

**DePaul  
CIM**

## **Stop Motion Animation**

Spring 2016 | Tues/Thurs 1:30pm-3:00pm | location CDM 803  
shooting space: CDM 818

**Instructor:** Devin Bell

**ANI 455**

**Office:** CDM 512

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**Phone:** (312)362-6156

**Office hours:** Tues/Thurs 11:40 am-12:20 pm and 3:00 pm-4:00 pm

### **Course Description:**

The principles of stop motion character animation in real space are the emphasis of this intermediate level course. Students are introduced to basic armature building, lighting and scene composition, and the designing and fabrication of characters with a variety of materials. Contemporary uses of digital technology to enhance stop motion production will be explored. **PREREQUISITE(S):** ANI 201 (or ANI 101)

### **Learning Outcomes**

- 1)** Students will learn basic and intermediate principles of stop-motion animation
- 2)** Students will utilize a range of physical tools and materials to explore complex puppet-making, props and miniature sets
- 3)** Students will be able to use lighting and shooting techniques to explore advanced cinematography for miniature setups
- 4)** Students will analyze historical and contemporary examples of stop-motion filmmaking
- 5)** Students will create a series of sculpts, animations and a substantial final stop-motion project

### **Texts and Materials**

#### **RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**

“Cracking Animation: The Aardman Book of 3-D Animation”  
Lord, Peter and Sibley, Brian.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Absences are not expected to exceed more than 10% (2 absences) of the number of classes scheduled for the term. More than two absences will automatically result in a one-letter grade reduction for the course. Any student missing five or more classes will receive an "F" for the quarter. Contact me before class if you are unable to attend. Being late to class two 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. Lecture notes alone will not make up for missed work.

**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 me 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.**

**Important dates for Spring 2016:**

- **April 3- last day to add/drop classes**
- **April 10- last day to withdraw with no tuition penalty**
- **May 15- last day to withdraw**

**Participation** One of the best ways to learn in a classroom environment is through *active* participation in discussions, activities and critiques. In general, we will be following a pattern of creating sculpts or animations and then discussing them in a 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 in your filmmaking.

**Class Work** Assignments

- Must be completed and fully uploaded through D2L one hour BEFORE class starts. Late assignments will be accepted with teacher discretion only. For non-time-based projects, you will submit files such as multi-page Word docs, pdfs or jpegs. For all time-based projects I request that you use **QuickTime** format unless discussed with me previously. Class time is for working with the material at hand, not finishing late assignments.
- 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.
- Written Assignments: Must be typed.
- Digital Assignments: All assignments handed in digitally must be in the following format (please note upper and lower case usage)
  - lastnameFirstname\_projectname.extension
  - example: bellDevin\_projectOne.mov

\* **BACK UP YOUR WORK**: 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.

\* **Accommodations/Disabilities**: If you have any particular considerations or concerns, please talk to me and/or contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

<b>Grading</b>	<u>Assignments</u>	60% of grade
	<u>Final Project</u>	40% of grade
	<b>Total</b>	100%
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 in a timely manner.

#### **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, 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.

**Computer Use** It is unacceptable to check e-mail, browse or social network while class is in session; it's not only rude, but distracting. Repeated misuse of time will result in a lowered grade.

**Materials, Supplies & shooting** You will need some basic sculpting supplies including 11-12 gauge aluminum wire, ½ lb. of plastacine modeling clay and 1lb. of "super sculpey." There will be some communal materials available while supplies last. While not required, it is recommended you bring your own preferred sculpting tools such as dental tools, pliers, blades, safety glasses etc. See the attached supply list for recommendations.

**Camera and lighting-** All photographic work must be shot using a DSLR camera and strong attention to lighting. Low quality images with poor lighting will be marked down, therefore it is strongly recommended to shoot every assignment using our school's facilities (room 818 has two controlled stages with cameras.) Additional gear, including stop-motion camera/computer kits and lighting kits may be checked out from CDM's "cage" on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. Reserve gear and shooting time in 818 (3-4 hours max/week) by visiting the cage in person or calling 312-362-5733. Be aware that check out policies are strictly enforced, find details here (click "Equipment" tab):

<https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Production-Resources.aspx>

**Work space-** We have two main spaces- one for building and one for shooting animation. Do not use the shooting space for messy construction of any kind; be ready to set up your finished puppets and sets quickly when you have time reserved (3-4 hours max/week.) It is common courtesy to stay on schedule for this shared precious commodity, and contact your classmates politely if a delay is impacting you or someone else. If someone ahead of you is running overtime, talk to each other and work something out within reason, i.e. an extra ½ hour-1 hour. It is not alright to ask for more than that, unless there is absolutely no demand for the space. It is your responsibility to make the time to shoot; scheduling conflicts will not be accepted as an extenuating circumstance for late projects or incomplete grades.

Regarding the building space- clean up and store your work every day, lock up your tools and supplies and label everything with your name, date and contact information. Students responsible for repeatedly leaving a mess in either space face a two letter grade reduction.

**Online Course Evaluations** Evaluations from students are a required part of the course and help the instructor recognize areas for improvement. Evaluations are anonymous. Students are sent periodic reminders automatically over three weeks, or until the evaluation is complete. Students complete the evaluation online in [CampusConnect](#).

**Schedule** **This schedule is subject to change throughout the term**, and will be adapted to fit the needs of the students.

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments will be submitted online 1 hour prior to class. Assignments may be submitted earlier.

	<u>Lecture</u>	<u>Assignment given:</u>
<b>Week 1</b> Mar 29	<b>Introduction</b>  Stop-motion, basic tools	Found Objects
Mar 31	Styles of lighting and basic movement  <b>Lighting Workshop</b>	Found objects animations
<b>Week 2</b> Apr 5	<b>Critique found objects animations</b>  Fun with clay- replacements and straight-ahead animation	Begin Clay Animation
Apr 7	Morphs, 3D cycles, 3D zoetropes	Final Clay Animation
<b>Week 3</b> Apr 12	<b>Critique Clay Animation</b>  Armature basics	Begin Armatures
Apr 14	<b>Armature workshop and troubleshooting</b>	Final Armatures
<b>Week 4</b> Apr 19	<b>Critique Armatures</b>  Basic physics and performance in stop-motion	Begin "Walks"
Apr 21	Mid-shooting repair guide, Adding character to get more complex walk	Final "Walks"
<b>Week 5</b> Apr 26	<b>Critique "Walks"</b>  Character design for sculpture	Begin character sculpt
Apr 28	Replacement mouth shapes and amazing	Final character sculpt

	eyeballs!	
<b>Week 6</b> May 3	<b>Critique character sculpt</b> Acting, improv, reference and lip sync	Begin expression/lip sync
May 5	More on character performance; exaggeration	Final expression/lip sync
<b>Week 7</b> May 10	<b>Critique expression/lip sync</b> Introduce Final Project	Begin Final (checkpoint 1)
May 12	Maquettes- characters and locations	Complete Final (checkpoint 1)
<b>Week 8</b> May 17	Complex character/puppet design Schematic drawings, rigging	Begin Final (checkpoint 2)
May 19	Detailing characters, establishing art direction and designing coherent worlds	Complete Final (checkpoint 2)
<b>Week 9</b> May 24	<b>Critique Checkpoint 2</b> Special effects, compositing	Begin Final (checkpoint 3)
May 26	Mold-making and casting overview	Complete Final (checkpoint 3)

<b>Week 10</b>  May 31	<b>Individual progress critiques</b>	Begin Final (checkpoint 4)
Jun 2	<b>Individual progress critiques</b>	Complete Final (checkpoint 4)
<b>Finals Week</b> <b>Jun 9</b>	<b>Final</b> <b>ATTENDANCE MANDATORY</b>  NOTE: CLASS WILL BE HELD IN SAME ROOM Thursday, June 9, 11:30am-1:45pm	<b>Final Projects</b>  <b>NOTE: Submission is due the night before</b>

Stop-motion tools and materials (\* items you will need to purchase- all other items are optional, so feel free to wait until we learn about them!)

*Aluminum wire (11.5-12 gauge)
*steel wire (18 gauge)
safety glasses
*modeling clay (oil-based plasticine)
*super-sculpey
liquid latex
Polyurethane foam
epoxy putty
wing nuts
machine screw nuts
machine screws
liquid epoxy
clay (water based)
plaster
silicone
foam
vinyl gloves
cups (plastic and paper)
Aluminum foil
Square tubing
mixing sticks
xacto blade
glue gun
glue sticks
dental/sculpture tools
Toaster oven
scissors
Drill
needle nose pliers
chicken wire
burlap
plastic mixing containers
foam core
wood (various)
Heat Gun
Jig saw
Dremmel tool