CTAN 201 Intermediate Animation Production
Units: 2
Spring 2025 Fridays 7:00 PM – 9:50 PM
Location: SCB 102
Instructor: Kasey Fagerquist (she/her/hers)
Office: fagerqui@usc.edu
Office Hours: Monday from 7 – 8 PM via Zoom; email is always open!
Contact Info: fagerqui@usc.edu
Student Assistant: Jules Pincus
Contact Info: jpincus@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 Fagerquist and your SA, Jules Pincus, 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 102 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 recorded. 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 be able to work on their films during class hours, and will also receive feedback from the Professor and their peers throughout the semester. While it is a personal project and endeavor, 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 102
Co-Requisite(s): None
Concurrent Enrollment: None
Recommended Preparation: Basic drawing and animating skills

Course Notes
The syllabus will be posted on Brightspace 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

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 work 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 submission 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.

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.

Please note: AI may be used as reference or inspiration for your work, but we do not accept AI-generated art as your own original work as it is deemed derivative of other works whose originators may not have granted permission for its use.

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 17**	**INTRO OF SYLLABUS + PRODUCTION PIPELINE OVERVIEW** -Both TV & Features -Gathering reference and inspiration for films.	**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. -Get storyboards ready to create animatic.	Due Week 4
Week 2 **Jan 24**	**REPITCH BOARDS + PRESENTATION** **LECTURE:** -Creating an animatic and adding sound.	**Homework:** -Build an animatic from your boards to time out your short.	Due Week 4

Week 3 **Jan 31**	**PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT** -Discuss the process for managing the stages of the production pipeline and timeline.	Homework: -Create schedule, input board panels and info into spreadsheets.	Due Week 4
Week 4 **Feb 7**	**PITCH ANIMATIC + PRESENTATION** ***Class critique on presentations**	Homework: -Get started on background layout/linework; color; etc. (The first tasks you want to hit on your schedule.)	**Next group critique will be on Week 6**
Week 5 **Feb 14**	**Lecture: Vis Dev & Creating a color script** -In lab work-time	Homework: -Create color script	Continue progress for group critique on **Week 6**
Week 6 **Feb 21**	**Class critique on progress**	Homework: -Create background layout/linework.	Continue progress for mid-point check-in on **Week 9**
Week 7 **Feb 28**	**Work in Lab:** Touchbase/receive feedback on what you've been up to.	Homework: -Color backgrounds, or get started on rough animation	Continue progress for mid-point check in on **Week 9**
Week 8 **Mar 7** ADR Sound Session	*Will be on Sound Stages during class*	Homework: -Color backgrounds/rough animation	Continue progress for mid-point check in on **Week 9**
Week 9 **Mar 14**	**MID POINT CHECK-IN** **Class critique of progress**	Homework: -Final animation	Next group critique will be on **Week 13**
Mar 16 - 23	**SPRING BREAK!**	Go outside, get some good sleep, eat some yummy food, drink water, and enjoy the break!	
Week 10 **Mar 28** Foley Sound Session	*Will be on Sound Stages during class*	Homework: -Final animation	Next group critique will be on **Week 13**
Week 11 **April 4**	****Professor out of town ***Work in lab/upload progress to google drive for review**	Homework: -Final animation	Continue progress for next group critique on **Week 13**

Week 12 Apr 11	**Work in Lab:** Touchbase/receive feedback on what you've been up to.	**Homework:** -Add color to backgrounds and characters	Continue progress for next group critique on **Week 13**
Week 13 Apr 18	**Class critique of progress**	**Homework:** -Add lighting/shadows	Continue progress for next group critique on **Week 15**
Week 14 Apr 25	**PICTURE LOCK** Touchbase/receive feedback on what you've been up to. ***Potential guest speaker**	**Homework:** -Finalize sound	Continue progress for next group critique on **Week 15**
Week 15 May 2	**SOUND LOCK/ COMPOSITING** ***Class critique of progress**	**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 9th!
May 3 - 6	**STUDY DAYS**		
May 9	**SHORT FILM DUE!** **Screening Time:** **7 – 9 PM** **Location TBD** *MAY 9, 2025: 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!**	

Land Acknowledgement

USC acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Tongva People. For thousands of years, the Tongva people lived on this land we occupy today and were considered the most powerful indigenous peoples to inhabit the Los Angeles basin. Along with the Tongva, we also recognize the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneño, and Luiseño People, for the land that USC also occupies around Southern California. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your learning location resides, please visit Native-Land.ca to discover the Original People of your home.

The School of Cinematic Arts Support Systems and Statements

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 persons 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 or anonymously submit a report on SCA Community: https://scacommunity.usc.edu/secure/diversityEquity/ You can also read more about how to report discrimination based on a protected class here: https://eeotix.usc.edu/get-help/what-are-my-choices-text/

SCA Office of Student Services
213-740-8358 or StudentAffairs@cinema.usc.edu

SCA Embedded Therapists
Students enrolled in an SCA major program can schedule an appointment with an embedded therapist for the School of Cinematic Arts through the student health portal MySHR.

SCA Community
For additional SCA resources please visit scacommunity.usc.edu

Creative Technology and Support
(213) 821-4571
creativetech@cinema.usc.edu
Location: SCA 128
Support Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM
https://knowledgebase.sca.usc.edu/
https://workstations.sca.usc.edu/

Physical Production Office
The Physical Production Office assists students and faculty with production-related matters including production numbers, locations, permits, insurance, gear and equipment vendors, safety issues, and crew and actor policies. More information can be found by visiting the online Production Procedures and Safety Handbook. The Physical Production Office is located at SCA 304 and is open every weekday from 9am-5pm (Fridays 9am-1pm). You can also reach the Office by calling 213-740-1298 or by email at spo@cinema.usc.edu.

Office of Industry Relations
School of Cinematic Arts - SCA 235
(213) 740-4432
ir@cinema.usc.edu

Cinematic Arts Library Research Guide
https://libguides.usc.edu/cinema

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, compromises 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 accommodation is 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:

COVID-19 Resource Center - https://coronavirus.usc.edu/what-should-i-do/

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.

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

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 for Equity, Equal Opportunity, 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 microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title 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.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411
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.