

ANIMATION GRADUATE SEMINAR

ANI460 - Fall 2020

Instructor: Amy Lockhart

Office: CDM 516

Office Hours: T/TH 3:10-5:10

Course Meeting Time/Place:

Tuesday 5:45-9:00pm

ONLINE

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This seminar will explore the animator's role in contemporary culture, including careers in entertainment, art, game development and education. A combination of guest speakers, critical readings, animation analysis and group discussion will help students lay a foundation for their graduate study in the field.

COURSE GOALS:

- Introduce major themes and topics relevant to the art of animation
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- Develop critical thinking skills in issues related to animation
- View a wide variety of examples of animation, including a diversity of eras, styles, techniques, forms, and content.
- Establish a sense of community among the MA and MFA students
- Introduce the animation faculty, their career backgrounds, their work, and their creative interests.
- Introduce a range of creative and career possibilities for people working with animation
- Create 2 two short animation-based projects based on a genre, artist or style, relevant to the course material.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

CLASS VISITS: Each week's class (with the exception of the first class) will start with a visit from one member of the DePaul animation faculty. The visiting faculty will talk about their background and their work, and screen some of their animations. You'll have a chance to ask questions and talk about their work. These visits will introduce you to the DePaul animation faculty, and to a range of examples showing what animation is and can be. They'll also show you some possible career paths in animation.

SCREENINGS: Each week's class will have a topic that will be examined through watching animations and through group discussion. To provide examples for each week's topic, each class meeting will include a screening of material chosen by the instructor. This material will illustrate ideas relevant to the week's topic using examples representing a wide range of animation styles, forms, eras, and techniques.

READINGS: Each weekly topic has corresponding readings that will be discussed in depth during the class meeting. These readings will be provided by the instructor on D2L. All students are expected to have done a careful reading of each week's assigned material at the start of class.

DISCUSSIONS: Students will sign up in pairs to lead one week of class discussions on one topic during the quarter. Leading the class discussion involves 1) giving an explanation of the topic and the key ideas explained in the assigned readings, 2) posing questions for discussion to the class about the topic, and 3) giving some of your own personal reactions to the topic and readings.

Leading the class discussion does not assume that you will be an expert on the topic or assigned readings. You should do your best to understand the readings and the topic as thoroughly as possible, and you can include explanations of any of your own questions and possible confusion in the Discussion forum on D2L.

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM: The class will use the Discussion forum on D2L to prepare for each week's meeting.

The group of students leading each week's discussion are responsible for creating a 500-word (minimum) blog post to begin discussion of the article or articles on which they are leading discussion. This post should outline what you see as the key ideas discussed in the readings, and should pose two or three questions for discussion. This post should be published on the blog *by 5:00 pm on the Sunday prior to the class*.

Every student is expected to write 250 words (minimum) in response or reaction to the assigned reading, which should be posted as comments to the blog *by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday before class*. Everyone is expected to have read the blog discussion prior to the class meeting on Thursday evening.

Creative Project: Each student will create a short, 20-30-second animation based on a contemporary animator, from a list of animators that I provide. This animation and an accompanying short 2-page paper explaining the process and ideas behind your animation, will be due on week 6, for an in-class critique. The technique you use to create your animation (2D or 3D, stop-motion or Wacom tablet, limited versus full animation) is up to you, but should be a technique that you are already familiar with (do not try to teach yourself a new skill or piece of software for this assignment). I will provide instructions on how and where to upload your video file.

READINGS:
All readings will be provided by the instructor.

GRADING:

15% Attendance & participation in class discussions

25% Weekly responses on the class blog (250 words)

35% In-class presentation on one topic, with a post on the class blog (500 words)

25% Creative Project and short explanatory paper

CLASS MEETING STRUCTURE:

5:45-6:45: Visiting animation faculty

6:45-7:00: Short break

7:00-7:45: Screening prepared by the instructor

7:45-9:00: Discussion on scheduled readings

SCHEDULE:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings Discussed</i>
Week 01: Sept. 15	Introduction to Course, Go Over Syllabus, Make Course Schedule. Give out Questionnaire.	None Faculty Presentation: Amy Lockhart
Week 02: Sept. 22	Developing a Personal Aesthetic in Digital Animation	Readings: Digital Animation Aesthetics by David O'Reilly Neil Postman: Amusing Ourselves to Death, Chapter 1 Discussion Leader: Amy Lockhart Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 03: Sept. 29	Towards a Theory of Animation	Readings: Wells, Ch.2 Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: BA
Week 04: Oct. 6	Animation as a visual art-form/ Narrative in Animation	Readings: Wells, Ch. 3 Animation and the powers of plasticity (Post Eisenstein reading as extra reference) Eisenstein on Disney, Ch. 1 (for reference - optional)

		Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 05: Oct. 13	Humor	Readings: Wells, Ch. 4 Discussion Leader: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 06: Oct. 20	Creative Project 1 rough: in-class critiques	<i>Creative Project 1 rough due</i> Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 07: Oct. 27	Various Contemporary Contexts for Animation: 3 Interviews	Readings: Animation Unearthed, The struggles of Independent animation Various interviews with contemporary independent animators. Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 08: Nov. 3	Personalities and Bodies, Difference	Readings: Representation in Animation Color. Chromophobia and Colonialism Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 09: Nov. 10	Cartooning	Readings: Animating Film Theory: "Cartoon Physics" by Scott Bukatman Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 10: Nov. 17	Animation as a Subversive Art-Form	Readings: Moritz, Narrative Strategies for Resistance and Protest in Eastern European Animation Interview with Jeron Braxton

		Course evaluations (in class) Discussion Leaders: TBA Faculty Presentation: TBA
Week 11: TBA	Final Critiques <i>Creative Project and Paper due</i>	