

CTAN 301 - Introduction to Digital Animation

3 Units Fall, Room G 136:

Professor: Sheila M. Sofian

TA: Diana Reichenbach

Office Hours **Mon 10:00am-11:30am** and **Wed 12:00pm-1:30pm** or by appointment.

Class: M 1:00 pm-3:50pm

Lab: Th 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

E-mail: ssofian@cinema.usc.edu

Tel (213) 740-7595

E-mail: dreichen@usc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced Studio A - Introduction to Digital Animation teaches students the fundamental principles of working in 2D digital software with an emphasis on animation, story, sound, timing and execution. Students will learn how to transition from traditional hand-drawn animation techniques and creative processes into the digital realm. Production-flow, scheduling and pipeline will be integral to the understanding of how these principles work together in a creative project.

ASSIGNMENT

Introduction to Digital Animation comprises of a semester-long process of learning and mastering animation and creative storytelling in the digital realm. The final assignment will comprise a 30-second animated film, utilizing original character designs, concepts, and sound.

GRADING CRITERIA

Assignments	40%
Class participation & Attendance	10%
Final project	50%

EVALUATION OF STUDENT WORK

Projects will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Accuracy of assignment guidelines
- b. Demonstration of principles covered in class
- c. Communication of ideas

Final projects will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Completion
- b. Communication of narrative or intent
- c. Effectiveness of timing and execution
- d. Effectiveness of soundtrack
- e. Creativity

LAB TIME

Students must expect to spend up to six hours lab time executing and learning the digital animation concepts outside of class. Failure to meet deadlines each week will constitute a reduction in the digital production execution grade.

RECOMMENDED READING

Hollywood 2D Digital Animation: The New Flash Production Revolution by Sandro Corsaro & Clifford J. Parrott, ISBN 1-59200-170-X

Adobe Training DVDs and manuals DADA library LPB 200C

Animation in the Home Digital Studio by Steven Subotnick, ISBN 0240516710

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CLASS BREAKDOWN

Week 1: Aug 25 Introduction, Story and Treatment

Syllabus distributed: Introductions. Discussion of production pipeline. Overview of assignments. Lecture: Story development, treatment. Develop story concept. Screening of 2D computer animation films.

Assignment: Write a one-page treatment of your story concept for your 30-second film. Be prepared to pitch your project to the class next week.

LAB: No lab this week.

Week 2: Sept 1: UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY- LABOR DAY

Week 3: Sept 8 Character Design and descriptions

Presentation and critique of story treatments. Lecture: Character Designs, character biographies. Prepare character designs and character biographies for proposed project. Be prepared to critique next week.

LAB: TA on hand for character designs

Week 4: Sept 15 Storyboarding / Staging

Critique character designs. Lecture: Storyboarding conventions, staging, camera shots, 180-degree rule.

LAB: TA on hand for storyboards.

Assignment: Complete a storyboard for proposed project. Be prepared to pitch to the class next week.

Week 5: Sept 22 Introduction to Flash

Presentation and critique of storyboard. Lecture: animatics, naming conventions.

LAB: Introduction to Flash software: timeline, scanning, editing. Raster vs. Vector.

Assignment: Scan storyboard panels, import and edit in Flash to create animatic.

Week 6: Sept 29 Sound design

Critique animatics. Discuss sound design. Prepare for foley session. Review Net Mix.

LAB: Attend ADR and Foley lab session scheduled in lab hours –mandatory.

Assignment: Edit sound effects with animatic.

Week 7: Oct 6 Presentation of sound tracks and animatic.

Critique animatics with soundtracks. Discuss backgrounds.

LAB: Introduction to creating digital backgrounds and layering animation using Adobe Photoshop.

Assignment: Create and render one complete background in Adobe Photoshop. See Adobe DVD- Photoshop for technical review.

Week 8: Oct 13 Presentation of digital background / Animating using Flash

Critique backgrounds. Review of Flash- creating symbols, key frames. Class lecture: Rigging character for Flash.

LAB: Animating in Flash using symbols

Assignment: Create 4 seconds of animation for independent film. Import or create in Flash.

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Office Hours **Mon 10:00am-11:30am** and **Wed 12:00pm-1:30pm** or by appointment.**Week 9: Oct 20 Schedules and Compositing in Adobe After Effects.**

Critique animation. Determine final workflow for each project and prepare schedules. Meet with instructor and TA for consultations. Consult individual schedules

LAB: Lecture: Compositing and animating using Adobe After Effects. This class introduces the interface, file management and basic techniques required to composite animation and create camera moves in After Effects.

Assignment: Create a camera move on the animation created the previous week.

Week 10: Oct 27 Presentation of camera move / Final Scheduling/ Begin production. Introduction to Premiere.

Review camera move and critique.. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs

LAB: Overview of Premiere.

Assignment: Begin animation on proposed project.

Week 11: Nov 3 Review Schedules/ Independent projects and consultations

Critique work-in-progress. Meet with instructor and TA for consultations. Review schedules. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs.

LAB: Workshop

Assignment: Continue animation on proposed project.

Week 12: Nov 10 Independent projects and consultations

Critique work-in-progress. Meet with instructor and TA for consultations. Review schedules. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs.

Assignment: Continue animation on proposed project.

Week 13: Nov 17 Independent projects and consultations

Critique work-in-progress. Meet with instructor and TA for consultations. Review schedules. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs.

Assignment: Continue animation on proposed project.

Week 14: Nov 24 Independent projects and consultations / Premiere Pro and post production

Critique work-in-progress. Meet with instructor and TA for consultations. Review schedules. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs.

This class will prepare the project files for importation to Adobe Premiere Pro, editing, and step-by-step instruction on DVD M2V file creation.

Attend ADR and Foley lab pick-up session scheduled in lab hours –mandatory.

Assignment: Import work-in-progress files to Premiere Pro, and render M2V files ready for DVD burn. Place M2V and associated sound file in your folder on the CTAN 301A file on HAL.

Week 15: Dec 1 Independent projects and consultations

Presentation of work-in-progress. Consult individual schedules. Lecture and hands-on training to be determined by class projects and student needs.

Assignment: Continue animation on proposed project. Complete 4 seconds of animation. Complete timeline for final project.

Week 16: Dec 8 Study week to complete post-production. No formal lecture.

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Presentation and critique of entire project.

Class: M 1:00 pm-3:50pm

Lab: Th 7:00 pm-10:00 pm

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E-mail: ssofian@cinema.usc.eduE-mail: dreichen@usc.edu**Final Exam: Presentation and Oral****ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Students will be assessed on the presentation, originality, quality and execution of their sound design and animation. All elements must be completed for the final presentation. Any student who fails to submit the completed elements in time for any previous deadlines or for the final presentation will see a reduction in their digital production execution grade and final exam grade.

The use of cell phones or mobile communication devices are prohibited during class time. Students are not permitted to surf the internet during class unless required for in-class research.

If a student wishes to improve on a class assignment grade, they are allowed to revise the assignment, which will be graded accordingly.

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

Students missing class are expected to contact the instructor and meet during faculty office hours in order to make up any missed assignments.

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 or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the professor before the exam 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.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: The School of Cinema-Television 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.