

Hofstra University
School of Communication
Radio/Television/Film Department
Professor: Marianne Carbon
Email: Marianne.Carbon@hofstra.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to the techniques of animation, with emphasis on creative content, experimentation, and critical thinking. Techniques covered will include computer-based stop-motion, as well as 2D animation techniques using digital tools such as Adobe After Effects, Illustrator, and Photoshop. A series of exercises will be built upon in order to learn basic skills in 2D animation. Students will create several projects throughout the semester including at least one that creates a narrative, making use of the techniques taught in class. There will be an emphasis on content, imagery and sound (e.g., drawing and collage, music, sound effects, poetry, fiction, etc.) Students will be expected to utilize the tools to express their ideas and develop personal style. Assigned readings and in class screenings explore the uses of animation beyond cartoon; including political, conceptual, abstract and non-commercial approaches to animation. Story writing and production planning skills will be strengthened. Student's work will be evaluated for expressiveness, technical achievements and aesthetic qualities. Constructive critiques of ongoing work will help the student determine possible improvements that can be utilized in the further development of their work.

Students are required to:

- complete weekly exercises and in class workshops as assigned
- complete an object of expression animation
- complete a stop motion animation with your assigned group
- complete a mechanical device animation
- complete a narrative animation

Final Grade Calculation:

Grading of assignments will be based on creativity, punctuality, resourcefulness and invention as well as on technical execution. Late assignments will be downgraded.

- 15% Weekly exercises as assigned and in class workshop completion
- 20% Project #1: object of expression animation (due class 5) TRT: 30 minimum
- 15% Project #2: stop motion animation (due class 8) TRT: 30 minimum
- 20% Project #3_mechanical device animation (due class 10) TRT: 45 minimum
- 20% Project #4 narrative animation (due class 14) TRT 1:00-3:00
- 10% Participation/ Professionalism

Required Texts

The Animator's Survival Kit, Expanded Edition: A Manual of Methods, Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion and Internet Animators (Richard Williams, 2009)

Other required reading assigned throughout the semester (will be available online)

Recommended Texts

Animating Film Theory

by Karen Beckman (Editor)

Duke University Press Books (2014)

Supplies:

Some form of storage is required. USB (or flash) drives, Firewire, or USB 3.0 drives are recommended.

Resources:

<http://www.freesound.org/browse/>

<http://filmsound.org/sound-effects/libraries.htm>

SCHEDULE

Class 1:

Discussion Topics

- Basic principles and origins of animation
- Persistence of vision
- The magic lantern, zoetrope and flipbook
- Presentation of the class syllabus and assignments

Screenings

Georges Méliès, *A Trip to the Moon* (1902)

Eadweard Muybridge (1880's)

Ladyslaw Starewicz, *The Cameraman's Revenge* -Part 1 (1912)

In Class Workshop

Creating layers and GIFs in Photoshop

Assignments for next class

- Exercise #1-GIFs (due class 2)
- Read: *The Animator's Survival Kit*, pages 1-22

Class Two:

- present GIF's

Discussion Topics

- *The Animator's Survival Kit*, (pages 1-22)
- aspect ratio, compression, media management, exporting

Screenings

- *Trash Talking*, Paper Rad (2006)
- Optimizer Customizer*, Jan Van Neunan, (2002)
- Martha Colburn selected works (2006-2014)

In Class Workshop

Students learn the basics of creating individual cells and preparing them for animation.
Intro to After Effects.

Assignments for next class

- Read: *The Animator's Survival Kit*, (pages 256-296)
- Read: *Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life*, by Ollie Johnston and Frank Thomas (online PDF provided)

Class Three

Discussion Topic

12 principles of animation

In Class Workshop

Using keyframes for motion, expression, stretching, squashing, anticipation, weight, and acceleration. Motion path curves.

Screenings

- Luxo Jr*, Pixar Animation (1986)
- The Skeleton Dance*, Walt Disney (1929)
- Geri's Game*, Jan Pinkava (1997)

Assignment for next class

Animate a skeleton using the elements provided and the techniques learned in class.

Class Four

- Present skeleton animation

Discussion Topics

- Motion styles as expressive tools.
- Spacing and timing

Screenings

- Automatic Writing*, William Kentridge (1999)

In Class Workshop

Graph Editor, ease in and out, animating and morphing masks.

Assignments for next class

- Objects of expression animation deadline. (due class 5)

Class Five

- Critique objects of expression animation.

Discussion topics

- Methods of stop motion.
- Designate groups for stop motion animated film project.
- Discuss stop motion animation assignment (due week 8).

Screenings

excerpts from:

The Cabinet of Jan Svankmajer, The Brothers Quay (1984)

Fantastic Planet, René Laloux (1977)

Heaven And Earth Magic, Harry Smith (1957)

In Class Workshop

Special effects in After Effects.

Assignment for next class

-Create/collect objects for stop-motion animation workshop.

Class 6

-In class stop-motion animation workshop.

-Use of digital video cameras to capture still frames. Create a short stop motion piece with collaborative groups using still photography, Photoshop, After Effects.

Assignments for next class

-Work on stop motion animations.

Class 7

-Present progress of stop-motion animations.

Screenings: excerpts from

Jack and the Beanstalk, Lotte Reiniger (1955)

Alice, Švankmajer (1988)

In Class Workshop

In class stop motion editing and animation lab.

Assignments for next week

-Stop-motion animation deadline (due class 8)

Class 8

-Critique stop motion animations.

Discussion topics

-Mechanical Device Animation (due class 10)

In Class Workshop

After Effects parenting, looping.

Assignments for next week

-Work on Mechanical Apparatus Animation (due class 10).

Class 9

Discussion topics

Foley techniques, sound recording

In Class Workshop

Adding sound (recording, mixing, music, effects and foley).
Sound mixing in Adobe Premiere.

Assignments for next class

-Mechanical Device Animation-deadline (due class 10).

Class 10

-In class critique of Mechanical Device Animation.

Discussion topics

-Preparing storyboards.

Assignments for next class

-Start working on your storyboards for the final project
-Read: *The Animator's Survival Kit*, (pages 102-216)

Class 11

Discussion Topics

The Animator's Survival Kit, (pages 102-216)

Making animated figures walk, run and crawl.

In Class Workshop

Animating movement techniques in After Effects. Walking, Running, Crawling.

Assignments for next class

-Complete storyboards for final project.

Class 12

-Present storyboards.

In Class Workshop

Puppeting in After-Effects.

Cameras, lights, and points of interest

Class 13

In Class Workshop

Students will work in-class on their final projects. Each student will meet individually with the professor while in class to discuss issues particular to their project.

Class 14

Discussion topics

-Short presentations of your final project's progress, treatments and challenges.
-In class work on final projects.

Final projects will be presented during the scheduled final exam time for this course.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

MMR SHOTS: Students who have failed to get their MMR shot(s) will not be allowed to remain in class as per University regulations.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: All students are expected to abide by the University's Policy on Academic Honesty, which can be found in the Hofstra University Bulletins. Procedures for Handling Violations of Academic Honesty by Students at Hofstra University are detailed in Faculty Policy Series # 11 (rev. 2004) for undergraduates.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have any documented disability-related concerns that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, it is your responsibility to meet with a representative from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) within the first two weeks of the current semester, so that we work out the appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are provided on an individual, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by SSD in 212 Memorial Hall. At [516.463.7075](tel:516.463.7075) or ssd@hofstra.edu

GRADES: Hofstra uses an alphabetical system of grades to describe the quality of the student's work. Alphabetical grades are further divided into plus and minus levels. These grades are explained as follows, as indicated in the Hofstra University Bulletin:

A – indicates that the student's academic performance in achieving the objectives of the course was of honors level

B – indicates that the student's academic performance in achieving the objectives of the course was distinctly above that required by the course

C – indicates that the student's academic performance achieved the objectives of the course

D – indicates that the student's academic performance on the objectives of the course was less than required by the course but was still sufficient to permit the student to receive full credit. This grade is not acceptable for major or minor credit. The course may be repeated for a higher grade but semester hour credit is given only once.

F – indicates that the student's overall academic performance failed to satisfy the objectives of the course. No semester hour credit is received.