

Animation I

Fall 2009

ARTS 4060-01

Tuesday, Friday 10:00am- 11:50am

Sage Lab, VAST Studio 2411

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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 a 3-dimensional introduction to animation as an art form. Students will complete several small assignments that are designed to encourage spontaneous creativity, develop a familiarity with the tools, and learn animation terminology. The final project will be a student-designed short animation.

Learning Outcomes:

By completion of the course...

- Students will be able to create polygon, NURBS, and SubD models.
- Students will be able to use shading, texturing, and lighting techniques.
- Students will be able to use basic rendering and basic animation techniques.
- Finally, students will create a rendered animation demonstrating the practiced skills from the semester.

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.

Suggested:

- Learning Maya 2009: Foundation. – The campus bookstore should carry this.
- The Art of Maya. – The campus bookstore should carry this. Also available as pdf.
- 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 from Fundamentals of Animation.
- Calendar to help plan your process.

Important Points:

Excuses:

Excuses 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 and accepted before class time by phone, email, or in person.

Procrastination:

Waiting until the last minute is not 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:

No computing, exceptions are: following in class demos and work in class. Refusal to turn off monitors, close laptops, etc will result in receiving an absence for that day.

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.

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 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.
- 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 modifications to final grade as follows:
Each three absences equal reduction of total points by one letter grade.
- Attendance to Final Critique during exam week is mandatory. Failure to appear will result in the reduction of total points by one letter grade.
- Work in Class days are not "free" days.

Overall:

- Grades will be based on an appropriate level for continuation into an industry related profession.
- All appeals 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 Sept 15th not Sept 18th. 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
1-Sep	Intro, syllabi, poly modeling	Poly Models 10%
4-Sep	poly modeling	
8-Sep	poly modeling/ deformers	NURBS Models 10%
11-Sep	work in class	
15-Sep	review poly models, start NURBS	subD Models 10%
18-Sep	NURBS modeling	
22-Sep	work in class	Textured Models 10%
25-Sep	review NURBS models, start subD	
29-Sep	subD modeling	Lighting Models 10%
2-Oct	shading	
6-Oct	work in class - Shawn in Baltimore	First Animation 15%
9-Oct	review subD models, texturing	
13-Oct	No Class - Mon Sched	Final Project 30%
16-Oct	texturing, work in class	
20-Oct	review textured models	Figure Drawing 5%
23-Oct	lighting, cameras, baking	
27-Oct	work in class - Shawn in Berkeley	Final Project 30%
30-Oct	work in class - Shawn in Berkeley	
3-Nov	lighting, cameras, baking	Final Project 30%
6-Nov	review lighting, start animation	
10-Nov	animation - graph, dope	Final Project 30%
13-Nov	playblast, batch render, compositing	
17-Nov	work in class	Final Project 30%
20-Nov	review animation	
24-Nov	Bones, IK	Final Project 30%
27-Nov	No Class - Thanksgiving	
1-Dec	Bones, IK, Skin, Rig	Final Project 30%
4-Dec	Skin, Rig, Animate	
8-Dec	project updates	Final Project 30%
11-Dec	project updates	
dec 16-23	Critique Final	Final Project 30%

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