

## **Intro to Animation - FDMA 1996 - Section 501**

Syllabus - REMOTE - Spring 2022

Instructor: André Callot

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### **Credit Hours**

This is a 3 credit-hour course. Students are expected to work on their own and in groups to complete assignments using school-supplied resources within the timeframe outlined for each assignment. The course is remote and asynchronous, meaning that class work will be turned in through the Blackboard Learn website ([learn.unm.edu](http://learn.unm.edu)) by midnight Mountain Time the night before the class in which the assignment is due.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

This course provides a basic understanding of tools and techniques of both traditional and computer animation, founded in the twelve basic principles of animation. Students will learn how to conceive and produce animated shorts through class discussion, weekly exercises and both group and solo projects.

Course objectives include:

- Demonstrate the twelve basic principles of animation in an animated work.
- Work alone and in groups to create animated shorts.
- Create short animated works using After Effects, Blender, Cinema 4D and Houdini, as well as traditional animation techniques and less conventional approaches.

### **Grades**

Grades are based on participation in class critiques and discussions, as well as weekly assignments and two final projects (group and solo). Projects that satisfy the stated requirements and which are turned in on time will receive full credit. Late projects will be docked a letter grade for each week they are late. This is a contract-based course, meaning that any assignment that is turned in that satisfies the assignment description will receive full points, and will not be graded based on "quality."

Video project assignments are to be uploaded directly to the Learn Blackboard Discussion Board to the appropriate assignment, using the Kaltura media management system. Letter grades correspond to point totals:

A: 90-100%   B: 80-89%   C: 70-79%   D: 61-69%

### **Office Hours**

Please email me ([acallot66@unm.edu](mailto:acallot66@unm.edu)) before January 31, 2022 to schedule a one-hour consultation session to occur before February 7, 2022. We will discuss your interest in the course, your hopes for covering specific subject matter, and your access to library resources. Additional sessions are available for scheduling upon request.

I am available on Fridays between 1 PM and 4 PM for additional meetings. If you would like to meet with me but haven't scheduled a time, you can email me during this weekly period for an immediate meeting, if I am not already meeting with a student.

## **Class Participation**

A portion of the student's final grade (defined above) will depend on the student's weekly participation in class discussions on the Blackboard Learn Discussion Board for this course. Failure to contribute significantly to the weekly forums created for each class will result in a lower final grade for the course. The student's final grade will be reduced by 1.25% for each week you fail to post responses to the prompts in the Discussion Board.

## **Production Assignments**

The student will complete six production assignments as described below, post to the course Discussion Board, and comment on other students' work in a timely manner.

## **Course Agreement**

Please complete, sign and email to me a copy of the Course Agreement, available at the end of this syllabus, before the start of the second week of this course.

## **Course Access**

This course will occur entirely on Blackboard Learn. A reliable internet connection and a computer capable of accessing the Blackboard Learn online platform are required for this course. For assigned readings provided as hyperlinks or PDF downloads, appropriate additional software for accessing class materials may also be required. Video conference appointments will be conducted on Zoom, using a webcam, a microphone and headphones. Film screenings will occur on Blackboard Learn, which may require minimum internet data speeds. Please test your internet speeds in the first week of class and report issues to me.

## **Privacy, Equal Access and Title IX**

Please inform me of your needs regarding disability as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner. In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM Faculty are considered responsible employees. This designation requires that any report made to a faculty member regarding sexual misconduct or gender discrimination must be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity and the Title IX Coordinator. For information on accessibility at UNM-Valencia, Title IX and student privacy, please [click this link](#).

[UNM-Valencia's Equal Access Services](#)

## **Plagiarism**

The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, including dismissal, against any student who is found responsible for academic dishonesty. Any student who has been judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; and misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or outside the University.

## **Student Resources**

For tutoring resources, information about the library, career counseling, financial aid and other student resources, please [click this link](#).

## Assignment Summary:

Class Participation - Each week, 20% of final grade. Comment on discussion boards in all topics, including discussion of student work, discussion of example clips, and discussion of the week's lesson.

Bouncing Ball Project	- Due in Class 10 (March 28, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Walk Cycle Project	- Due in Class 11 (April 4, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Character Model Project	- Due in Class 12 (April 11, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Lighting Project	- Due in Class 13 (April 18, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Storyboard Project	- Due in Class 14 (April 25, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Background Project	- Due in Class 15 (May 2, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Solo Project	- Due in Class 16 (May 9, 2022)	10% of final grade.
Group Project	- Due in Class 16 (May 9, 2022)	10% of final grade.

## School Production Resources

Production resources for use on course assignments will be available for check-out from the UNM Valencia library, based on availability. The student will reserve production equipment ahead of time and return the equipment to the UNM Valencia library according to the return deadlines set by the library. The student will return the equipment in the condition in which it was checked out, as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian. The student will remove batteries before returning equipment. The student will replace quick-release plates on tripods before returning equipment. The student will pack camera bags, light kits and other equipment in a responsible and professional way, preventing unnecessary damage to the equipment. The student will return any media (such as SD cards and/or hard drives) that are included in the camera kit, and will backup their footage before returning equipment. Failure to respect these instructions may result in suspension or revocation of privileges as determined by the UNM Valencia librarian.

## Mental Health and Counseling Services

UNM-Valencia has one part-time mental health counselor, Arturo Fierro. His hours are Wednesdays, 3pm - 6pm and he is located in the SCC (Student Community Center) Room 206. (phone # and email will be shared via Learn). He is able to see patients in-person or in Zoom (this may change to virtual only as the pandemic continues to change). He may have more hours throughout the semester, but this is the current info. I will update this via Learn if/when it changes. Also, here is a list of services available in Valencia County and around the state: <https://valencia.unm.edu/students/student-resources/index.html>

## Additional Contact Information

Program Chair	-	Alexa Wheeler	-	<a href="mailto:alexa08@unm.edu">alexa08@unm.edu</a>
Department Chair	-	Justin Bendell	-	<a href="mailto:jbendell@unm.edu">jbendell@unm.edu</a>



**Week One:** January 18, 2022 - Twelve Basic Principles of Animation

Students will learn the twelve basic principles of animation and how to apply them to their own work as animators. Subjects will include squash and stretch, anticipation, staging, straight ahead action vs. pose-to-pose, follow through & overlapping action, slow in/slow out, arc, secondary action, timing, exaggeration, solid drawing and appeal.

SCREENING: Little Nemo: Adventures in Slumberland (1989)

Discussion - Do the twelve basic principles of animation help the animator to see their own work in a broader context, or constrain animators into a particular limited style?

**Week Two:** January 24, 2022 - Adobe After Effects

Students will learn the interface of Adobe After Effects and how to use After Effects tools to create two-dimensional motion graphics animations. Subjects will include the use of expressions, the animation panel, tools for imitating three-dimensional animation using two-dimensional assets, and basic compositing.

TUTORIAL VIDEOS: Instructional videos that cover the basics of the Adobe After Effects software are available here: <https://helpx.adobe.com/after-effects/tutorials.html>  
Please watch the "After Effects Get Started" course, the "animating essentials" course and the "build and animate custom shapes" course.

SCREENING: A Scanner Darkly (2006)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) about the troubled production of A Scanner Darkly.

**Week Three:** January 31, 2022 - Blender

Students will learn the interface of Blender and how to use Blender to create three-dimensional characters, create and apply textures, create and apply lighting environments, animate character actions, and use the Grease Pencil tool

TUTORIAL VIDEOS: Instructional videos that cover the basics of the Blender software are available here: <https://www.blender.org/support/tutorials/>  
Please watch the "Get Started" and "Modeling and Sculpting" video series.

SCREENING: Wolfwalkers (2020)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) about the making of Wolfwalkers using Blender.

**Week Four:** February 7, 2022 - Houdini

Students will learn the interface of Houdini, and how to use Houdini to model, render, animate and simulate three-dimensional objects.

TUTORIAL VIDEOS: Please watch the first two Houdini Foundations videos here: <https://www.sidefx.com/learn/collections/houdini-foundations/>

SCREENING: Blade Runner 2049 (2017)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this article](#) about the use of Houdini in Blade Runner 2049.

**Week Five:** February 14, 2022 - Cinema 4D

Students will learn the interface of Cinema 4D, and the fundamentals of three-dimensional animation in Cinema 4D's platform.

TUTORIAL VIDEOS: A series of Cinema 4D tutorial videos can be found here:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhw3dM6mDkfeqc3xEs\\_3-9Q9c13zLYHYd](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhw3dM6mDkfeqc3xEs_3-9Q9c13zLYHYd)

Please watch this video first: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Izo8rFPOQ14>

GROUP ANIMATION PROJECT: Students will work together in groups of three to produce a three-minute animated short, using the animation techniques of their choice. Production plans, including script, storyboards and schedule, are to be posted on the course Discussion Board, due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 7, 2022. Final group projects are to be posted on the course Discussion Board (using the Kaltura media management platform in Blackboard Learn) no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 9, 2022.

SCREENING: Spider-Man: Into the Spiderverse (2018)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this article](#) on the use of Cinema 4D in Spider-Man: Into the Spiderverse.

**Week Six:** February 21, 2022 - Bouncing Ball

Students will animate a bouncing ball, using techniques of their own choice.

SOLO ANIMATION PROJECT - Students will work on their own to produce a 90-second animated short, using the animation technique of their choice. Production plans, including script, storyboards and schedule, are to be posted on the course Discussion Board, due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 21, 2022. Final projects due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 9, 2022, uploaded via Kaltura to the course Discussion Board.

ASSIGNMENT ONE: Students will animate a bouncing ball and upload the video file (using the Kaltura media management platform in Blackboard Learn) to the course Discussion Board no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of March 28, 2022.

SCREENING: An American Tail (1986)

Discussion - What is the relationship between animation and the history of engraving?

**Week Seven:** February 28, 2022 - Walk Cycles

Students will animate a walk cycle, using techniques of their own choice.

ASSIGNMENT TWO: Students will animate a walk cycle and upload the video file (using the Kaltura media management platform in Blackboard Learn). Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 4, 2022.

SCREENING: Animalympics (1980)

Discussion - Please read and discuss [Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic](#), by Henri Bergson. Specifically discuss the meaning of the "mechanical" and the "inelastic" as Bergson describes them in the text.

**Week Eight:** March 7, 2022 - Character Models

Students will create character models for the characters in their animations.

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Students will create character models for all characters in their solo project. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 11, 2022, uploaded to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: The Illusionist (2010), Aya of Yop City (2013)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) with the director of the Illusionist.

**Week Nine:** March 21, 2022 (Week of March 14 is Spring Break) - Lighting/Framing

Students will experiment with lighting environments for their characters to move through.

ASSIGNMENT FOUR: Students will light a walk cycle from above, from below, using three point lighting, and with the character holding a candle. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 18, 2022, uploaded to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: Batman: Mask of the Phantasm (1993)

Discussion - Discuss [this interview](#) with the director of Batman: Mask of the Phantasm.

**Week Ten:** March 28, 2022 - Storyboards

Students will create storyboards using their characters.

ASSIGNMENT FIVE: Students will draw storyboards for their characters as they cook and eat a meal. Due no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of April 25, 2022, uploaded to the course Discussion Board.

SCREENING: Gandahar (1987), Berserk (1997)

Discussion - What is the relationship between the original Berserk manga and the series?

**Week Eleven:** April 4, 2022 - Sound, Music and Voice Acting

Students will learn techniques for incorporating sound effects, music and voice acting.

SCREENING: Yellow Submarine (1968), Azumanga Daioh (2002), Dorohedoro (2020)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) with sound designer Gary Rydstrom.

**Week Twelve:** April 11, 2022 - Writing for Animation

Students will learn techniques for writing animated films and how to write visually.

INTERVIEW: Eric Rivera will visit the class to discuss writing for animated television series.

SCREENING: Evangelion 1.0: You Are (Not) Alone (2007)

Discussion - How have animated films traditionally communicated to an audience wordlessly?

**Week Thirteen:** April 18, 2022 - Backgrounds and Environments

Students will learn how to create visually-arresting environments with dynamic elements that characters can interact with directly.

ASSIGNMENT SIX: Students will create a room in which an animated character might exist. This room may be created as a three-dimensional environment or a collection of two-dimensional illustrations, large enough for an animated character to move around in. Upload your finished project to the course Discussion Board no later than 12:01 AM on the morning of May 2, 2022.

SCREENING: Mind Games (2004), Paprika (2006)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) with Paprika's director, Satoshi Kon.

**Week Fourteen:** April 25, 2022 - Emotion

Students will learn to manifest the powerful relationship between animation and human emotion. Subjects will include desire, drama, comedy and fear. Students will recognize the possibilities of the face, the body, and the environment to reflect the inner life of their characters.

SCREENING: [Chuck Jones: Extremes and InBetweens](#) (2000)

Discussion - How can the experience of an emotion exist outside of the mind?

**Week Fifteen:** May 2, 2022 - Alternative Animation Techniques

Students will learn to implement the concepts of unconventional animation practices, including limited animation, stop-motion, and rotoscoping.

SCREENING: Alice (1988)

Discussion - Read and discuss [this interview](#) with Alice's director, Jan Svankmajer.

**Week Sixteen:** May 9, 2022

Final group and solo projects will be screened and discussed, in addition to any late work.



## COURSE AGREEMENT

I, the undersigned, commit to fulfill the expectations of this course as laid out in this syllabus, specifically regarding these requirements:

1. I will participate each week in the course Discussion Board in Blackboard Learn, providing constructive criticism of my fellow students' completed assignments. I will interact in a meaningful way with my fellow students while demonstrating respect and courtesy. I will demonstrate my understanding of each week's lesson by commenting meaningfully on the week's film discussion, in a timely manner.
2. I will complete each week's production assignment on time, with an eye toward the week's lesson and a progression over the semester toward refinement of my personal understanding of digital media production as a discipline. I will post on the Discussion Board with any relevant thoughts or questions that arise through my completion of the week's assignment.
3. I will complete my final solo project and group project and turn them in before the deadline, having acknowledged here that I am aware before the course begins that these assignments constitute a combined 20% of my grade and have a deadline of May 9, 2022. My final projects will reflect the skills and concepts I learn as I progress through this course.
4. I will meet one-on-one with the course instructor before February 7, 2022 to discuss my goals for the course, my potential concepts for my final project, and my ability to use school resources to successfully fulfill my obligations outlined in the points above.
5. I will note at the bottom of this agreement the name of the director of the film from week twelve's screening, along with one additional film that he created (my choice), which I will watch and describe in the course Discussion Board in the context of one of our weekly lessons.

If at any point during this semester I become aware of conditions in my life that make any of these requirements difficult or impossible to fulfill, I pledge to contact my instructor through email ([acallot66@unm.edu](mailto:acallot66@unm.edu)) to discuss what mitigations may be enacted to provide for my continued success in my education at the University of New Mexico.

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Full Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
UNM ID

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DATE