

COURSE DESCRIPTION FALL 2014

If animation was once understood as an adjunct of film and a backwater in cinema, it now finds itself as the core condition of film-making per se. ... Lev Manovich concludes it is 'live action material + painting + image-processing + compositing + 2D computer animation + 3D computer animation,' adding that '...cinema can no longer be clearly distinguished from animation.'

—Paul Wells from "Re-Imagining Animation: The Changing Face of the Moving Image"

This studio class explores experimental techniques in animation while addressing fundamental problems such as rhythm, timing, and sound. Emphasis is on conceptual idea and development, abstract and material processes, and locating narrative flow in technique. Students will research, discuss, and interpret the cultural and historical fascination with animating the inanimate through screenings, lectures, and readings. We will gain proficiency with digital cameras and audio recorders while working through a variety of techniques and formats that may include traditional, digital, and/or electronic (ie. stop-motion, collage, pixelation, etc). The final project output is in digital format.

The course's framework is centered on the idea of multiple iterations—designing and creating experimental animations frequently and with variety—as opposed to focusing on a single finished piece. I recommend that you make something you can ONLY do with animation; don't purely reiterate life, comment on it as well. Make this class an investigation of your inclination to animate. Make the impossible.

Intensive technical instruction is provided alongside a dynamic exploration of historical and contemporary techniques, aesthetics, and conceptual issues, within a supportive critical environment focused on the development of the student's own work. Please feel free to take an experimental approach to the projects, as our goal is to expand on the discourse of animation.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

- Individually and collaboratively create time-based work that engages audiences.
- Use storyboards to efficiently plan the structure of time-based projects.
- Effectively compose using camera angle, exposure, lighting, rhythm, color, and sound.
- Prepare oral and/or written analyses of animation history and its relationship to student work, machine culture, game industry, and mechanical wonders.
- Conduct research to develop original ideas for animations.
- Critically shoot and edit animations independently using digital cameras, frame grabbing software, and non-linear editing software.
- Interpret key concepts, techniques, and vocabulary at an advanced level to discuss readings and critique student work orally and/or in writing.
- Experiment and take risks with digital and/or analog media to investigate the relationship between maker and media culture.

PROJECTS

There are six projects. Assignments are due at the start of class. For critiques, turn in projects as Quick Time movies or on-line as instructed. For the final, you are required to turn in all of your completed work on a data DVD, an authored DVD, and on-line. Projects will be peer-critiqued in class. Be prepared to discuss your work and ideas.

Equipment demonstrations and technical practice will take place in Taylor 022. We may also visit and use equipment and facilities at the SMDC (basement of Morris Library). Software available in the Lab includes: Final Cut Studio (FCP 7.0, Soundtrack Pro, Color, Motion, DVD Studio Pro), Adobe CS4 (Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, Flash, Dreamweaver), and Frame Thief, among others.

GRADING *

Grades are based on student's full participation in critiques, discussions of readings, attendance, and class exercises as well as his/her individual progress and commitment to projects. Projects are evaluated with consideration of concept and development, technical execution, and presentation of work. Experimentation is encouraged.

Projects	Percent of Grade
Projects 1 – 5	50% (10% each)
Final Project (5% proposal, 10% rough-cut, 10% completion)	25%
Reading Response / Writing (BLOG) / Participation	35%

The following descriptions detail the criteria for earning grades. **To receive a grade of C- or better on any assignment, it must be turned in on time unless a PRIOR arrangement has been made or there is an emergency situation.**

A Outstanding Achievement Significantly Exceeds Standards Innovative & Creative Thinking	C Acceptable Achievement Meets Standards	D Marginal Achievement Below Standards
B Commendable Achievement Exceeds Standards	C- Substandard You still receive elective credit.	F Failing No credit received.

LATE-WORK POLICY

In general I do not accept late assignments. I will only accept assignments late if you have an excused absence from class or in an emergency situation, which you have spoken with me directly. If an assignment is turned in late, it will be given only partial credit.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The whole point of this class is to learn from DOING, watching, listening, and discussing. You will learn from each other perhaps as much as you will learn from the artists' work presented, readings, discussions, lectures, and demos. All of these require PRESENCE in the classroom. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. One unexcused absence for the course will be permitted without impacting your grade, unless it is a day when projects are due. For every other absence, your grade will be impacted by one half point. Being more than 10 minutes late for class three times will equal one unexcused absence.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

While it is often difficult to quantify the time needed to successfully complete an artistic project, you are expected to work on studio assignments outside of class at least the same number of hours the class meets per week in addition to readings. For this course, you are expected to work at least an additional six or more hours outside of class.

COURSE FEES

Course Fee process: Visit <http://www.udel.edu/artconsumables> and select the course(s) in which you are enrolled and have course fees. Add to shopping cart and proceed to checkout. At this time only checks are being accepted as a payment method. You will need to have your bank account number, account type (i.e., checking or savings) and your bank's Routing Transit number. A receipt will be emailed directly to the Art Department. Fee must be paid by drop/add or the student must drop the class or provide proof of payment that the student has purchased required supplies for the course.

LAB AND EQUIPMENT USE POLICIES

In order to use any production equipment (cameras, mics, tripods, lights, etc.) you will have to abide by the Art Department's policies and regulations. You are fully responsible for loss or intentional damage of equipment. Equipment will be available for use for two-three days at a time from the equipment cage in the basement of Taylor Hall. Policies are posted on your Sakai course site and also available from the equipment cage.

TUTORIALS

Tutorials with Lynda.com are available through the University. Tutorials are highly recommended, and required, based on need to further your technical proficiency with specific software. Only students enrolled may access these tutorials.

For more information on accessing the tutorials go to:

Lynda.com: <http://www.udel.edu/learn/usered/webtutorials.html>

Adobe Video Training: http://www.adobe.com/designcenter/video_workshop/about.html

REQUIRED STORAGE MEDIA

Back-up your work continuously. Lab computers are not a safe place to leave your work, as they may be periodically cleaned out or accidentally deleted/modified by other computer lab users. Therefore, it is required that projects are stored on removable firewire hard-drives, CDs, DVDs, or your personal computer. Losing your files because you have not backed them up is not an acceptable excuse for tardy assignments.

You are required to purchase your own external firewire hard drive for use in storing and editing your footage, which, depending on how much storage space you want, will cost you a minimum of \$110. I suggest you purchase a LaCie Firewire drive, as they are sturdy, reliable drives. If you need more information about what to buy, ask.

Recommended External Drives:

- a. LaCie Rugged Triple 500 GB Triple Interface (\$129.99 / \$119.00)
<http://www.lacie.com/us/products/product.htm?id=10553>

http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/800153-REG/LaCie_301983_1TB_Rugged_Triple_Interface.html
- b. G-Technology G-DRIVE mini High-Speed Portable Drive 500GB (\$80.00)
http://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/product/681780-REG/G_Technology_GDM4500X_G_DRIVE_mini_High_Speed_Portable.html

PROCESS BOOKS

Purchase a sketchbook or process book. This book is to be used for recording your working process, in the form of drawings, photos, writing, storyboards, and collage. I recommend the book not be smaller than 8.5x11" or 9x12".

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND READINGS

Critical and Historical Reading:

Edison's Eve: A Magical History of the Quest for Mechanical Life by Gaby Wood (Anchor, July 2003)

Comics & Sequential Art (expanded edition) by Will Eisner (W. W. Norton & Company, Aug 2008)

New Media 1740-1915 edited by Lisa Gitelman and Geoffrey B. Pingree (The MIT Press, Oct 2004)

The New Media Reader, edited by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort

Animations edited by Klaus Biesenbach and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev (P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center 2003)

Re-Imagining Animation by Paul Wells & Johnny Hardstaff (AVA Publishing Oct 2008)

Technical How-To:

The Animation Book: a complete guide to animated filmmaking by Kit Laybourne (Three Rivers Press Dec 1998)

The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods... by Richard Williams (Faber & Faber; 2nd Edition Dec 2009)

Timing for Animation 2nd Edition by Harold Whitaker and John Halas (Focal Press; 2 edition Sept 2009)

SUGGESTED TEXTS AND READINGS CONTINUED:

Creating 3-D Animation: Aardman Book of Filmmaking by Peter Lord & Brian Sibley (Harry N. Abrams; Oct 1998)

Creating Motion Graphics with After Effects Vol 1 by Trish Meyer and Chris Meyer (4th edition)

Final Cut Pro 6.0 for Mac OS X, by Lisa Brenneis (Peach Pit Press)

Producing Animation, Winder and Dowlatabadi, Focal Press 2001

Clay Animation: American highlights 1908 to the present, Michael Frierson, Twayne 1994

After Effects in Production, Trish Meyer and Chris Meyer

Creating Motion Graphics with After Effects Vol 2 by Trish Meyer and Chris Meyer (4th edition)

*** GRADING POLICY CONTINUED:**

A note on F – F Represents **failure** and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is **not worthy of credit** or (2) was **not completed** and there was **no agreement** between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an “I”. Keep in mind that a student can turn in work, attend class and still fail the course if the work is **not worthy of credit** according to the clearly stated criteria for passing work. “F” is for **“failed to get help.”** Anyone willing to make a sincere effort can pass this class. There are many resources available for assistance. The first step is to let me know that you need help. The second is to follow through on doing the work.

The F carries 0 (ZERO) grade points and the credits for the course do not count toward any academic degree program. The credit hours for the course shall count in the grade point average.

Incomplete (I) - Assigned **at the discretion of the instructor** when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Student must have been passing the course before the emergency incident. Requires a written agreement between the instructor and student specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements. In no event may any such written agreement allow a period of longer than 6 months to complete the course requirements.

Note: The requirements and objectives are clearly stated on assignment sheets. This is the criteria you will be graded on. If you are not clear about the criteria or what you will be graded on, please ask. I encourage you to discuss your grades with me at any time.

COURSE SCHEDULE FALL 2014

Week 1

8/27, Wed Introductions. Outline course and syllabus. Experimental and Expanded Animation. Overview of facility and equipment procedures.

Screening: *Muybridge, Melies, Reiniger, Blackton, McCay, and others*

Homework: Access to external hard drive, FrameThief or iStopMotion.

Reading: *Basic Unit of Time in Animation* from "Timing for Animation" by H. Whitaker and J. Halas
12 Principles of Animation: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/12_basic_principles_of_animation
28 Principles of Animation: <http://www.animationarena.com/principles-of-animation.html>
John Lasseter's 1987 presentation to Siggraph (11 principles of Animation):
http://www.siggraph.org/education/materials/HyperGraph/animation/character_animation/principles/prin_trad_anim.htm

Week 2

9/1, Mon HOLIDAY – CLASSES SUSPENDED

9/3, Wed **Bring cameras, laptops, and external drives.** General workflow from capture to edit to export. Import / Export. *Exercise 1: Principles of Animation in-class workshop.*

Exercise 1: *Study the readings and apply these principles through creation of a series of 100-frame animation.* Working collaboratively, you will use modeling clay to experiment with a simple form while maintaining a constant volume.

Homework: Open VIMEO Account. BLOG Reports—Write reports about 4 tutorial sessions and 4-6 artists over the course of the semester. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop)

Week 3

9/8, Mon Collaborations, workflow, and organization. Basic lighting vs. silhouette. Introduce *Project 1: Mutable Morph (Soft Medium) workshop.* Additive / subtractive. Prep for 200-frame animation with mixed media charcoal, chalk, paint, or rice.

9/10, Wed In-class work on *Project 1.*

Screening: Oskar Fischinger, Caroline Leaf, William Kentridge, etc

Reading: Research from artist list. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop, etc)

Week 4

9/15, Mon *Project 2: Multi-layer with Rigid Medium workshop.* Lighting and Horizontal/Vertical Orientation. Background / foreground. Prep for 300-frame animation with mixed media paper collage or torn-paper silhouette.

9/16 *Artist Talk: Andrea Chung, Smith Hall 130, 5pm*

9/17, Wed In-class work on *Project 2.* Post project 1 and 2 on Vimeo.

Screening: Lotte Reiniger, Nicolas Brault, Anthony Lucas, Brent Green, Kelly Sears, Martha Colburn, etc

Reading: Research from artist list. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop, etc)

Week 5

9/22, Mon DISCUSS: *Project 1 Mutable Morph*, and *Project 2 Multi-Layer*.
 Audio Workshop—add sound to your projects and post new version on VIMEO by 9/29.
Project 3: Landscape as Animation. Prep for three 15-second animations in a studio space or external site. Focus on camera movement, image size, tracking, and rack focus as transition.

9/24, Wed *Project 3: Landscape as Animation* Workshop.

Screening: Virgil Widdrich, Eric Dyer, Jan Svankmajer, Norman McLaren, EatPes, Allison Schulnik, Michael Palmieri, Semiconductor, etc

Reading: Research from artist list. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop, etc)

Homework: Record and add Audio.

Week 6

9/29, Mon *Project 3: Landscape as Animation* Workshop.

9/30 *Artist Talk: Ricardo Rivera, Smith Hall 130, 5pm*

10/1, Wed Add layers to Landscape. Pixelate object or person within space.

Reading: Research from artist list. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop, etc)

Week 7

10/6, Mon CRITIQUE Audio versions of *Project 1, 2, and 3*.

10/8, Wed *Project 5a: Processed workshop*. Use landscape footage to add a digital layer in Photoshop or AE. Moving masks, etc. Prep for 30-second digital collage using basic motion properties.

Reading: Research from artist list. On-line tutorials (AfterEffects, FCP, Premiere, Photoshop, etc)

Homework: Collect paper collage resources for Digital Project.

Week 8

10/13, Mon Lab. Review Process. Artist Presentations.

10/15, Wed *Project 5b: Processed Collage*

Screening: *Packard Jennings, Kirsten Geisler, Kelly Sears, Nina Paley, Virgil Widdrich, etc.*

Week 9

10/20, Mon Lab. Review Process. Artist Presentations.

10/22, Wed CRITIQUE Audio versions of *Project 5*.

Week 10**10/27, Mon** LAB.**10/29, Wed** LAB. Final Project Proposals & Sketches Due.**Week 11****11/3, Mon** CRITIQUE: *Project 5 Processed Collage*.**11/5, Wed** Individual Meetings / In-class work on Final Project.**Week 12****11/10, Mon** In-class work on Final Project.**11/12, Wed** In-class work on Final Project.**Week 13****11/17, Mon** In-class work on Final Project.**11/19, Wed** Rough-Cut Group #1. (In-class work on Final Project for Group 2)**Week 14****11/24, Mon** Rough-Cut Group #2. (In-class work on Final Project for Group 1)**11/26, Wed** *HOLIDAY – CLASSES SUSPENDED***Week 15****12/1, Mon** In-class work on Final Project. Export to DVD. Finalize Work for Screening.**12/3, Wed** Critique & Celebrate: Final Projects. All projects DUE on authored DVD, as DATA files, and on-line (Vimeo).
Video Screening (Date and time to be determined with other participating classes.)