once we have them up and running, we will work on animating them. We will also discuss various types of “cycles” and their use in different forms of animation. There will be lab time to work together as a class in AfterEffects.

**Assignment:** Create a 2 – 3 second walk with the jointed character you have created. Turn in as a Quick time.

**Week 8**

**Lecture:** Staging, planning, story boarding and animatics. We will be preparing you to plan you final animation piece and the choices you will be making (technique, timing, mood, theme, etc) before you begin. Also, use of “2.5 D” in AfterEffects to enhance your storytelling capabilities. Also “hybrid animation will be discussed

**Assignment:** Create a “pitch” presentation for your final project. At least a one page description of the story/theme, technique, style of your final piece. Include reasons why you chose the topic that you did and why you feel the particular style is a good method to deliver your message. Very simple storyboard/animatic is also required and, if you wish, visual references for the style you hope to create.

**Week 9**

**Lecture:3D****Computer Animation**

We take a glimpse at the world of 3d computer animation and its many uses in films, gaming and web animation and do a brief in class Maya demo to show the similarities and differences between the digital animation we have done and full up 3d. We will meet in the lab (rm 801) so people can learn how to do titles, fx and play around with 2.5d first hand.

Assignment: Do a rough draft of your final animation project. The idea is to get the overall timing and staging of the animation in place.

**Week 10**

*Critique rough drafts*

Wrapping things up: We will be tying up any loose ends in terms of animation in general and your projects specifically

*We will spend some time in class working in class on our final projects and tackling any issues and problems that might arise.*

**FINAL EXAM**

Monday June 10 from 11:45am – 2:00pm

Final Project due. They will be presented and discussed during this time. **Attendance is mandatory**. Failure to attend will result in lowering your final project one full letter grade.