

Fundamentals of Animation

Fall 2006

ARTS 2961-01

Tuesday, Friday 12:00pm- 1:50pm

Sage Lab, VAST Studio 2411

Shawn Lawson

Email: lawsos2@rpi.edu

Phone: 518 276 2206

Office: West Hall 314

Office Hours: Tuesday, Friday 10pm – 12pm, and by appointment

"There is no particular mystery in animation... it's really very simple, and like anything that is simple, it is about the hardest thing in the world to do." Bill Tytla at the Walt Disney Studio, June 28, 1937.

Abstract:

Fundamentals of Animation is a two-dimensional introduction to animation as an art form. Assignments are designed to encourage spontaneous creativity, explore animation concepts, and learn animation terminology. These varying style assignments will build a solid foundation for entrance into Animation 1. The remainder of the course will be screens and discussion.

Supplies:

Required:

- Notebook – You will want to write small notes for your own reference in the event I'm not around to help.
- Data storage – Whichever means of saving your files is most trustworthy and effective for you. You are responsible for your data, no excuses.
- Williams, Richard. The Animator's Survival Kit. Faber and Faber, London and New York. 2001. ISBN: 0-571-20228-4 – This book is a valuable resource, as well as demonstrating many concepts from this course. Amazon or half.com should have some good used copies. The bookstore should also carry this title.

Suggested:

- Timing for Animation. Focal Press. ISBN 0-240-51714-8 – Great examples of how to resolve common issues, also explains the reasoning for solution.
- Wacom tablet. The big, high quality tablets are nice; but the cheap, small ones are just as effective at this stage.

Important Points:

Be on time:

Attendance will be taken every class. Excused absences must be cleared and accepted on instructor's conditions before the start of class by phone, email, or in person. See Grading and Excuses for further explanation.

Excuses:

Excuses pertaining to anything are only acceptable in the following four scenarios: death of family member, a note from doctor or documentation of hospitalization, viable religious observance, and presentation or exhibition of academic work or research at a conference, symposium, gallery, museum, etc. Singular sick days are excusable without documentation within a reasonable limit – for example: two. Illness spanning two or more consecutive class days is not excusable without documentation. Excuses must be declared before class time.

Responsibility:

It will be the student's responsibility to keep track of their performance and all aspects pertaining to it, this includes accepting responsibility for previous actions, attendance, and performance.

Procrastination:

Waiting until the last minute would not be advisable in this course. Animation does not have a "quick solution," and you will have several difficulties when rushing through it.

Studio Format/ Work Load:

This course does not require everyday attention, although it is a studio course and will require six to ten hours of work outside of class each week on average.

E-mail:

E-mail is the most effective communication with me outside of class. I will also use it to communicate with you, so please check regularly. I will respond as soon as possible, but understand that email between 10 pm and 8am will most likely wait until the next morning.

Cell Phone:

No audible cell phones; if you decide to take the call, please exit the classroom to talk.

Computing:

Examples: Instant Messenger and/ or other open non-class related applications. If you are running any extraneous distracting applications other than what is being taught and you ask for help, then you may be denied the help until you start paying attention.

Studio Critique:

Monitors/ Laptops/ etc:

- All audio/visual devices other than the equipment being used to present work will be turned off.
- Refusal to turn off monitors, close laptops, etc will result in receiving an absence for that day.

Participation:

- You will be required to speak and present your work.
- Part of each assignment grade will be based on your participation during critique.
- You will also be required to speak about your colleagues' work.
- A simple like, dislike, or opinion must be followed with substantiating reasons.

- Please give positive feedback. Our class has a mix of disciplines, and not everyone is accustomed or prepared for a full critique forum.
- Allow everyone a chance to speak.
- Use common sense and play nice: don't interrupt; do wait for your turn, etc.

Ideas:

- Ideas that cause any physical or emotional harm to the student or anyone else will not be accepted.
- All other ideas will be accepted for conversation.
- A student may excuse themselves for a short duration if there is a conflict of religious beliefs with the content presented.

Grading:

Assignments:

- WebCT
 - All assignments, grades, and written comments will be dispersed through WebCT.
 - Read the assignment and follow it exactly, this includes where to turn in assignments and their formatting requirements.
 - Additional submitted samples or supplementary materials not specifically required may be in any cross platform format.
 - Assignments will be due on the date listed in WebCT regardless of whether they were officially assigned in class.
 - Question? Ask it.
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class.
- Ten percent of an assignment's total points will be deducted per day late. Days are calculated by the time an assignment is due. After ten days, an assignment will be graded with a zero.
- Voluntary extra assignments for an increase in a final grade will not be entertained or accepted.
- Redoing an assignment for a potentially higher score is acceptable only if the assignment was originally turned in on time and if the re-completed assignment is submitted within ten days of the assignment's original deadline. The final assignment of the semester will not be available for redoing.

Attendance:

- Attendance is mandatory and taken at the beginning of class. Tardiness will be calculated when either of the following happens first: the end of opening announcements or ten minutes.
- Only disputes brought to the instructor's attention within one week of the infraction will be considered and discussed. All other disputes will not be considered.
- Attendance and tardy final grade modifications as follows:
 - Each three tardies equal one absence.
 - Each three absences equal reduction of total points by one letter grade.
 - Work in Class days are not "free" days.
- Attendance to Final Critique during exam week is mandatory. Failure to appear will result in the reduction of total points by one letter grade.

Overall:

- Grades will be based on an appropriate level for continuation into an industry related profession.
- Any appeal for grades must be brought to the instructor during office hours or at a scheduled time convenient to both parties. Keep in mind that an appeal has the potential to raise or lower your grade.
- Incompletes will only be granted for the death of family member during the semester, note from doctor or documentation of hospitalization representing a significant period of time.
- Only if given the final grade of “I”, will additional work after the conclusion of a semester will be accepted for a change of grade.
- There is no rounding of the thousands place.

Grade	Expectations	Percentage	
A	Consistently outstanding work, presentation, and effort, turned in on time.	100	- 96
A -		95.99	- 92
B +		91.99	- 88
B	Good work, presentation and effort presented on time.	87.99	- 84
B -		83.99	- 80
C +		79.99	- 76
C	Most work presented on time, some participation and effort.	75.99	- 72
C -		71.99	- 68
D +		67.99	- 64
D	Some work presented on time, little participation and effort.	63.99	- 60
F	Failure	59.99	- 0

Academic Integrity

Trust:

Student-Teacher relationships are built on trust. Students must trust that teachers have made appropriate decisions about the structure and content of the courses they teach. And, teachers must trust that the assignments which students turn in are theirs. Acts which violate this trust undermine the educational process.

Plagiarism:

All work produced in this course must be original and created by the student. First infraction will result in a failure for the course and a report to the Office of the Dean.

Collaboration:

Collaborative work and discussion is encouraged. Instructor must be notified of students' intention to collaborate on assignments well ahead of that assignment's deadline. Instructor will determine whether or not collaboration will be allowed. Upon assignment completion, there must be documentation of each member's contribution to the finished assignment. The instructor reserves the right to award members of the collaboration different grades.

Project Assignment Schedule:

Projects are due on the date that matches the end of their time block. For example, the first assignment “Shape to Shape” is due Sept 12th not Sept 15th. Readings are supplied for students’ use in relation to project assignments. Discussion about readings will not occur unless otherwise notified during the class time in which they are assigned.

Day	in Class	assignments	reading
29-Aug	Intro. IC-BounceB, S & S, T & S		
1-Sep	IC- T& S, Screen	Shape to Shape 20 pts	35 - 101
5-Sep	IC-Walk Cycle		102 - 175
8-Sep	IC-Weight		256 - 273
12-Sep	Look at StS, IC-aniticipation		274 - 284
15-Sep	Screen, discuss Stop Motion	Rotoscope 20 pts	217-255
19-Sep	Screen, IC - stop motion, audio mixing		
22-Sep	Discuss Roto, Screen, IC - roto		
26-Sep	IC-roto, idea discuss		
29-Sep	audio mixing, idea discuss		
3-Oct	Work in Class		
6-Oct	Work in Class	Stop Motion 20 pts	333 - 339
10-Oct	No Class - Mon Schedule		
13-Oct	Critique Rotoscope	Story Board 10 pts	333 - 339
17-Oct	Critique Rotoscope		
20-Oct	No Class - Shawn WI	Final Animation 30 pts	
24-Oct	Work in Class		
27-Oct	Discuss Leica Reel, Mise en Scene		
31-Oct	Crit Stop Motion		
3-Nov	Crit Stop Motion	Final Animation 30 pts	
7-Nov	Work in Class		
10-Nov	Critique Story Board	Final Animation 30 pts	
14-Nov	Critique Story Board		
17-Nov	Screen, Work in Class	Final Animation 30 pts	
21-Nov	Work in Class		
24-Nov	No Class - Thanksgiving	Final Animation 30 pts	
28-Nov	One on One updates		
1-Dec	One on One updates		
5-Dec	Work in Class		
8-Dec	Last work in class	Final Animation 30 pts	
Dec	Final Project Due		

- Changes to syllabus may be made at instructor's best discretion with notification to the student •