CTAN 305 Professionalism of Animation
2 units
Mondays – 4:00 – 6:50
Instructor: Jan Nagel
nagel@usc.edu **or janet.nagel@usc.edu**

Syllabus

Course Purpose

This course is designed to take the undergraduate from a student to a professional, ready to work in the industry of digital media, animation or any area of production or post-production.

Three principles the course will cover are: researching, networking and negotiation in preparation for job hunting and career development. Each student will prepare personal marketing tools (i.e. resume, business card, cover letter, website and demo reel/portfolio) and learn vital skills of interviewing. The business of the animation industry will be covered in lecture, including the intellectual property rights, terms of employment, content distribution and content development.

Guest speakers may be scheduled throughout the semester. Dates are tentative and may change. Additional speakers may be added to the schedule.

Course Learning Objectives
Students will be able to:
- Assess and apply appropriate presentation skills for interviewing and pitching.
- Create and design a portfolio, demo reel and/or website for different types of employers.
- Prepare and present a resume, business card and portfolio.
- Research employment opportunities, required skills and employer expectations.
- Gain an understanding of the business and business models of animation.
- Networking techniques
- An understanding of employment agreements, contracts and salary negotiation

Grading Policy
- Mid-Term Revised Cover Letter and Revised Resume   20%
- Informational Interview   20%
- Final Personal Presentation Package and presentation   20%
- Class participation   20%
- All other assignments   20%

Each assignment has assigned points or maximum points for completion and are stated in the syllabus. If there are any questions about assignments and the grading scales, please contact the instructor.

Written aspects of all assignments MUST be typed. In this class, presentation is important. Grammar and spelling will be taken into consideration. Students are responsible for purchasing their own supplies.

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CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – August 25
- Introduction to the course, a review of the curriculum and assignments
- What producers are looking for in candidates
- The importance of the internet to your career
- Importance of knowing about the business of animation
- Importance of networking – Industry Events and Informational Interviews
- Discussion of time management and the Time Sheet assignment

Assignment for Week 3 – September 8:
- Prepare a 1-minute oral presentation about yourself and your future career (10 points).
  - o Be sure to include:
    - ▪ What part of the digital media/animation industry you wish to join
    - ▪ What or who inspired you to become an animation professional
    - ▪ What is something interesting about you that no one knows
- Research 3 jobs in your chosen discipline (10 points). Print out the job listing and bring to class
- Informational Interview Selection (10 points)
  - o Identify 3 people who are currently working in a field you are interested in
  - o List them on a sheet of paper with their contact information. Be sure to include your name on the page.
    - ▪ Even though you are only required to interview 1 person for this assignment (see Week 12 for details) it is best to have a couple of back-up contacts
    - ▪ If you are fortunate to interview more then one person, write up a one page report for extra credit
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 2 – September 1 Labor Day – No Class

WEEK 3 – September 8
- Oral student presentations
- Review the job listings and how they were obtained
- The importance of self-branding
- Networking- how to build your network for future career growth
- Importance and fundamentals of personal marketing tools
  - o A review of what is to be included in
    - ▪ Resume, cover letter, demo reel/portfolio/website), business cards
    - ▪ A review of how the employer reads these promotional pieces and what they are looking for in a candidate

Assignment for Week 4 – September 15:

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- Research formats and write your first draft of your resume (10 points)
  - o Bring in a printed copy of the resume along with a digital format for class presentation
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 4 – September 15
- In class review of the first draft of the Resume
- Continuation of the importance and fundamentals of personal marketing tools
- Budget a project; the first look at the various business models in the industry, including television, film, game, motion graphics.

Assignment for Week 5- September 22:
- Research the proper business letter format and write your first draft of your cover letter (10 points)
  - o Bring in a printed copy for the cover letter along with a digital format for class presentation
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 5 - September 22
- In class review of the first draft of the Cover letters
- Continuation of the importance and fundamentals of personal marketing tools

Assignment for Week 6 – September 29:
- Prepare your demo reel, portfolio and/or website (10 points)
  - o Be prepared to present in class for critique
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 6 – September 29
- In class review of the WIP Demo Reels/Portfolios/Websites
- The importance and fundamentals of pitching projects – fundamentals of storytelling
- Importance of Intellectual Property Rights including copyright and trademark
- Terms of employment as it relates to Intellectual Property Rights
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (Extra Credit)

Assignment for Week 7 – October 6:
- **MID-TERM: This is a letter grade assignment.** Based on the critiques from the professor and in class
  - o Prepare a revised version of the Resume (Letter grade with a maximum of 20 points)

- o Prepare a revised version of the Cover Letter (Letter grade with a maximum of 20 points)
- Create a design for a self branding package to include a business card, letterhead and demo reel cover/website design (10 points)
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point) both 10/6 and 10/13
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 7 – October 6
MID TERM: Revised Resume and Cover Letter
- In class presentation of a self branding package to include business card, demo reel cover/website design
- Networking:
  - o How to use the personal marketing materials in networking
  - o How to network to find the people you wish to meet

Assignment for Week 8 – October 13:
Due to the guest speaker, there is no assignment due this week
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point) will be due on October 13

WEEK 8 - October 13
- Guest Speaker – Sheila Sofian
- Topic – Indie films, crowd funding, distribution and festivals.

Assignment for Week 9 – October 20:
- Prepare in writing 5 most frequently asked job interview questions along with your personal answers (10 points)
- Come to class dressed for success, as if you were going to an interview
- Bring business cards and other important materials you would take to an interview (10 points)
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 9 – October 20
- All students will participate in job interviewing
- Fundamentals of thinking on your feet
- Body language
- What to do in an interview
- What to do after the interview

Assignment for Week 10 – October 27:
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 10 – October 27
- Business of Animation
    - The importance of content, story and pitch
        - Learn how to prepare and pitch an original idea

Assignment for Week 11 - November 3:
- Revise your Website for review in class (5 points)
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 11 – November 3
- Review Websites WIP
- How to find a job
    - Where to look
    - Who to talk with
    - How to generate job leads
    - How to keep track of leads

Assignment for Week 12 – November 10:
- Informational Interviews: This is a graded assignment – This is your opportunity to interview someone that is in the career you wish to have in the future.
    - This is a written (letter grade with a maximum of 40 points) and verbal report (10 points)
    - Prepare a written and verbal report on the professional you interviewed
        - The written report must be a minimum of 4 pages double-spaced.
        - Write a narrative story. Do not write a questions/answer report.
        - The verbal report must be at no more then 3 minutes in length
    - Be prepared to present in class
        - Note cards can be used
        - Do not rely on the written report for information
        - Be prepared to answer questions
    - The report needs to include:
        - Highlight what you learned from the person you interviewed
        - How you arranged for this interview
        - What you will always remember from this interview
        - A bio on the individual
        - A brief company profile, if the individual is working at a studio
    - Prepare and send a Thank You or Follow Up Letter after the interview.
        - Provide a copy of the letter or email in this report
        - Will be part of the final grade
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)

- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 12 – November 10
- Informational Interview Report and Presentation

Assignment for Week 13 – November 17:
- Prepare your Work In Progress (WIP) on your
    - Demo Reel, portfolio and/or website and revised self-branding concepts for the Personal Presentation Package (10 points)
    - Be prepared to present these items in class
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

IN (Incomplete) *is assigned when work is not completed*
because of documented illness or other "emergency" ***occurring***
after the twelfth week *of the semester (or 12th week*
equivalent for any course scheduled for less than 15 weeks).

WEEK 13 – November 17
- Demo reel and/or portfolio and web site review
- Review of self-branding

Assignment for Week 14 – November 24:
- Prepare a written and oral report on an off-campus Industry Event. (10 points)
- Start working on your Final – Due December 1
    - Between this week and Week 15 please complete the final revisions of these elements for your Personal Presentation Package:
        - Resume
        - Cover Letter
        - Business Card
        - Design and Packaging for
            - Demo Reel and/or Portfolio and Website
    - The final Personal Presentation Packages are to be turned in Week 15
    - The Personal Presentation Packages will be returned to you on the Final Exam Day
- Time Sheet – Tracking of time of the Senior Thesis Project (1 point)
- Look for industry related news stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 14 – November 24
- Industry Event Oral and written reports due
- Freelancing
    - Finances, Budget and scheduling of projects and for freelancing
- Discussion of taxes for a sole proprietor business

- Where does the money come from for jobs
    - A look at the television, feature film, motion graphics and game business

Assignment for Week 15 – December 1:
- Bring in all time sheets for an in class exercise
- **Final: This is a graded assignment with a maximum of 50 points.**
- Turn in your final versions of all of the elements in your Personal Presentation Package
    - This should be a package that will get you the job
        - Include:
            - Resume, cover letter, business card, demo reel and/or portfolio, website and self branding
    - Your Personal Presentation Package will be graded and returned on the Final Exam Day
- For the Final Exam, prepare a 3 minute presentation of your Personal Presentation Package (see FINAL EXAM DAY)
    - Include a digital presentation of the resume, cover letter, package design, business card, demo reel and/or portfolio packaging and website.
- Look for industry related new stories to report on in class (1 Extra Credit)

WEEK 15 – December 1
- Time Sheet Exercise – Budgeting and Scheduling (5 points)
- Business of Animation continued
    - The importance of distribution for television, feature film, motion graphic and games
- **Final Personal Presentation Package is due**

STUDY DAYS – December 6-9

FINAL EXAM DAY: Monday, December 15, 4:30 – 6:30
- Be prepared to present your final package to the class
    - Have digital files ready for presentation during the final.
    - Explain how your Personal Presentation items relate to the area of the business that you are seeking employment
    - Explain how you think an employer will react to your materials
        - What sets your materials apart from other candidates
    - Class will participate in the critique
    - Presentations will be no longer then 3 minutes each.
- This presentation will be graded (worth a maximum of 20 points) and will be added to the grade of the Personal Presentation Package that you have already turned in.
- Your final graded Personal Presentation Packages, which was submitted on Week 15, will be returned on the day of the final exam with only the grade for the Package. It may not include the grade for the final presentation.

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ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Students will be assessed on the presentation, originality, quality and execution of their assignments. Any student who fails to submit the completed assignments by the stated deadlines will see a reduction in their grade by one full grade for each week the assignment is late.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES
Any student arriving more than 10 minutes late will be marked "LATE". Three "lates" constitute an absence. Three (3) absences will result in failure. The only exceptions will be valid emergencies with appropriate documentation.

Students missing class are expected to contact, via email, the instructor, prior to missing the class. If it is impossible to contact the instructor prior to missing the class, then contact, via email, within 24 hours of missing the class in order to make up any missed assignments. Instructor will be available at least one half hour before or after class for office hours, or an appointment can be requested and arranged.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered to the Professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

MISSING AN EXAM, INCOMPLETES: The only acceptable excuses for missing an exam, assignment deadline or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the professor before the exam or assignment deadline and present verifiable evidence in order for a make-up to be scheduled.

Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor or teaching assistant before final grades are due.

Disruptive Student Behavior: Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical performance from USC students. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, submitting a paper to more than one instructor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. If you have any doubts or questions about these

policies, consult "SCAMPUS" and/or confer with the professor or teaching assistant

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus,* the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards*https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.
Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the *Department of Public Safety* http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems
A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.htmlprovides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information*

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http://emergency.usc.edu/will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.