

Animation I

ARTS 4060-01

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

Sage Lab, VAST Studio 2411

Spring 2008

Shawn Lawson

Email: lawsos2@rpi.edu

Phone: 518 276 2206

Office: West Hall 314

Office Hours: Tue and Fri 10am – 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:

Animation I is both a 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional introduction to animation as an art form. Students will complete traditional 2-dimensional assignments that are designed to encourage spontaneous creativity during planned keyframing, explore animation concepts, and learn animation terminology. In conjunction, students will learn the tools to create and animate in Maya. These varying size assignments will build upon the traditional assignment ideas and begin to examine intermediate animation questions. The final project in Maya will be a student designed animation.

Supplies:

Required:

- Notebook – Maya and computerized 3D space is very complex and can be confusing. You will want to write small notes for your own reference in the event I'm not around to help.
- Data storage – And lots of it. Whichever means of saving your files is most trustworthy and effective for you. You are responsible for your data, no excuses.
- Learning Maya 2008: Foundation. – The campus bookstore should carry this.

Suggested:

- Williams, Richard. The Animator's Survival Kit. Faber and Faber, London and New York. 2001. ISBN: 0-571-20228-4 – You should already have this.
- Calendar to help plan your process.

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 use your RPI account to communicate with you.

Cell Phone:

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

Distractive Computing:

Example: Instant Messenger and/ or other open non-class related applications. If you are running any extraneous distracting applications then you may be denied 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:

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class.
- Twenty-five percent of an assignment's total points will be deducted per day late. Days are calculated by the time an assignment is due. After four 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 four 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.
- Points are based on the RPI +/- system as follows:

Grade	Expectations	Assigned Value	Range
A	Excellent: consistent effort, timely	4.00	- 3.68
A -		3.67	- 3.34
B +		3.33	- 3.01
B	Good: effort, timely	3.00	- 2.68
B -		2.67	- 2.34
C +		2.33	- 2.01
C	Satisfactory: some effort, timely	2.00	- 1.68
C -		1.67	- 1.34
D +		1.33	- 1.01
D	Passable: little effort	1.00	- .68
F	Failure	0.67	- 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 “Poly Models” is due Feb 5th not Feb 8th. 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	
15-Jan	Intro, 2D anim, Maya Nav	Poly Models 20%	
18-Jan	modeling		
22-Jan	modeling		
25-Jan	Basic Animation		
29-Jan	Animation		
1-Feb	Work in Class		
5-Feb	Critique Poly Models		
8-Feb	Shading		Moving Scene 30%
12-Feb	Shading, Texturing		
15-Feb	Texturing, Lighting		
19-Feb	No Class - Mon Sched		
22-Feb	Lighting, Cameras, Batch Render		
26-Feb	Work in Class		
29-Feb	Work in Class		
4-Mar	Critique Moving Scene		
7-Mar	Critique Moving Scene		
11-Mar	No Class - Spring Break	Story Board 10%	
14-Mar	No Class - Spring Break		
18-Mar	Bones, IK		
21-Mar	Bones, IK, Skin, Rig		
25-Mar	Skin, Rig, Animate		
28-Mar	Critique Story Board		
1-Apr	Critique Story Board		
4-Apr	Shawn to SIGCHI		Final Animation 40%
8-Apr	Shawn to SIGCHI		
11-Apr	Shawn to ITU		
15-Apr	Graph, Dope, Trax Animation		
18-Apr	Compositing		
22-Apr	In Progress Peek		
25-Apr	Work in Class - Shawn to Chicago?		
29-Apr	Last Work In Class		
may 5-9	Critique Final		
		breakdown: in progress peek 20%	
		final render 20%	

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