Digital Animation Techniques

ARTV 2370
Section #:
Days/Times/Location
Semester

Instructor:
Office Hours:
Appointment Office Hours:
Email:
Please set up appointments either through email or in person.

Instructor's Communication Policies

- Although I show particular office hours, that does not always mean that I am available. Please set up an appointment with me in advance either by email or in person.
- I will answer emails Monday through Friday at my earliest possible opportunity on the same day it is received. I check ACC email Saturdays and Sundays, depending on availability. Please note that I will ONLY respond to emails received from your official ACC email address.
- Check your ACC email daily Monday through Friday as I may send out correspondence on those particular days.

Course Description

- Credit Hours: 3
- Classroom Contact Hours per week: 2
- Laboratory Contact Hours per week: 4

Intermediate study of 2D animation in a 3D environmental workspace. Includes camera and layer multi-planing, advanced character development and compositing. Study includes use of exposure sheets and advanced lip-sync techniques as well as compression, output and HD quality video.

Course Rationale

Digital Animation Techniques is an intermediate course for tradigital and cut-out animation. This course provides students the fundamental skills to produce traditional style animation as well as puppet animation and the knowledge of the principles of animation to be built upon in subsequent courses leading up to the Portfolio course. Students can also apply skills learned in this class in other areas including basic traditional animation.

Course Prerequisite

ARTV 1403 Basic Animation

Student Learning Outcomes

Course Student Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the 12 principles of animation
- Calculate and apply appropriate frame rates
- Manipulate animation production equipment
- Create accurate and aesthetically appealing CG animation
- Describe characteristics of well-designed and executed animation
- Relate some knowledge of the history of animation
- Assess and critique past and current animation trends
- Demonstrate progress in basic drawing and animation skills
- Critically analyze your creative work and the work of others

Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the 2D Animation program, students will be able to:

- Define and apply design principles and theories to animation production.
- Identify and apply the 12 principles of animation.
- Demonstrate skills in the use of industry standard tools for animation.
- Create traditional and CG animation based on current industry trends and practices.

Required Textbook

None

Required Materials

- Paper, pencils, eraser (to sketch out ideas)
- USB flash drive or external hard drive (to back up work

Students will use **Blackboard** learning management system for assignment materials, grading, and collaboration.

Instructional Methodology

To help you meet course objectives, the teaching methods in this class are based on professional experience and best practices in the area of 2D animation. These methods might include: lecture, demonstration, critiques in group and one-on-one settings, group activities and student presentations.

Student Technology Support
Austin Community College provides free, secure drive-up WiFi to students and employees in the parking lots of all campus locations. WiFi can be accessed seven days a week, 7 am to 11 pm. Additional details are available at Student Technology Access.

Students who do not have the necessary technology to complete their ACC courses can request to borrow devices from Student Technology Services. Available devices include iPads, webcams, headsets, calculators, etc. Students must be registered for a credit course, Adult Education, or Continuing Education course to be eligible. For more information, including how to request a device, visit Student Technology Access.

Student Technology Services offers phone, live-chat, and email-based technical support for students and can provide support on topics such as password resets, accessing or using Blackboard, access to technology, etc. To view hours of operation and ways to request support, visit Student Technology Access

Distance Education (for online or hybrid courses only)
All course instruction is online. High-speed Internet access is required.

We encourage you to review the ACC Distance Education General Information available at https://online.austincc.edu/faq/

Grading System

Passing Grade Policy - Effective September 2005, D's are not accepted as a passing grade within the department courses. Students receiving a grade of D must retake the course to receive credit and to progress to the next level course. Students who made a D prior to September 2005 will be allowed to proceed to the next level course.

Each assignment in this course will be graded on a 100-point scale. Point values for letter grades are as follows:

89.5 – 100 = A
79.5 – 89.4 = B
69.5 – 79.4 = C
59.5 – 69.4 = D
00.0 – 59.4 = F

Assignments that typically take place over a longer period and require more ingenuity and creativity. Students are expected to comprehend, retain, build and expand on the skills that are taught leading up to the start of work and working outside of class at home or in open labs may be required to stay on pace with the class. Grading will be more specific than in exercises and will directly assess the objectives associated with that project.

Each assignment will have its own specific criteria. Assignments will have an associated Assignment Sheet with essential requirements such as specifications, required techniques, and due dates.

Course Policies

- **Attendance/Participation -** Regular and punctual class and laboratory attendance is expected of all students. If attendance or compliance with other course policies is unsatisfactory, the instructor may withdraw students from the class.
    - If for any reason you're unable to come to class, you will be counted as absent. You are allowed 4 absences. There is no distinction between an excused or unexcused absence, so use your absences meaningfully and sparingly. You are counted absent if:
        - you are not in class
        - you leave the class early
        - you get to class extremely late
    - If you are late to class 5–20 minutes, you will be counted as tardy. Three tardies count as one absence.
    - After a third absence, you should withdraw from the course. If the fourth absence happens past the final withdrawal date of the semester, then your final grade will be lowered one letter grade for each subsequent absence. If you decide to withdraw from the course, it is your responsibility to officially withdraw yourself from the class through admissions and records. If you do not withdraw from the class, you will receive an F.

- **Withdrawal** - It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that his or her name is removed from the roll should he or she decides to withdraw from the class. The instructor does, however, reserve the right to drop a student should he or she feel it is necessary. If a student decides to withdraw, he or she should also verify that the withdrawal is submitted <u>before</u> the Final Withdrawal Date. The student is also strongly encouraged to retain their copy of the withdrawal form for their records.

  Students who enroll for the third or subsequent time in a course taken since Fall, 2002, may be charged a higher tuition rate for that course. State law permits students to withdraw from no more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career at Texas public colleges or universities. With certain exceptions, all course withdrawals automatically count towards this limit. Details regarding this policy can be found in the ACC college catalog.

- **Missed or Late Work -** Assignments are due at the beginning of class periods or otherwise specified by the instructor. If turned in after that, the project is late. I will lower

a project one letter grade for each class day that it is late***. I will not accept work 1 week past the due date.***

- **Naming Convention -** Following a prescribed naming convention is important. Use your last name, then an underscore, then the name of the exercise or project. Specific naming conventions will be indicated on your assignment sheet.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) Policy

Any use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) is strictly prohibited in all class assignments and projects. The purpose of this course is to help students develop their animation skills with Toon Boom Harmony. The use of GAI in class work undermines these goals.

Rationale
The course is built on the 12 principles of animation, which forms the foundation of animation. These principles cannot be learned through automated systems like GAI. True understanding and mastery comes from hands-on application. Draw, experiment, and let yourself fail. The process of revision and refinement is the journey towards being an animator. For this reason, the use of GAI is strictly prohibited in this class.

Definition
For the purposes of this course, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) refers to digital tools or systems that use machine learning to automatically produce text, images, video, sound, or other media in response to user prompts. Examples include, but are not limited to, tools such as ChatGPT, Stable Diffusion, MidJourney, DALL·E, Runway, or similar programs.

Resources
Since GAI is prohibited in this course, no resources will be provided for its use. Students are encouraged instead to consult recommended animation software tutorials, library resources, and faculty office hours to strengthen their craft.

Assessment
All assignments and projects will be assessed based on the originality of the student's work, adherence to project guidelines, demonstration of technical skills, and artistic growth. Evidence of GAI usage will result in a violation of course policy.

Penalties
Violations of this policy will be treated as academic misconduct. Consequences may include:
- A grade of zero on the assignment in question.
- A report filed with the academic integrity office.
- Potential course failure for repeated or severe violations.

Exceptions

Exceptions may only be granted with prior written approval from the instructor. This could include limited scholarly use of GAI tools for research into animation history, industry analysis, or other non-creative applications. Such cases must be explicitly cleared with the instructor before use.

Usage Permissions

The use of GAI to generate animation, concept art, scripts, character designs, storyboards, sound, or any other course-related creative work is prohibited.

Incompletes

An incomplete (grade of "I") will only be given for extenuating circumstances. What constitutes "extenuating circumstances" is left to the instructor's discretion. If a grade of I is given, the remaining course work must be completed by a date set by the student and professor. This date may not be later than two weeks prior to the end of the following semester. A grade of I also requires completion and submission of the Incomplete Grade form to be signed by the faculty member (and student if possible) and submitted to the department chair.

Students may request an Incomplete from their faculty member if they believe circumstances warrant. The faculty member will determine whether the Incomplete is appropriate to award or not. The following processes must be followed when awarding a student an I grade.

1. Prior to the end of the semester in which the "I" is to be awarded, the student must meet with the instructor to determine the assignments and exams that must be completed prior to the deadline date. This meeting can occur virtually or in person. The instructor should complete the Report of Incomplete Grade form.

2. The faculty member will complete the form, including all requirements to complete the course and the due date, sign (by typing in name) and then email it to the student. The student will then complete his/her section, sign (by typing in name), and return the completed form to the faculty member to complete the agreement. A copy of the fully completed form can then be emailed by the faculty member to the student and the department chair for each grade of Incomplete that the faculty member submits at the end of the semester.

3. The student must complete all remaining work by the date specified on the form above. This date is determined by the instructor in collaboration with the student, but it may not be later than the final withdrawal deadline in the subsequent long semester.

4. Students will retain access to the course Blackboard page through the subsequent semester in order to submit work and complete the course. Students will be able to log on to Blackboard and have access to the course section materials, assignments, and grades from the course and semester in which the Incomplete was awarded.

5. When the student completes the required work by the Incomplete deadline, the instructor will submit an electronic Grade Change Form to change the student's performance grade from an "I" to the earned grade of A, B, C, D, or F.

If an Incomplete is not resolved by the deadline, the grade automatically converts to an "F." Approval to carry an Incomplete for longer than the following semester or session deadline is not frequently granted."

Class Schedule

Schedule may be subject to change by the instructor. If there is a change in the schedule, the instructor will notify students ahead of time.

Module 1 The Toon Boom Harmony Interface
Module 2 Cleanup Tools in Harmony
Module 3 Introduction to the Node View
Module 4 Deformers and Cutters
Module 5 Rigging Hierarchy
Module 6 Posing the Turnaround
Module 7 Final Project: Demo Reel