CTAN 201 Intermediate Animation Production

Units: 2
Spring 2023 Fridays 7:00 PM – 9:50 PM
Location: SCB 102
Instructor: Katie Smith (she/her/hers)
Office: katharis@usc.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday nights from 7 – 8 PM via Zoom, email is always always open!
Contact Info: katharis@usc.edu
Student Assistant: Aloha Lee
Contact Info: haekyung@usc.edu
IT Help: (213) 841-4571
Contact Info: creativetech@cinema.usc.edu

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

With Introduction to Storyboarding (220) as a precursor, students will have a rough sequence prepared for the spring semester to turn into a 30 second/1 minute short. This class will focus on the tools, skills, and procedures used in animation production with a focus on professional execution of independent and collaborative productions. CTAN 201 is a required course for all Animation undergraduates in preparation for their Senior capstone film (CTAN 401).

Course Goals

- For students to step through the entire animation production process, from concept to finish, and to become familiar with the production pipeline.
- To experience various stages of the pipeline (story to design, animating to edit) and gain comprehensive knowledge of these areas. This will also help students obtain a better sense of which area(s) of animation they are most interested in.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

- At the end of the semester they will have a completed 30 second/1 minute short film that has sound and music, which can be pulled from the school's sound library, in collaboration with a composer, or personally recordered. The students

will have gained an extensive knowledge of the production process and how to follow a timeline.

- This class will teach them how to be practical in their time and schedule, while also still being creative. In turn this will prepare them for their Senior year, and will provide them the tools and basics to then successfully design and visualize their film later on.

CTAN 201 focuses on exploring the production pipeline from the early stages of concept design and story, to the final stages of editing, compositing, and sound. Students will have a peer review of their work before they go into full on production, and throughout the semester they will also pitch their work to their peers for thoughts and feedback. While it is a personal project and endeavour, the students are encouraged to work together to help solve problems or get through the process. Assessments will be based on in-class participation, as well as the execution of specific assignments covering the various stages of the pipeline process.

Students will be split into two groups of 10, Group A and Group B, so peer review of homework is possible during the beginning part of class before the guest speaker(s) join. Additionally there will be full group peer review points throughout the semester, to ensure students are keeping up with their schedule and staying on track for submitting their short.

Prerequisite(s): CTAN 220
Co-Requisite(s): None
Concurrent Enrollment: None
Recommended Preparation: Basic drawing and animating skills

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

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required
Students may use software provided by USC for their short films, for instance Adobe CC; Dragonframe; Maya; TVPaint.

Recommended Text/Supplementary Materials
- *Save the Cat* by Blake Snyder
- *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* by Syd Field
- *The Animator's Survival Kit* by Richard Williams
- *If it's Purple, Someone's Gonna Die: the Power of Color in Visual Storytelling* by Patti Bellantoni
- *On Filmmaking: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director* by Alexander Mackendrick

Be sure to bring your sketchbook and drawing tool of choice! Time permitting, we will be doing 15 min of gesture drawing after homework critique.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

- Students can choose which medium(s) to use for creation of their film (for instance: stop-motion, mixed media, 3D animation, traditional animation, etc), but will be required to present their progress digitally.
- Pitches and class critiques will be in a group setting. Class participation, questions and discussions are highly encouraged and will be factored into your grade.
- Since presenting ones work is an important aspect of the filmmaking process, individual student pitching will play a role in overall assessments. Otherwise, grading will be based on progress and grasp of the production pipeline.
- Please note that your draftsmanship or animating abilities will not be included in any assessment or grading.
- Grading will be based on participation during critique and guest lectures, progress during the mid-point check-ins, and the film being submitted as the final.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	% of Grade
Participation	20%
Re-Pitch/Presentation	15%
Mid Point Check-In	30%
Submission of Film	35%
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 going through the production pipeline in the same order, the individualized nature of creating a film dictates that each students execution and/or interpretation of this will vary. Students will learn at different paces, therefore evaluations will be largely based on one's overall grasp of the pipeline, progress

demonstrated over the semester, problem solving due to time constraints, and the completion of a short film. Instructor and group critiques would be used to guide learning. In-class feedback will be essential. Group discussion and/or participation in class along with Q&A during guest lectures is required.

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will follow the production pipeline, starting from storyboarding and concept ideation, and ending with the completion of a 30 second to 1 minute short film. Time permitting, there will be a 15 minute figure drawing session at the beginning of class to get the creative juices flowing.

There will be peer critique of film progress throughout the semester, and the instructor will devote individual time for instruction and to answer questions during in-class workshop hours.

Grading Timeline

Grading will be based on participation within class and during guest lectures, attendance, progress during the mid point check-ins, and the submission of the final film.

Additional Policies

- Attendance will be taken by the Student Assistant 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 **Jan 13**	**INTRO OF SYLLABUS + PRODUCTION PIPELINE OVERVIEW RECAP** -Both TV & Features **LECTURE:** -Gathering reference and inspiration.	**Homework:** -Pull together reference, imagery, and any video clips or music to create an inspiration board/presentation. This will act as a blueprint for the style of your film. -Have storyboards prepared to re-pitch.	Due Week 2
Week 2 **Jan 20**	**SOUND/ANIMATIC LECTURE** -Creating an animatic and adding sound. ***Guest Speaker from the Sound Dept to join**	**Homework:** -Build an animatic from your boards to time out your short; include temp sound/music.	Due Week 3

Week 3 **Jan 27**	**PITCH ANIMATIC +** **PRESENTATION** *Groups A & B present** **PRODUCTION** **MANAGEMENT** -Discuss the process for managing the stages of the production pipeine and timeline.	**Homework:** -Create schedule, input board panels and info into spreadsheets.	Due Week 4
Week 4 **Feb 3**	**VIS DEV** *Group A** peer review of Week 3 homework. *Potential guest speaker**	**Homework:** -Create color script	Due Week 5
Week 5 **Feb 10**	**LAYOUT** *Group B** peer review of Week 3 and 4 homework. *15 Minutes Figure Drawing*	**Homework:** -Create background layout/linework.	Due Week 6
Week 6 **Feb 17**	**ANIMATION** *Group A** peer review of Week 4 and 5 homework. *15 Minutes Figure Drawing*	**Homework:** -Create background layout/linework.	Due Week 7
Week 7 **Feb 24**	**ANIMATION** *Group B** peer review of Week 5 and 6 homework. *15 Minutes Figure Drawing*	**Homework:** -Color backgrounds, or get started on rough animation	Next check-in for both Groups will be on Week 10
Week 8 **Mar 3** ==Foley sign-up sheet sent for groups==	**ANIMATION** *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. *Potential guest speaker**	**Homework:** -Color backgrounds/rough animation	Progress shown during in-class session with Professor
Week 9 **Mar 10** ==Foley Week with groups!==	**ANIMATION** *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. *15 Minutes Figure Drawing*	**Homework:** -Rough animation	Progress shown during in-class session with Professor
Mar 12 - 19	**SPRING BREAK!**	Go outside, get some good sleep and food, and enjoy the break!	

Week 10 **Mar 24**	***MID POINT CHECK-IN*** ***Groups A & B present**	**Homework:** -Final animation	Group A to present progress Week 11
Week 11 **March 31**	**COLOR** ***Group A** peer review of progress. *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. ***15 Minutes Figure Drawing***	**Homework:** -Final animation	Group B to present progress Week 12
Week 12 **Apr 7**	**COLOR** ***Group B** peer review of progress. *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. ***15 Minutes Figure Drawing***	**Homework:** -Add color to backgrounds and characters	Group A to present progress Week 13
Week 13 **Apr 14**	**LIGHTING** ***Group A** peer review of progress. ***Potential guest speaker**	**Homework:** -Add lighting/shadows	Group B to present progress Week 14
Week 14 **Apr 21**	**PICTURE LOCK** ***Group B** peer review of progress. *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. ***15 Minutes Figure Drawing***	**Homework:** -Finalize sound	Due Week 15
Week 15 **Apr 28**	**SOUND LOCK/** **COMPOSITING** *Work in the lab, touchbase briefly on what you've been up to. ***15 Minutes Figure Drawing***	**Homework:** -Add final touches to your short: any type of effects, film grains, etc. to overlay in using After Effects.	Final film to be submitted on May 5th!
Apr 29 – May 2	**STUDY DAYS**		

May 5	SHORT FILM DUE! Final Exam time: 7 – 9 PM *MAY 5, 2023: Submit final film at 7 PM via Google drive to then share in class with your fellow comrades!*	Celebrate creating your own 30 sec/1 min short – you did it! Happy Cinco de Mayo!	

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