ANIMATION PRODUCTION | ANIM 401 FALL SEMESTER 2026

Instructor Name: Andy Beane / John Ludwick / Zach Craw

Course Information: 6 Credit Hours

Meeting Time: MWF 8am – 11:50 pm

Room: RB353 / BC137 / AJ 246

Production Flow https://test-bsu-animation.shotgrid.autodesk.com/projects/

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Office Hours: Tuesday - Thursday Noon – 2pm or by Appointment

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description: Design and production of a collaborative animation project. Projects will be produced in collaboration with an interdisciplinary group of artists, animators, or composers.

Course Overview: This course provides introduction and immersion into the production pipeline of an animated film, as well as fundamental concepts and philosophy of animation. Techniques used to create the film can include 3d, 2d, stop motion and motion graphics. Software is dependent on the project to be completed as dictated by the class at the beginning of the course.

Students are responsible for learning new digital software in order to complete the film. Demonstrations of the pipeline management are meant to be introductory. In addition to regularly scheduled class time, students are expected to work outside of class to finish their assignments given by their lead.

Course Objectives: The goal of this course is to equip students with industry pipeline workflows for finished animation deliverables, soft skills to maintain professional relationships, technical skill and procedures to solve problems, aesthetic discipline to maintain creative vision, and a working vocabulary of terms and concepts applicable to studio life.

Course Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Apply time and resource management principles to the development and production of computer animation projects in accordance with program requirements and industry standards
- Interact in a professional manner with team members through appropriate interpersonal and communication skills
- Synthesize information from diverse sources for project purposes

High-Impact Course Learning Outcomes: This course is built around a framework beyond the boundaries of a traditional classroom, enabling students to develop expertise in communication, the use of cutting-edge technologies, and critical thought. This engagement means that you:

- Design an “authentic” research project (*your film*)
- Conduct a study, analyze findings (*objectively assess you and your group’s performance making the film*)
- Share the results of the research project, typically in a forum beyond the classroom (*in this case, the final class day is a day of reflection and often a day of revelations about the process*).

Course Modality / Structure: The format for this class is primarily immersive and hands-on. Your classes have provided the skills you need to fit in an animation pipeline, and it's up to you to evaluate where you belong and how effective you are to so far. The Course Calendar located on the Canvas course site includes all weekly tasks, assignments, and due dates. This calendar will be updated as the semester progresses.

Course Time Commitment: It is expected that students will spend approximately 2 hours of study time outside of class for every one hour in class. Since this is a **6-credit studio**, you should expect to study an average of 24 hours outside of class each week.

Making Back-ups: Students are responsible for their digital work. Never rely on the local computer HD or Desktop in the art labs or the Art Lab Share Server for any overnight storage or long term storage. The Art Lab Share Server will be wiped every Sunday afternoon. The local HD and Desktop on each computer will be wiped clean on a daily basis. The Workspace drives on the computers will not be touched until the end of the semester over the breaks for cleanup. **The loss of class work due to the lack of backup is not a viable excuse in this class.** Hard drives corrupt or break - expect it and plan ahead for it. Always backup everything and do not leave all your files in one location (one location = one CPU).

COURSE MATERIALS AND FEES

Note-taking media (sketchbook, notepad, journal, etc.) Any type of media storage device (flash drive, portable hard drive, cloud drive). Styluses can be checked out from the Crypt. However, it is recommended that you buy your own stylus. As we progress through the semester, we will discuss other potential materials that you may choose to experiment with.

COURSE FEES: NONE

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

The Value of Your Work: As an artist/designer/creative, you help to determine the worth of your work and to cultivate respect for the work that you create. You should take care of your work, the execution, craftsmanship and maintenance of your work reflects on you. Maintaining a portfolio (physical/digital) is an important aspect of your development and education.

Grading Scale, Based on Industry Standards:

A = You excelled, were self-driven, and added techniques not taught by instructor

B = Performed the work requested with acceptable results

C = Performed the minimally acceptable work and attended all class sessions

D = Unacceptable work but attended all class sessions and completed all homework

F = Unacceptable work, unacceptable homework and unacceptable attendance

Assessment Criteria & Methods of Assessment:

Assessment	Points
Professionalism	30
Peer review survey	20
Project Completion Points (see below)	100

Project Completion Points

Ideal Deadline	Milestone	Points	Total
Aug 31	Animatic	10	10
Sep 11	Visual Development	20	30
Sep 18	Layout	10	40
Oct 16	Rough Animation	20	60
Nov 16	Looks Due	0	60
Nov 23	Final Animation	20	80
Dec 11	**Final Composite w/Sound**	**20**	**100**

Class Format	Minutes
Work – 8:00am – 9:30am	90
Team Meetings – 9:30am -9:45am	15
Leads Meeting – 9:45am – 10:05am	20
Dailies – 10:05am – 10:20am	15
Work – 10:20am – 11:50am	90

COURSE CALENDAR

Critiques/Due Dates indicated in Bold text/*Assignments indicated in Italic text*			
Week	**Mon**	**Wed**	**Fri**
Week 1	**Aug 24 -** Syllabus - Animatic **-** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*	**Aug 26** - Animatic **-** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*	**Aug 28** - Animatic **-** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*
Week 2	**Aug 31 - Final Animatic Due** **-** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Modeling & Layout*	**Sep 02 -** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Modeling & Layout*	**Sep 04 -** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Modeling & Layout*
Week 3	**Sep 07 - *LABOR DAY***	**Sep 09 -** *R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Modeling & Layout*	**Sep 11 - Vis Dev Due** *- R&D* *- Visual Development* *- Modeling & Layout*
Week 4	**Sep 14 -** *R&D* *- Modeling & Layout* *- Rigging*	**Sep 16 -** *R&D* *- Modeling & Layout* *- Rigging*	**Sep 18 - Layout Due** *- R&D* *- Modeling & Layout* *- Rigging*
Week 5	**Sep 21 -** *R&D* *- Modeling & Layout* *- Rigging*	**Sep 23 -** *R&D* *- Modeling & Layout* *- Rigging*	**Sep 24** – *R&D* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 6	**Sep 28** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Sep 30** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 01** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 7	**Oct 05** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 07** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 08 -** *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 8	**Oct 12 - *FALL BREAK***	**Oct 14** - *Rough Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 16 - Rough Animation Due** - *Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 9	**Oct 19** - *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 21** - *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 23** – *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 10	**Oct 26** - *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 28** - *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*	**Oct 30** - *Finalize Animation* *- Rigging* *- Modeling*
Week 11	**Nov 02** - Finalize *Animation* *- Looks*	**Nov 04** - Finalize *Animation* *- Looks*	**Nov 06** - Finalize *Animation* *- Looks*
Week 12	**Nov 09** Finalize *Animation* *- Looks* *- Editing*	**Nov 11** Finalize *Animation* *- Looks* *- Editing*	**Nov 13** Finalize *Animation* *- Looks* *- Editing*
Week 13	**Nov 16** Finalize *Animation* **-** *Looks* *- Editing*	**Nov 18** Finalize *Animation* **-** *Looks* *- Editing*	**Nov 20** Finalize *Animation* **-** *Looks* *- Editing*
Week 14	**Nov 23 – Final Animation Due & Looks Due** Finalize *Animation* **-** *Looks Editing* *- Rendering* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*	***Nov 25* – THANKSGIVING** **Looks** *Editing* *- Rendering* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*	**Nov 27 – THANKSGIVING** *- Rendering* *- Animatic Refinement/Editing*
Week 15	**Nov 30** - *Rendering*	**Dec 02** - Rendering	**Dec 04 - Final Edit Due**
Finals	**Dec 07 - Final Class**	**Dec 09** - (No class)	**Dec 11 - Final Film Due**

Professor's Discretionary Grade: 1 – 40 points Additive or Subtractive to Final Grade on a per-student, per-case basis from observations, reports, and contributions.

Portfolios You should consider that everything you create could potentially become your next portfolio piece. That includes a well-executed class assignment.

Sketchbook: Bring your sketchbook to every class session. You will use your sketchbook in a variety of ways: as a journal, notebook, a creative laboratory for your thoughts, ideas, and sketches. It's okay to have other course work in your sketchbook, but label pages clearly so work for this course can be identified.

Research: is an essential part of this course in the context of tutorials, demos, and instructional material to reach the goals you've planned in Pre-Production.

Ball State University Grading Scale:

A = 4.000	B = 3.000	D+ = 1.333	F = 0.000
A- = 3.667	B- = 2.667	D = 1.000	
B+ = 3.333	C+ = 2.333	D- = .667	

COURSE STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

Attendance Policy
This course is based upon a series of meetings involving videos, discussions, homework assignments and projects. Attendance at all classes is mandatory. All absences are considered unexcused. Extraordinary circumstances should be discussed as soon as possible to help you stay on track. All accommodations will require official documentation and are subject to the instructor's discretion. For 15-week courses meeting three times a week, five unexcused absences are permitted. **Upon sixth, unexcused absence results in an automatic failure of the course.**

Participation Policy:

- This course is designed with critiques, discussion, and other forms of regular collaboration and communication.
- It is recommended that you log into your course 3 to 4 times a week and check your official Ball State email account daily to view announcements and prepare for class.

Feedback Policy:

- I will respond to email from your official Ball State email address within 24 hours during weekdays (Monday-Friday) and within 48 hours on the weekend.
- I will grade your assignments no later than within 5 business days of submission.
- Contact me directly if you have questions or concerns about your performance in class.

AI Policy:
As part of this course, students are permitted to use text-based AI tools, including ChatGPT, to support their creative and technical work. However, the responsible and ethical use of AI is essential and should align with the principles of academic integrity, originality, and respect for the creative process.

Guidelines for AI Use:

1. **Purposeful Assistance**: AI tools may be used for brainstorming, generating ideas, refining written content, or solving technical challenges. AI should serve as a supplement to your own critical thinking and creativity, not a replacement.
2. **Transparency**: Clearly document when and how AI tools were used in your project.
3. **Originality and Ownership**: Ensure that the final work reflects your personal vision and effort. AI-generated content must be reviewed and integrated thoughtfully, not submitted as-is, to maintain the integrity of your artistic voice.
4. **Critical Evaluation**: Verify the accuracy, relevance, and originality of AI-generated content. Be cautious of relying on AI-generated outputs that may perpetuate biases, inaccuracies, or unoriginal ideas.
5. **Respect for Collaboration**: If collaborating with peers, discuss and agree upon the role AI will play in your shared work to maintain fairness and equitable contribution.

Ethical Considerations:

1. **Moral Responsibility**: Recognize the broader ethical implications of using AI tools, including potential issues of copyright infringement, plagiarism, and over-reliance on automated processes.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity**: Be mindful of biases or culturally insensitive outputs generated by AI tools. It is your responsibility to evaluate and adjust content to reflect ethical and inclusive values.
3. **Creative Integrity**: Understand that your capstone project is a demonstration of your skills and creativity as an artist and professional. Misuse of AI tools to shortcut the creative process can undermine the purpose of the course and your learning experience.

Consequences for Misuse:
Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in academic penalties, including loss of credit for assignments or projects where misuse is identified. Additionally, such behavior may be reported in accordance with the university's academic integrity policies.

By adhering to this policy, you will demonstrate professionalism and ethical decision-making while leveraging AI as a valuable tool in your creative journey. (I did use AI to help create this AI policy)

Late Assignment Policy:

- All assignments are due by the dates and times indicated on Canvas.
- Assignments posted after the indicated time will receive half credit.
- **If the assignment is submitted more than seven days after the deadline, you will receive no credit.**
- Internet connectivity and technical issues may occur and impede you from turning in work on time. Turn in work early and often, and set up a **back-up** plan, such as visiting the computer labs or having a personal hard drive for backup.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Diversity and Disability Services Statement: We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Ball State Academic Ethics Policy: Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its

credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the complete Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism is not acceptable, unless otherwise indicated for all assignments, you must work independently by yourself. Sharing of files is not permitted for any reason.

Potential Violations

Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Use or possession of a file created by someone else.
- Reusing work from another semester, course, or section.
- Fraudulent submission of work.
- Using unauthorized materials during Exams.
- Impersonating someone else or having them impersonate you.
- Making fraudulent or dishonest statements regarding your work.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.
- Posting course files and resources on study or content sharing websites.

The Plagiarism Tutorial from UNC Libraries provides you with a great foundation in Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism Detection

The campus subscribes to SimCheck, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to SimCheck. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose. The student may indicate in writing to the instructor that he/she refuses to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case the instructor can use other electronic means to verify the originality of their work.

CANVAS AND STUDENT PRIVACY

Canvas Accessibility: Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages (i.e. text formatting is accomplished using styles). Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. The National Federation of the Blind granted Canvas the Gold Level Web Certification in 2010. Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

FERPA and Privacy: As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection

SUPPORT SERVICES

Writing Center: You are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing. The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to

http://www.bsu.edu/writingcenter. Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

The Learning Center: offers free tutoring for many courses. We also provide writing and study skills tutoring. Students can make appointments for virtual (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit my.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Additional Tools section, or just go directly to https://bsu.navigate.eab.com. You can also download the Navigate Student app. The Learning Center also has drop-in tutoring (no appointment necessary) for math, chemistry, and biology. Check our website for more information. Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

For more information about all of our programming visit www.bsu.edu/learningcenter or call 765-285-1006. Email us at learncenter@bsu.edu. Follow us on Instagram and X: BallStateLC

The Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State now also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found here.

Cardinal Kitchen: Cardinal Kitchen is Ball State's campus food pantry. The pantry is open to all Ball State students Tuesday nights from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. throughout the year. It is located in Room L26 of the Student Center and you can contact them by phone: (765) 285-2621 or email: cardkitch@bsu.edu

Financial Wellness: provides free and confidential financial education services to all students. Our mission is to help you take control of your finances and achieve your financial goals. We are located in Lucina Hall, Room B32, and can be reached at 765-285-3939 or via email at financialwellness@bsu.edu. Our services include personalized financial coaching, workshops, and resources on topics such as budgeting, debt management, financial aid literacy, credit building, and planning for your future. We also provide tools to help you tackle your eBill, navigate student loans, and make informed financial decisions. Whether you're looking to create a budget, reduce financial stress, or set a path toward financial freedom, our team is here to support you. To learn more or schedule an appointment, please click our link here Financial Wellness Appointment Link or reach out directly.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances

CLASSROOM POLICIES AND GUIDES

(covered by the Professionalism grade):

- No food allowed in class or lab at any time.
- Edible items brought to class or lab must be thrown out.
- Please log out of computer when done working. The lab will be updated remotely and this is the easiest way for the tech to know that the computer can be updated.
- Break times are scheduled by the instructor at appropriate intervals.
- No private software is to be brought to lab or loaded onto school computers.
- No software games are allowed in lab (unless in course curriculum).

- Headphones are required if listening to music during lab. No headphones are allowed in lecture.
- **There will be no movie watching, instant messaging, texting, electronic social networking of any kind, or internet browsing during class hours unless it is class-related.**
- Any student who has special needs that may affect his or her performance in this class is asked to identify his/her needs to the instructor in private by the end of the first day of class. Any resulting class performance problems that may arise for those who do not identify their needs will not receive any special grading considerations.
- "ABSOLUTELY NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE FINAL CLASS."