



CTAN 220 Introduction to Storyboarding

Units: 2

Fall 2022 Fridays 7:00 PM – 9:50 PM

Location: SCB 102

Instructor: **Katie Smith (she/her/hers)**

Office: katharis@usc.edu

Office Hours: Monday nights from 730 – 830 PM via Zoom, email is always open!

Student Assistant: **Aloha Lee**

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IT Help: (213) 841-4571

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THIS IS AN IN-PERSON CLASS

In accordance with university recommendations, all meetings of this class will be held in person. Students who become ill and need to self-isolate will be supported in their efforts to stay current with classwork and assignments, to the extent possible. **Please contact Professor Smith and your SA, Aloha Lee, at least one hour prior to class start time if you become ill and need to self-isolate.** Do not come to class if you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or other illnesses. Requests for longer term exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and must be supported by a written accommodation request from the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)

Course Description

A practical introductory course that emphasizes the fundamentals of digital storyboarding to include storyboarding basics, proper composition, staging for clarity, pitching and critique. This is a required course for all Animation undergraduates in preparation for their Senior capstone film (CTAN 401) and precedes CTAN201, Intermediate Animation Production, where a 30 second short film is created.

Course Goals

- For the students to leave the class confident in their storytelling and filmmaking abilities, and to be prepared for more complex boarding assignments and sequences.
- Upon completion of the class, they should have:
 - Two sequences for their portfolio, both will include concept and character designs, beat boards, and thumbnails.
 - A set of beatboards based on a personal story.
 - A set of reverse storyboards.
 - Figure drawing gestures.
 - Guidance on how to craft their online portfolios for internships and positions.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The storyboard is the visual blueprint of any animated film. This course provides the foundation for students to learn elements of good draftsmanship, the use of the virtual camera, the performance art of pitching and the basics of writing for animation. Emphasis is on practical exercises done digitally which mirrors the professional setting of storyboarding for films and television.

Upon completion of this course, students will have gained practical experience and demonstrable skills in all aspects of professional storyboarding, which will encompass the building blocks required for the detailed planning and pre-visualization of most any type of presentation – applicable to TV, film or otherwise. They also will have the groundwork for creating a successful portfolio to help stand out when applying for positions and roles. **The students will create two sequences during the course of the class, one of which will become their blueprint for next semester's 'CTAN201 Intermediate Animation Production', where they will make a short film.**

Assessments will be based on in-class participation, as well as the execution of specific assignments covering the various stages of the storyboard process.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-Requisite(s): None

Concurrent Enrollment: None

Recommended Preparation: Basic drawing skills

Course Notes

The syllabus will be posted on Blackboard for students enrolled in this course.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Proficiency with Photoshop is required.

Suggested Readings and Supplementary Materials

Storyboarding needs a lot of pencil mileage, equaling many hours spent drawing (and re-drawing... and drawing again!). Be sure to also read as much as you can about filmmaking, screenwriting, and directing – it's just as valuable of a resource and tool as the pencil. All the books listed below are available new and/or used, and in paperback, on Amazon.com or eBay, as well as book and art supply stores:

DISNEY ANIMATION – THE ILLUSION OF LIFE by Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnson

100 TUESDAY TIPS by Griz and Norm

SAVE THE CAT by Blake Snyder

STORY by Robert McKee

SCREENPLAY: THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCREENWRITING by Syd Field

THE VISUAL STORY by Bruce Block

5 C'S OF CINEMATOGRAPHY by Joseph V. Mascelli

I MOVED TO LOS ANGELES TO WORK IN ANIMATION by Natalie Nourigat

*****Be sure to bring your sketchbook and drawing tool of choice! We will be doing 15 min of gesture drawing in-between the lectures.*****

Description and Assessment of Assignments

- Students will be required to execute and present their assignments digitally, utilizing storyboarding software and/or Photoshop.
- In order for students to become accustomed to working within cinematic framing, all assignments will be formatted at various common screen-based aspect ratios most often required for TV or commercial film. (These formats will be provided for student use.)
- Pitches and class critiques will be in a group setting. Class participation, questions and discussions are always encouraged.
- Since presenting one's work and pitching is an important aspect of the storyboarding process, individual student involvement will play a role in overall assessments as well participation during group critique.
- Grading will also be based on quality of work, progress, and grasp of given assignments.

Please note that one's individual drawing or draftsmanship abilities will NOT be included in any assessment or grading. ANYONE can learn to storyboard in the comprehensive manner this class is designed for.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	% of Grade
Participation	15%
Assignments	50%
Mid-Term Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Rubrics

While all students will be given the same assignments in the same order, the individualized nature of storyboarding dictates that each student's execution and/or interpretation of those assignments will vary. Students will learn at different paces therefore evaluations will be largely based on one's overall grasp and progress demonstrated over the semester. Instructor and group critiques would be used to guide learning. In-class feedback will be essential. Group discussion and/or participation in the form of Q&A is always encouraged.

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments in the form of various storyboard exercises will be given during each class, sometimes creating a "workshop" environment in where the instructor will devote time for individual instruction and answering questions. Group critique will be encouraged after each pitch or presentation.

Each student must give critique at least 3 times during class. Don't be afraid to speak up!

Grading Timeline

Grading will be based on weekly assignments being completed and turned in; attendance; and participation in class.

Additional Policies

- Attendance will be taken by the Professor 15 minutes after the class start time
- 3 lateness (arriving 15 minutes late) = 1 absence
- 3 absences = 1 full downgrade of the student's letter grade

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1 Aug 26	-Introduction -What is Storyboarding! -The Storyboarding process -Film language -Reverse Storyboarding	Homework: -Choose a sequence from a film that's in the AFI top 100 list and reverse storyboard it. -Story prompt for first sequence assignment: there are two characters, and one wants something. What happens next? Create 3 log lines/ideas for story sequence #1.	Due Week 2 -The reverse storyboards can be reviewed digitally on screen or physically brought into class. -Log lines/ideas must be written down and presented to the class.
Week 2 Sept 2	LECTURE: Camera, Composition, Story structure -Break into groups to pick one log line with which to	Homework: -Syd Field & Blake Snyder worksheet for 'Toy Story'. This will be an exercise in breaking	Due Week 3

	<p>move forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review reverse storyboards -Lecture! -15 min figure drawing (online – clothed/costumed*) -Discuss homework 	<p>down/studying story structure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create design & expression sheets for characters for sequence #1. -Thumbnail 5 beats for sequence #1 (focusing on beginning, middle, and end.) 	
Week 3 Sept 9	<p>LECTURE: Storyboarding Basics 1 – the Set Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Character performance -Staging and blocking -Thumbnailing demo -15 min figure drawing* -How to use Photoshop to craft your Storyboards 	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thumbnail sequence #1 (this should not exceed 50 panels.) 	Due Week 4
Week 4 Sept 16	<p>LECTURE: Storyboarding Basics 2 – The 5 C’s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Camera angles -Continuity -Composition -Close-ups -Cutting (Film examples will be shown) 	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Draw 1 example of a single shot that contains information. Then redraw that same shot four 4 times, but with a different camera/composition to show various moods or emotions (you will have 5 drawings total). -Revise/add thumbnails for sequence #1 	Due Week 5
Week 5 Sept 23	<p>LECTURE: Writing for Storyboarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Discuss and show examples of the writing planning process and setup. -15 min figure drawing* 	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rough out sequence #1 	Due Week 6
Week 6 Sept 30	<p>LECTURE: PITCHING!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What the pitch is -How to pitch -Show examples -In Class Workshop as students develop sequence #1. Instructor will do walk-around to view progress and advise. Theater Games as prep for next week’s pitches. 	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue on sequence #1 (revisions, add panels, etc) 	Due Week 7
Week 7 Oct 7 MIDTERM- NO CLASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Submit your ROUGH PANELS to the GOOGLE DRIVE by 11:59 PM. 	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Come up with three log lines/ideas for sequence #2. 	Due Week 9

Week 8 Oct 14	Fall Recess	Homework: Take a breather, go outside, eat something delicious - take care of YOU!	
Week 9 Oct 21	STUDENTS PITCH SEQUENCE #1! -Choose one idea of the three to storyboard for sequence #2.	Homework: -Create rough concept and character designs for sequence #2.	Due Week 10
Week 10 Oct 28 Happy (early) Halloween!	LECTURE: Portfolio Discussion + Editing and Music for Storyboards -Review various online story portfolios - How to set it up -What recruiters/board artists look for in portfolios. -How social media fits in. In class exercise: 'My Favorite Day' (personal story)	Homework: -Thumbnail 7 story beats (beginning, middle, end) for the sequence.	Due Week 11
Week 11 Nov 4	LECTURE: Working in this business and how to succeed! -Applying for jobs -Freelancing -Moving from gig to gig -Rates -AMA	Homework: -Thumbnail sequence #2	Due Week 12
Week 12 Nov 11	Veteran's Day Holiday – No Class!	Homework: -Continue sequence #2 thumbs	Due Week 13
Week 13 Nov 18	STUDENTS PITCH SEQUENCE #2 THUMBNAILS -Group critique of assignment *Potential Guest Speaker*	Homework: -Revise thumbs based on notes	Due Week 15
Week 14 Nov 25	Enjoy Turkey Day!		
Week 15 Dec 2	Last Class before Final Exams: Class time will be open for questions, in class workshopping, notes, etc.	Homework: Prep for Final Pitch! -Rough out your boards for Sequence #2!	
FINAL Dec 9 IN CLASS FINAL	PITCH ROUGH PANELS FOR SEQUENCE #2!	In class pitch of rough storyboards.	Date: December 9th Normal class hours (7 – 950 PM)

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, <http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm>; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here <https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/>

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.

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX.