Animation 1   Spring 2015

ARTS 4060-01
Tuesday, Friday 10:00am- 11:50pm
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 1 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:
- create polygon and SubD models
- shade, texture, and light models and scenes
- render and animate
- create a short 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.
- The Art of Maya. Available as pdf.

Suggested:
- Introducing Maya 2015. Sybex. ISBN: 1118862848
- Williams, Richard. The Animator's Survival Kit. Faber and Faber, London and New York. 2001. ISBN: 0-571-20228-4
- Calendar to help plan your process.

On Reserve in RPI Library:
- Animating Cartoon Characters in Maya TR897.7 .A597 2008

- Facial Rigging and Animation in Maya Bundle TR897.7 .F33 2006, TR897.7 .F335 2006
- Quadruped Rigging and Animation in Maya Bundle TR897.7 .A598 2007, TR897.7 .R569 2007
- UV Mapping Workflows in Maya TR897.7 .U8 2008
- Introduction to Maya Muscle TR897.7 .I68 2008

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.

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.

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.

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.
- You will be required to speak and present your work. You will also be required to speak about your colleagues' work. Part of each assignment grade will be based on your participation during critique.
- 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.
- Only disputes brought to the instructor's attention within one week of the infraction will be considered and discussed.

- Each three absences equal reduction final grade by one letter.
- Attendance to Final Critique during exam week is mandatory. Failure to appear will result in the reduction of final grade by one letter.

Overall:
- 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.
- Midterm grades will be sent individually to your RPI email account. However, you may request grades at any time.

Grade	Total Points	Expectations
A	100 – 93	Excellent: consistent effort, timely
A -	92.99 – 90	
B +	89.99 – 87	
B	86.99 – 83	Good: effort, timely
B -	82.99 – 80	
C +	79.99 – 77	
C	76.99 – 73	Satisfactory: some effort, timely
C -	72.99 – 70	
D +	69.99 – 67	
D	66.99 – 60	Passable: little effort
F	59.99 – 0	Failure

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 assignments that students turn in are their own. Acts which violate this trust undermine the educational process. The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities defines various forms of Academic Dishonesty and you should make yourself familiar with these.

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 10th. 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	Introducing Maya	Art of Maya	EMPAC	
27-Jan	Intro, UI, get dirty		Chapters 1-3	pgs 7-32, 41-45, 48-49		
30-Jan	poly modeling	Poly Models	Chapter 4	pgs 50-54		
3-Feb	poly modeling, defomers	15%				
6-Feb	poly modeling, work on models					
10-Feb	review poly models, start subD				11-Feb	Dreams $
13-Feb	subD modeling	subD Models				
17-Feb	Mon on Tue - no class	15%				
20-Feb	spline modeling techniques		Chapter 5	pgs 46-47		
24-Feb	Shawn - residency					
27-Feb	Shawn - residency				28-Feb	Animation & Workflow
3-Mar	review subD models, unwrap UVs		Chapter 7	pgs 63-67	28-Feb	Tales of L F
6-Mar	unwrap UVs	Textured Models				
10-Mar	texturing with Mudbox	15%				
13-Mar	hypershade, node editor					
17-Mar	review textured models, cameras					
20-Mar	lighting and MR lighting	Lighting Models	Chapter 10	pgs 69-73		
24-Mar	spring break - no class	15%				
27-Mar	spring break - no class					
31-Mar	basic rendering		Chapter 11	pgs 76-79	31-Mar	Parallel I-IV
3-Apr	flex, work in renders					
7-Apr	review lighting, start animation		Chapter 8	pgs 35-40		
10-Apr	batch rendering, compositing	First Animation				
14-Apr	work in class	15%	Storyboard 5%			
17-Apr	review animation					
21-Apr	review storyboard	Final Project			22-Apr	EMPAC from Inside
24-Apr	bones, IK	20%		Chapter 9	pgs 57-61	
28-Apr	Bones, IK, Skin, Rig					
1-May	Skin, Rig, Animate					
5-May	flex					
8-May	progress updates, work in class					
12-May	work in class					
May 18-22	Critique Final					

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