

USC School of Cinematic Arts

John C. Hench Division of Animation & Digital Arts

Ideation & Pre-Production

Creating a senior film can be an overwhelming undertaking, it is difficult to know where to start. This course will support you in creating a clear concept for your film and how to successfully approach the creation process. Along the way we will explore different animation techniques, planning tools, pitching skills, approaches to design and story and much more. Each assignment has been strategically created with the creative process, the faculty pitch and your senior film in mind.

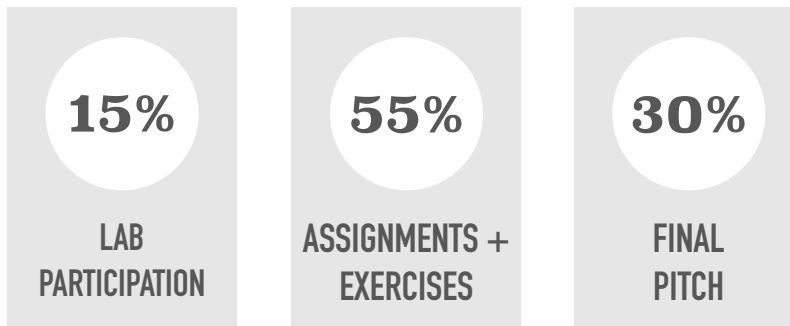
Course Overview:

This course is aimed at digging into the important questions and topics before you commit to your senior film. We will incorporate activities and discussions to think deeply about what makes a senior film successful and how best to approach your own senior film. We will explore story and art styles and mediums, we will discuss duration and content. Each week will build on the previous week, with the intention of setting you up for success in your senior film and beyond.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

At the completion of the course, you will have a clear idea for your senior film, what you will be creating and the process by which you will approach your film. Additionally, you will feel prepared and ready for your senior film pitch.

Grading Allocation / Assessment:



Participation: (15% / 150 points)

Each week's format will be similar and students are expected to be engaged throughout. We will begin by watching a professionally created and/or student created short film to deconstruct the film thematically, visually and technically. This will be followed by a lecture period, discussion, and then a short break. The latter half of each class is devoted to student presented project updates.

USC School of Cinematic Arts

John C. Hench
Division of Animation
& Digital Arts

CTAN 336

Units

2

Term/Day/Time

Spring 2024
Tuesdays
1:00pm - 3:50pm
SCB 102

Instructor

Josh Staub
jstaub@usc.edu

Student Assistant

Shon Xiao
shonxi@usc.edu

Contact Info

jstaub@usc.edu

Prerequisites

None

Description of Assignments: (55% / 550 points)

	Class Topic	Assignment(s) Due	Points
Class 1 Jan 9th	Overview and Goal Setting	3 Ideas / Loglines	N/A
Class 2 Jan 16th	Production Planning	Final Idea + Basic Details	25
Class 3 Jan 23rd	Story Structure	Final Logline / Mood Board / Scope	25
Class 4 Jan 30th	Story Pipeline	Beat Boards / Story Moments	55
Class 5 Feb 6th	Character Design	N/A	N/A
Class 6 Feb 13th	Story Thumbnails	Story Thumbnails	55
Class 7 Feb 20th	Environment Design	Character Designs	55
Class 8 Feb 27th	Look of Picture / Proof of Concept	Storyboards	55
Class 9 Mar 5th	Animatics / Editorial / Sound / Music	Environment / Backgrounds Designs	55
Spring Recess / No Classes March 11th - 15th			
Class 10 Mar 19th	Rough Animatic Review	Rough Animatic (1st Pass)	N/A
Class 11 Mar 26th	Review Look of Picture	Look of Picture (1st Pass)	N/A
Class 12 Apr 2nd	Pitch Deck Prep / Rough Animatic Review	Rough Animatic (2nd Pass)	75
Class 13 Apr 9th	How to Pitch	Look of Picture / Schedule / Resources	75
Class 14 Apr 16th	5 Minute Pitch	Polished Animatic	N/A
Class 15 Apr 23rd	8 Minute Pitch	Completed Pitch Deck	N/A
Classes End / April 26th			
Study Days / April 27th - April 30th			
Exams - May 1st - May 8th			
Pitch Dates TBD			

Final Pitch: (30% / 300 points)

At the end of the semester each student (or team) will pitch their project to Faculty for review with the goal of a project "greenlight" for production of the project during Senior year.

Grading Scale:

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]

About the Professor

Josh Staub is an award-winning filmmaker, production designer, and visual effects supervisor of Walt Disney Animation Studios and Netflix Animation, and currently serves as writer/creator and executive producer of an original animated series in development. Over the course of 14 years at Walt Disney Animation Studios, Josh contributed to more than 20 film projects including the Academy Award winning film *Frozen* and the animated short films *Paperman* and *Feast*.

In addition to helping create some of the most successful and popular animated feature films ever made, Josh is also an accomplished independent filmmaker and sole-creator of the animated short film *The Mantis Parable*, which screened in over 100 film festivals around the world (Annecy, Tribeca), graced the screens of the nation's top art museums (National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian, LACMA, MoMA), and twice qualified for consideration of an Academy Award nomination.

In 2018, Josh was inducted into the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (Oscars) for "exceptional accomplishments in the field of theatrical motion pictures."

Josh is also a founding member of *Rise Up Animation* (dedicated to increasing diversity in the animation industry), and has given countless lectures at studios, festivals, and schools around the world.

Additional Resources:

Books:

Inspired 3D Short Film Production [Jeremy Cantor, Pepe Valencia]

I Moved to Los Angeles to Work in Animation [Natalie Nourigat]

Instagram Portfolios:

@joshstaub.art [Josh Staub]

STORY

@tallychyck [Natalie Nourigat]

@whittlewoodshop [Jeremy Spears]

@briankesinger [Brian Kesinger]

@samstyle [Samantha Villfort]

@ryangreenart [Ryan Green]

@domeeshi [Domee Shi]

@leomatsuda7 [Leo Matsuda]

@stevehatguy [Stephen Anderson]

ASSETS

@alenawooten [Alena Wooten]

@chadstubblefield [Chad Stubblefield]

@andrewtaylorjennings [Andrew Jennings]

ANIMATION

@andrew_chesworth [Andrew Chesworth]

@michael.franceschi [Michael Franceschi]

@trentanimation [Trent Correy]

@agreenster [Adam Green]

ART / DESIGN

@coryloftis [Cory Loftis]

@grizandnorm [Griselda Sastrawanita]

@dethancooper_art [Dan Cooper]

@bschwaby [Bill Schwab]

@dicetsutsumi [Dice Tsutsumi]

@woutertulp [Wouter Tulp]

@peteremmerich [Peter Emmerich]

@bobbypontillas [Bobby Pontillas]

@rrr_yaga [Daniel Arriaga]

@ryanlangdraws [Ryan Lang]

@aaronblaiseart [Aaron Blaise]

@robertkondo [Robert Kondo]

@ladyadorabeezle [Ami Thompson]

@megprk [Meg Park]

@britsketch [Brittney Lee]

@myamada1979 [Mike Yamada]

@theillustratus [Jeff Turley]

@robhruppel [Robh Ruppel]

@lorelay_bove [Lorelay Bove]

Websites:

www.awn.com

www.animationguild.org

www.cgsociety.org

Periodicals:

Animation Magazine

CGW

VFX Voice

Inspiration:

CTN Gallery [North Hollywood]

Nucleus Art Gallery [Alhambra]

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, comprises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see **the student handbook** or the **Office of Academic Integrity's website**, and university policies on **Research and Scholarship Misconduct**.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at **osas.usc.edu**. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at **osasfrontdesk@usc.edu**.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health:

(213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

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

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:

988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP):

(213) 740-9355 (WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office of Equity and Diversity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX):

(213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment:

(213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and micro-aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS):

(213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

Campus Support & Intervention:

(213) 821-4710

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

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

(213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds:

(213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323) 442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice:

(323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

PLEASE NOTE:

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