Hand-Drawn Character Animation
syllabus

**DEPAUL
CDM**

Hand-Drawn Character Animation
winter 2020
T, Th 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Online Zoom Meetings - following the link

Instructor: Brian Ferguson

**ANI 327
ANI 427**

Office: CDM 461
Email. brian.ferguson@depaul.edu (best way to reach me)
phone: (312) 362-1422
Office/Advising hours:
  W: 9 am - 12:00 pm, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

**Course
Description**

In this course, students will be introduced to the traditional art of hand-drawn character performance. Topics covered will include acting, body mechanics, volume, weight, walk cycles, dialogue and facial expression.

Prerequisites   ANI 231 or ANI 421

**Course
Objectives**

1. Gain a complete understanding of traditional animation principles and the tools needed to apply them to hand-drawn projects.

2. Utilize performance techniques to give character animations the illusion of life.

3. Analyze multiple animation styles and techniques, and experiment with drawing to create your own style based on your response to the medium

4. Evaluate various professional animation demo reels and produce your own demo reel quality character animation

Texts and Materials

Required Texts
"The Animator's Survival Kit"
by Richard Williams
Publisher, Faber and Faber Inc.
2001

Recommended Texts
"Stop Staring"
by Jason Osipa

Texts you might really find useful, if you have the means
"The Illusion Of Life"
by Frank Thomas & Ollie Johnston

Attendance   Students are expected to attend every class. We cover an enormous amount of material in every class, and missing even one can be a huge setback. Any student missing 3 classes or more 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 hands on tutorials, screening films, and critiquing work. Lecture notes will not make up for these missed learning experiences.

You may not miss the midterm or final class date. Doing so will equal an automatic two letter grade reduction of your final grade. If for some reason you cannot make one of these dates 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.

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 will help you learn from your mistakes and progress with your animation skills. It will also prepare you for the professional arena.

Class Work   <u>Assignments</u>
  • Must be handed in on time.   Late assignments will be accepted with teacher discretion only. <u>On time</u> means submitted through D2L one hour BEFORE class on the day the assignment is due. Students who use class time to finish assignments the day they are due will forfeit the right to hand in that assignment. Class time is for working with the material at hand, not finishing late assignments.

<u>Late work:</u>
  o Late work will not be accepted unless approved of PRIOR to the class in which it is due or accompanied by a valid medical excuse.
  o You are allotted one "freebie" per term that allows you to turn ONE assignment late for full credit (up until the 10th week of the term). You only get one of these per term. All other late assignments are forfeited.

<u>Written Assignments:</u> Must be typed.

<u>Digital Assignments:</u> All assignments handed in digitally must be in the following format (please note upper and lower case usage)
  o firstname.lastname_projectname.extension
  o example: josh.jones_projectOne.m4v

  ✴ <u>Special Accommodations:</u> If you have any special considerations please see the instructor.

  ✴ <u>BACK UP YOUR WORK:</u> Failure of computer software and or Hardware will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for late projects or incomplete grades so back up your work daily. Also, save frequently.

Critiques

Unless I tell you otherwise, assigned work must be completed and submitted through D2L the midnight BEFORE class starts. This will keep us from wasting valuable class time. In most cases (I'll let you know the exceptions) I request that you use a readable movie format, such as QuickTime, AVI, or m4v. Please watch the size of the file you hand in. They really don't need to be larger than 20 MB. Also, check that your movie file is watchable. Occasionally people have turned in videos that either were all black, or wouldn't play at all. **Handing in something unfinished is always better than nothing at all.** Due to the large size of our class, and the limited class time, not everyone's work will get a full review during class. 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 last class.

Grading

Assignments	80% of grade	
Final Project	20% of grade	
Total	100%	

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

Your grade will depend on the following criteria:

• **Meeting Project Deadlines:** It is vital to have your work available for critique. Work unavailable for critique will be considered late and will not be accepted unless you are using your one "freebie."

• Creativity and personal input into execution of project

• Coming prepared to class, including assigned reading and assignments

• Showing in-progress work, which can benefit from suggestions, rather than presenting entirely new work at critiques

• Effective visually aesthetic solutions to all problems assigned

• Taking initiative to work outside of class and research

• Hard work and sweat

• Participation in critiques and discussions

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

All assignments in this class will be transmitted digitally online through D2L unless otherwise noted.

Schedule
(subject to change)

week	Tue	Thu	class	assignment
1	3/31		• Intro, review of syllabus, • review of basic terms, • discuss good drawing for animation • also, inbetweening demo	•In class exercise/ inbetweening in class •Complete inbetweening as homework.
		4/2	• **Critique inbetweening work** • perhaps more demonstration. • Discuss animating a flour sack with personality.	thumbnail a flour sack with personality
2	4/7		• **Critique flour sack scene thumbnails.** • Discuss planning a scene	animate flour sack scene
2		4/9	•**Critique flour sack scene**. •Discuss walks with purpose	walk with purpose exercise - 1st pass

week	Tue	Thu	class	assignment
3	4/14		• **Critique first pass at walk with purpose exercise**.	walk with purpose exercise - final pass
3		4/16	• **Critique final pass at walk with purpose**. • Discuss more about planning a scene	box scene - thumbnails, story poses
4	4/21		• **Critique thumbnails and story poses for box scene**. • Discuss staging	box scene - rough animation blocking
4		4/23	• **Critique rough animation for box scene**. • Discuss registering a change in emotion	box scene - animation breakdowns
5	4/28		• **Critique animation breakdowns for box scene**. • workshop	• box scene - finish
5		4/30	• **Critique final animation for box scene**. • Discuss lip sync	• find audio files for lip sync assignment
6	5/5		• **Discuss audio file choices for facial exercise**. • Lecture: lip sync	thumbnails w/audio - facial exercise facial exercise blocking
6		5/7	**Critique facial exercise blocking**. Discuss anticipation - in terms of moving from one distinct emotion to another	facial exercise animation

week	Tue	Thu	class	assignment
7	5/12		**Critique facial exercise final** lecture: what makes something funny?	silent funny scene - thumbnails, storytelling poses
		5/14	**Critique silent funny scene thumbnails**.	silent funny scene - blocking
8	5/19		**Critique silent funny scene blocking** Workshop.	silent funny scene - rough animation
		5/21	**Critique silent funny scene -** last chance for feedback	refine and finish funny scene choose audio for 2 character dialogue scene
9	5/26		**Critique silent funny scene finish** Review 2 character audio choices	2 character dialogue scene - thumbnails, storytelling poses
		5/28	review of 2 character dialogue scene thumbnails and storytelling poses	2 character dialogue scene - blocking
10	6/2		lecture: finish	2 character dialogue scene - breakdowns and/or rough animation
		6/4	review of 2 character dialogue scene breakdowns discuss different ways of thinking	**For next class**: Final animation is due
11	6/9		**no class** **finals in session**	**For next class**: Final animation is due
		6/11 **final**	**critique of animation final assignment**	**-** final critique, by students and teacher.

Final Exam **Date:** Thursday, June 11th, 2020,
Time: from 11:30 AM to 1:45 PM
Location: Zoom Meeting

Your exam is on June 11th, 2020, from 11:30 AM to 1:45 PM