

**DePaul  
SCA**

**ANI 455**

## **Stop Motion Animation**

Fall 2018-19 | M/W 1:30pm-3:00pm | location CDM 803

shooting spaces: CDM 818 & The IRL (14 E. Jackson room 310)

Instructor: Devin Bell

Office: CDM 512 (but can also be found in CDM 803, CDM 818 or the IRL)

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

Phone: (312)362-6156

Office hours: M/W 12:00pm-1:30pm

**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)

This course is repeatable.

**Learning Outcomes**

- 1) Students will be able to implement basic principles of stop-motion animation
- 2) Students will be able to utilize a range of physical tools and materials to explore puppet-making, props and miniature sets
- 3) Students will be able to use lighting and shooting techniques to explore cinematography applied to animation
- 4) Students will be able to analyze historical and contemporary examples of stop-motion filmmaking
- 5) Students will be able to shoot a series of stop-motion animations with an emphasis on developing personal style and creating character performances

**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% 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. To receive any credit for a late assignment, it must be submitted within 24 hours of the deadline.

**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 any reason you cannot make one of these dates you must contact me BEFORE the class meets. Excuses given after the fact will not be accepted regarding late assignments or absences.**

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

**Important dates for Fall 2018-19:**

<https://academics.depaul.edu/calendar/Pages/default.aspx>

- **September 11- Last day to add (or swap) classes**
- **September 18- last day to drop with no tuition penalty**
- **October 23- 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 sculptures 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.

<b>Grading</b>	<u>Assignments</u>	60% of grade
	<u>Final Project</u>	40% of grade
	Total	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 is rude and 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, pliers, and ½ lb. of plastacine modeling clay. You will be notified about other required materials as projects call for them. There will be some communal materials available while supplies last. It is recommended you bring your own preferred sculpting tools, xacto blades, safety glasses etc. See the attached supply list for requirements and 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 (CDM 818 and the IRL Animation Stages at 14 E. Jackson, room 310.) Additional gear, including stop-motion camera/computer kits

and lighting kits may be checked out from CDM's "cage" at 14 E. Jackson, Suite LL106. Reserve gear and shooting time in 818 (3 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 different areas for fabrication and shooting animation: CDM 803 is for building puppets and sets, CDM 818 and the IRL animation stages (located at 14 E. Jackson, room 310) are exclusively for shooting. The IRL does have community space for building puppets and sets as well, but storage is limited. Do not use the shooting spaces for messy construction of any kind; be ready to set up your finished puppets and sets quickly when you have time reserved (3 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 both the shooting and the building spaces- 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.

**Signing up for Stage Time-** You may sign up for shooting time in 818 or the IRL (3 hours max/week) via signup sheets provided each quarter. When a class is not using the IRL, you may request more time for bigger projects by contacting the stage coordinator (currently me) with details about the project and shooting schedule. Be aware that these stages require you to sign and adhere to a safety and equipment policy contract for each and every shoot.

## Academic Policies

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: [cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment](http://cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment).

\* Special Accommodations/Disabilities: Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu).

\* Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at: <https://offices.depaul.edu/oa/faculty-resources/teaching/academic-integrity/Pages/default.aspx>.

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 syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

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> Sep 5	<b>Introduction</b>	Select Found Objects
<b>Week 2</b> Sep 10	Stop-motion, basic tools	Begin Found objects animations
Sep 12	Styles of lighting and basic movement <b>Lighting Workshop</b>	Found objects animations
<b>Week 3</b> Sep 17	<b>Critique found objects animations</b> Fun with clay- replacements and straight-ahead animation	Begin Clay Animation
Sep 19	Morphs, 3D cycles, 3D zoetropes	Final Clay Animation
<b>Week 4</b> Sep 24	<b>Critique Clay Animation</b> Animation basics	Begin Armatures
Sep 26	<b>Armature workshop and troubleshooting</b>	Final Armatures
<b>Week 5</b> Oct 1	<b>Critique Armatures</b> Basic physics and performance in stop motion	Begin "Walks"
Oct 3	Mid-shooting repair guide, Adding character to get more complex walk	Final "Walks"

<b>Week 6</b> Oct 8	<b>Critique “Walks”</b>  Character design for sculpture	Begin character sculpt
Oct 10	Replacement mouth shapes and amazing eyeballs!	Final character sculpt
<b>Week 7</b> Oct 15	<b>Critique character sculpt</b>  Acting, improv, reference and lip sync	Begin expression/lip sync
Oct 17	More on character performance; exaggeration	Final expression/lip sync
<b>Week 8</b> Oct 22	<b>Critique expression/lip sync</b>  Introduce Final Project	Begin Final (checkpoint 1)
Oct 24	Maquettes- characters and locations	Complete Final (checkpoint 1)
<b>Week 9</b> Oct 29	Complex character/puppet design Schematic drawings, rigging	Begin Final (checkpoint 2)
Oct 31	Detailing characters, establishing art direction and designing coherent worlds	Complete Final (checkpoint 2)
<b>Week 10</b> Nov 5	<b>Critique Checkpoint 2</b>  Special effects, compositing	Begin Final (checkpoint 3)
Nov 7	Mold-making and casting overview	Complete Final (checkpoint 3)
<b>Finals Week</b> Nov 12	<b>Individual progress critiques</b>	Complete Final (checkpoint 4)
<b>Nov 14</b>	<b>Final ATTENDANCE MANDATORY</b> NOTE: CLASS WILL BE HELD IN SAME ROOM Wednesday, Nov 14, 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 or “floral wire” (20-26 gauge)
*needle nose pliers
*modeling clay (oil-based plasticine)
*xacto blade
*Small glue gun
*glue sticks
*wing nuts
*machine screw nuts
*machine screws
*Aluminum foil
super-sculpey
clay (water based)
plaster
silicone
foam
vinyl gloves
cups (plastic and paper)
liquid epoxy
Square tubing
mixing sticks
liquid latex
Polyurethane foam
Industrial glue gun
epoxy putty
dental/sculpture tools
Toaster oven
scissors
Drill
safety glasses
chicken wire
burlap
plastic mixing containers
foam core
wood (various)
Heat Gun
Jig saw
Dremmel tool