

## CHARACTER DESIGN

ANI 345 WINTER 2017 | Tuesday & Thursday | 10:10 - 11:40 | CDM Room 722

Instructor: Amy Lockhart

My email: alockha3@cdm.depaul.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-1pm, 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.

\*GRADS      In addition to the standard assignments, students enrolled in the graduate section (ANI 445) must research and create a 15-minute Power Point presentation on a character designer of their choice. They must clear their subject with the instructor to make sure he/she is appropriate and not a duplicate. The presentation will be given to the entire class.

**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: Commissioned Character	10
Project 2: Franken Character and the Redesign	10
Project 3: Showing Expression in the Face and Hands	10
Project 4: Creatures – cartoon animals	5
Creatures – research and creature design	10
Project 5: Relative Creature	10
Project 6: Accessories	5
Project 7: Environment as Character	10
Project 8: Final	20
Participation	10
TOTAL	100

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**

Tuesday, January 3

Go over syllabus and expectations.

In class exercise: building on shapes

Assignment: shape based characters

Thursday, January 5

Assignment: Commissioned Character Design

Part One: research a serialized television show (or comic book)

### **WEEK 2**

Tuesday, January 10

Due: Commissioned Character Design - Part One: research

Assignment: Commissioned Character Design

Part Two: design a character for a pre-existing television show

In class exercise building on shapes, and other visual strategies (iconic vs. realistic)

Thursday, January 12

Due: Assignment One Commissioned Character Design - Part Two: character design

Assignment: Franken Character and the redesign

In class exercise: Franken Character

### **WEEK 3**

Tuesday, January 17

In class exercise: redesign and dynamic poses

Thursday, January 19

Due: Franken Character and the Redesign

Assignment: Showing expression in the face and hands

Part One: facial expressions from iconic to realistic

### **WEEK 4**

Tuesday, January 24

Due: Showing expression in the face and hands – Part One

Assignment: showing expression in the face and hands

Part Two: expressive extremities (hands, hair, clothing)

Thursday, January 26

Due: expressive extremities (hands, hair, clothing)

Assignment: creatures

Part One: cartoon animals

### **WEEK 5**

Tuesday, January 31

Due: cartoon animals

Part Two: research and creature design

Thursday, February 2

Due: research and creature design

Assignment: relative creature

**WEEK 6**

Tuesday, February 7

Relative creature continued

In class exercises and work class

Thursday, February 9

Due: Relative Creature

Assignment: Designing a Cast of Characters

**WEEK 7**

Tuesday, February 14

In class exercise

Thursday, February 16

Due: Designing a Cast of Characters

Assignment: Accessories

**WEEK 8**

Tuesday, February 21

Due: Accessories

Assignment: Environments as Character

Thursday, February 23

Due: Environments as Character

Assignment: Final Assignment

Part One: Character Bible

**WEEK 9**

Tuesday, February 28

Assignment: Final Assignment

Part Two: World Bible

Thursday, March 2

Assignment: Final Assignment

Part Three: Acting for Animation

**WEEK 10**

Tuesday, March 7

Working class and in class presentations

Thursday, March 9

Working class and in class presentations

**FINAL CRIT**

Thursday, March 16

Due: Final Assignment

**MANDATORY ATTENDANCE!**

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

**Make your travel plans accordingly!**