

F/TV 72G “Animated Film Pre-Production Workshop”

CRN 35044, De Anza College, Winter 2025

Course

Time: Tues. 10:30 - 1:20 PM (Lecture)
Lab is online/asynchronous
Location: AT 102
Final Exam: Tues. 3/25, 9:15 - 11:15 AM

Instructor

Name: Mark Hamer
Email: hamermark@fhda.edu
Phone: 415.864.8519
Office Hours:
(AT 102) Tues. 9:30 - 10:30 am
(Online) Mon. 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Prerequisites

F/TV D068A and F/TV D070A; and F/TV D066A or D067A or D082A (dependent on type of animation production to be developed)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Students will create the pre-production visual and audio components of a short personal animated film.

Course Description

Development of the initial concept stages of a short personal film in any style of animation, e.g. drawn, puppet or computer, that can be used as a demo reel in a professional portfolio. Creation of storyboards, set designs, character models, voice tracks, and animatics.

Welcome!

Welcome to **F/TV 72G Animated Film Pre-Production Workshop**. I’m glad you’re here and I look forward to working with you this quarter. I hope you have fun and learn a lot! I believe that every student who works hard at it can succeed in this class. Please talk to me if you have any questions or concerns during the quarter, I’m here to help.

Course Work & Structure

This course requires 6 or more hours of work, per week, outside of class. If you can’t devote this time to your homework, you may want to consider taking the class a different quarter when you have more time.

This course will be divided into 11 units or “modules.” Each module is 1 week long. Each week’s assignments can be found in the Modules section of our Canvas course. Most weeks will contain a lecture, readings, discussion, and assignments. Weeks begin Tuesday at 10:30 am and end the following Tuesday at 10:30 am.

Please plan ahead for times when Canvas, the internet or your computer may be down. Back up all materials early in the week and allow plenty of time to prepare and complete your assignments. Don’t wait until the last minute to post to discussion threads, please give everyone a chance to read your posts and have time to respond to you. Assignment details and due dates will be located in each weekly module.

Required Technology

All the technology needed for this class is available on the school computers in our classroom.

Required Materials

- Regular access to Canvas
- Personal media storage device for backing up and transporting files
- Pens, pencils, erasers
- Sketchbook or plain white copy paper
- Access to digital camera or smart phone with camera for shooting reference video

Required Texts

No required textbook. Handouts, readings, and assignment instructions will be provided on Canvas.

Recommended Texts

- Beiman, Nancy. “Prepare to Board! Creating Story and Characters for Animated Features and Shorts: Creating Story and Characters for Animated Features and Shorts”, CRC Press; 3rd edition, 2017.
- Blazer, Liz. "Animated Storytelling." Peachpit Press; 2nd edition, 2019.

Supporting Texts & References

- Johnston, Ollie and Thomas, Frank. "Disney Animation: The Illusion of Life." Disney Editions; Subsequent edition, 1995.
- Schumer, Gary and Sullivan, Kate. “Ideas for the Animated Short, Second Edition: Finding and Building Stories.” Focal Press; 2nd edition (November 19, 2012)

- Williams, Richard. "The Animator's Survival Kit: A Manual of Methods, Principles and Formulas for Classical, Computer, Games, Stop Motion and Internet Animators." Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Fourth Edition, Revised, 2012.

Software (available on school computers)

- Adobe Photoshop CC (or any digital drawing program)
- Adobe Premiere CC (or alternate video editing app, to be discussed in class)
- Handbrake (a free online app for reducing file size)

Grading

Your final grade consists of:

- Participation 15%
- Assignments 85%

Instructor/Student Interactions

Email is the fastest way to reach me. I do my best to respond to messages within 24 hours (although it may take longer on weekends). On campus you can find me in Office #42 in Building A4, in our classroom (AT 102), or the animation lab (AT 104). I'm available to meet with you in person during my office hours, or you can always email me to arrange an appointment to meet online via Zoom.

Professional Behavior

Professionalism is a quality which 97.5% of employers list as either "absolutely essential" or "essential" for a new college hire's success.

Essentially, being professional is about always giving your best. You think about how your behavior will be perceived by others and make sure you understand and follow the given codes of conduct. You are honest, respectful, responsible, use your time effectively, and produce high quality work.

I expect students to always conduct themselves in a professional manner while in the classroom. Therefore, please come to class prepared to respect each other and your shared workspace and give your best. The classroom is not the place to sleep, or surf the web, or text your friends, so if you are doing this repeatedly, I will ask you to leave, and if it continues, I may drop you from the course.

Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior is engaging in any activity which degrades the learning environment for everyone. Some examples are sleeping, doing ANYTHING not related to the class during class time, talking loudly or making noise while other people are trying to work, disrespectful or hurtful language or behavior, and excessive domination of class discussions.

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. I'll warn students who engage in such behavior and lower their participation grade. If the behavior continues, students may be asked to leave the classroom and/or be dropped from the course.

Please refer to [De Anza's Student Rights and Responsibilities page](#) for more information

Participation

Your contributions are important! By participating in class, you help create a positive learning environment for you and your classmates. Participation can also make the difference between an A and a B!

In addition to other designated participation activities, participation points will be given based on the student's daily participation in classroom discussion, activities, and critiques. Disruptive behavior will lower this score.

9 -10 points	Maximum participation: student came to class on time, actively participated and stayed for entire class session
7 - 8 points	Minimum participation: student arrived late or left early, and only participated when called upon or asked to
0 - 6 points	No participation: student missed class, did not participate, or engaged in disruptive behavior

Attendance Policy

- Unless otherwise stated, **attendance for the entire length of class is required**
- I will take attendance at the beginning of class. If you're not there when I take attendance, you may be marked absent and receive zero participation points for that day
- A student may be dropped after 2 absences, regardless of the reason
- Arriving late or leaving early will reduce your participation points for that day
- If you arrive late, or have to leave early, please move quietly so as not to disturb the rest of the class
- Please contact me ahead of time to make arrangements for an absence, and as soon as possible for absences due to illness or emergencies

Classroom Policy

- **The classroom and classroom resources are for academic purpose and should only be used for work connected to class**
- Food and beverages (except for closed water bottles) are NOT allowed on your desk in the classroom. We'll have breaks where you can use the restroom or eat
- Unless otherwise stated, cell phones and other hand-held electronic devices should be always silenced and put away. Please note that using a hand-held device during class time for activities unrelated to class is disruptive behavior and will result in a lowered participation score. If it becomes a problem, I may ask all students to put their electronic devices on my desk for the duration of the class.
- Store your working files in your SAN folder, not on the classroom computers
- Always save and backup your work. You are responsible for your lost data, not the faculty, computers, software, or other students
- Always log out of the computer's animation account before you leave

Submissions

Please read assignment instructions carefully. Every assignment has a due date and a deadline for submissions. Students are expected to submit assignments on or before the assigned due date, which, in turn, allows me time to review your work and provide meaningful feedback. Due dates have been designed in the course to ensure time is provided to allow you to produce your best work. I understand that because time management is challenging, deadlines might not be met. Late submissions will be accepted with a penalty. Assignments submitted after the deadline may receive a 10% grade point deduction for every week that they are late.

Assignments Policy

- All assignments will have instructions. Please read them carefully.
- **All assignments should be your own new, original work. Any written text or concepts should be your own original thoughts, written in your own words.** You will get a 0 for turning in work from a different class, a previous quarter of this class, or another assignment in this class. You will also get a 0 for turning in work created by someone else, or by an AI application such as ChatGPT; this is considered cheating and is taken very seriously by De Anza College.
- It is the student's responsibility to find out when assignments are due, and to submit their assignments on time, in the correct place, and in the correct format
- Assignments turned in on time may be eligible for revision. Please contact me for more information on revising work.

Late Assignment Policy

- Assignments are due BEFORE class starts, unless otherwise stated. Once class has started, the assignment is late

- Always check the closing date of the assignment on Canvas. Some assignments cannot be turned in late and will close on the due date. Assignments turned in after the closing date are given a 0
- Late assignments will be reduced by 1 letter grade every week they are late
- Late assignments are not eligible for revision
- All assignments, late or otherwise, must be turned in by the Friday before finals week
- If you know that a situation will prevent you from turning something in, contact me in **advance of the deadline** to make arrangements

Don't want the penalty?

If you recognize a due date might be a problem, advocate for your success by following these steps:

1. Identify the problem
2. Contact me to propose a solution
3. Let's negotiate

Missing Assignment Policy

In our animation production classes, assignments make up the biggest part of your grade. Missing one assignment will negatively affect your grade and missing two assignments will severely affect your grade. Therefore...

- If a student has missed 2 assignments, regardless of the reason, they may be dropped from the class
- All missing assignments will be given a 0

Revisions Policy

- If an assignment has been turned in on time, and received a letter grade below a B-, the student may be able to revise it for a higher grade. Please contact me for details
- A revised assignment will not be given a grade higher than a B
- All revisions must be turned in before finals week

Drop Policy

It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their progress and, if needed, to drop the class with a "W" by the drop date

A student may be dropped, without warning from me, from this class for several reasons, including:

- Missing the first meeting of our class (Tuesday 1/7)
- Missing 2 class meetings, regardless of the reason
- Missing 2 assignments, regardless of the reason

- Severe or chronic disruptive behavior
- Cheating or violating the Academic Integrity guidelines established here in our course syllabus

Grade Definitions and GPA

A+	> 100%, Excellent: 4.0 points
A	94 to 100%, Excellent: 4.0 points
A-	90 to < 94%, Excellent: 3.7 points
B+	87 to < 90%, Good: 3.3 points
B	83 to < 87%, Good: 3.0 points
B-	80 to < 83%, Good: 2.7 points
C+	77 to < 80%, Satisfactory: 2.3 points
C	70 to < 77%, Satisfactory: 2.0 points
D+	67 to < 70%, Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 1.3 points
D	63 to < 67%, Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 1.0 point
D-	60 to < 63%, Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 0.7 point
F	0 to < 60%, Failing: 0.0 points
FW	Failed to Withdraw: 0.0 points (<i>This is new; it's given when students fail the course because they stopped coming to class and turning in work.</i>)
P	Pass (at least satisfactory): units awarded not counted in GPA
NP	No Pass (less than satisfactory, or failing): units not counted in GPA
I	Incomplete: Not used to calculate GPA. Academic work is incomplete for unforeseeable, emergency and justifiable reasons at the end of the term. At least 75 percent of the class must have been completed to qualify for Incomplete status.
W	A "W" will be assigned to all drops occurring between 20 percent and 75 percent of completion of a term. After this period, a student can be awarded a "W" only by means of an Extenuating Circumstance Petition, in which s/he provides documentation proving "verifiable reason" such as illness or incarceration. In the absence of the petition and documentation, a grade will be assigned to the

student record. While a "W" will not be used in calculating GPA, it will be used as a factor in probation and dismissal procedures. It is also used to calculate enrollment limits; that is, students may not enroll in the same course more than three times, which includes both "W" and substandard grades.
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[Read the De Anza grading policy here](#)

Academic Integrity

As previously stated, all assignments should be your own new, original work. You will get a 0 for turning in work from a different class, a previous quarter of this class, or another assignment in this class. You will also get a 0 for turning in work created by someone else, or by an AI application such as ChatGPT; this is considered cheating and is taken very seriously by De Anza College.

I assume all my students will pursue their studies with honesty. However, students need to know what constitutes academic dishonesty at De Anza College. Incidents of academic dishonesty are taken very seriously. [Read about it on the following pages](#)

Special Accommodations

If you have a condition that will affect your work, you must register with Disability Support Programs & Services (DSPS). A doctor's note is not enough. While I am sympathetic to your personal or medical issues, if you are not registered with DSPS you will not get special accommodations in this class. [Read about it on the following pages](#)

Disabled Student Services

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, De Anza College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical issues).

You can meet with a Disabilities Support Services (DSS) counselor or Learning Disability (LD) Specialist to discuss any accommodations or specific learning needs you may have. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable accommodations or services in this course, you will need to provide the instructor with a Test Accommodation Verification (TAV) from the DSS office.

Students are expected to give 5 (five) days-notice of the need of for accommodations. Students with disabilities may obtain this form by contacting their DSS counselor or LD Specialist at (408) 864-8753.

Student Success Center

Need help? Student Success Center peer tutors can relate and are ready to help! [Go to the SSC homepage](#) and click on the yellow links for on-campus schedules and Zoom links.

- **Individual Weekly or Drop-in Tutoring:** Come with questions, or just drop by to see how tutoring works
- **Workshops, group tutoring and group study:** Most people work better with others... give it a try!
- **Support for online learning:** speak with a friendly peer tutor or SSC staff member
- **Need after-hours or weekend tutoring?** [See the Online Tutoring page](#) for information about Net Tutor (via Canvas) or Smarthinking (via MyPortal)

Computer Lab Access

Information on times for open computer lab use will be posted during the first week of the quarter. You can also use the computers in our classroom, AT102, during my office hours on Tuesday from 9:30 - 10:30 am

If you have any questions, please contact our Lab Technician Fernando Perez in AT109, 408.864.8391

You are also welcome to use the equipment in the **Animation Lab (AT104)** once it opens for the quarter, more info on that to come. The Animation Lab has traditional animation desks, a light table for photographing artwork, an animation paper scanner, a stop-motion animation camera, PC's with animation software, and Wacom Cintiqs for digital drawing and painting.

Please take advantage of this! The PC's in both labs are identical and have the same software installed. *For more information on lab hours and equipment availability, please contact the F/TV Lab Technician, Fernando Perez, in AT 109*

Lab Software

Adobe CC Animate

Adobe CC Photoshop

Adobe CC Illustrator

Adobe CC Premiere

Adobe CC After Effects

Adobe CC Audition

Toon Boom Harmony 22

Autodesk Maya

Autodesk Mudbox

Dragonframe

MonkeyJam

Audacity

File Storage

The F/TV Department uses a special file storage system. Each F/TV class has class folders for shared files, and a password-protected folder for each student to store their work. Step-by-step instructions for accessing SAN folders will be provided via email

Files on the SAN are deleted at the end of every quarter. Please back-up your important files on your own personal media storage device

Equipment & Facilities

The Film/Television Department has professional equipment and facilities available for student use, including:

ITEM	LOCATION	ACCESS
Wacom digital drawing tablets	AT 110	Check out by the hour or on a weekly basis
Desks with animation drawing discs	AT 104	When AT 104 is open
High-speed feed scanner	"	"
Acme pegs paper punch	"	"
Pencil-testing stations, digital capture via Dragonframe or MonkeyJam	AT 104A	"
Stop-motion equipment, digital capture via Dragonframe or MonkeyJam	AT 104B	"
Zoom F4 Multitrack Field Recorders	AT 110	By checkout with lab technician
Microphones	"	"
Headphones	"	"
Foley recording room	AT 121	Reserve with lab technician

Important Dates

JAN 6	First day of classes
JAN 19	Finalize drops, no-shows
JAN 19	Last day to add classes
JAN 19	Last day to drop without a W
JAN 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – no classes, offices closed
JAN 21	Census Date – Adds & Drops finalized
FEB 14-17	President's Holiday – no classes, offices closed

FEB 28	Last day to drop with a W
MARCH 24-28	Final exams
MARCH 25	Final exam for OUR class, Tues. 3/25, 9:15 am - 11:15 am in AT 102

[College-wide listing available on this page](#)

Weekly Schedule of Topics, Homework and Exams:

Week 01, Jan. 7 - 14

Topic: Animated Short Projects

In-Class Activity:

- Storytelling Exercise (30 Min.) – exercise in the art of storytelling and story structure

Homework:

- Orientation Module Activities
- Week 01 Reading
- Mix & Match Story Ideas – how to start the process of finding ideas for a short, animated film and create a story outline

Week 02, Jan. 14 - 21

Topic: Pre-Production and Character Development

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Character Development Exercise (30 Min.) – exercises in character development and creating a character arc

Homework:

- Week 02 Reading
- Story Journal – create a daily story journal to record inspiration that can be developed into story ideas

Week 03, Jan. 21 - 28

Topic: Theme, Story Structure, and Concept Development

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Story Spine & Theme (10-15 Min.) – exercise in story structure and theme
- Three Act Story Structure (15-20 Min.) – breaking a story into three acts

Homework:

- Week 03 Reading
- Concept Development: TV Ad – practice developing a stand-alone concept for a tv ad with a creative brief, theme storyline, elevator pitch and tagline

Week 04, Jan. 28 – Feb. 4

Topic: Concept Development for Your Animation Idea

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- TV Ad: Visual Development (30 Min.) – do visual research for your TV Ad idea and translate the concept into visuals

Homework:

- Week 04 Reading
- Concept Development for YOUR Animation Idea – do concept development for your animated film idea

Week 05, Feb. 4 - 11

Topic: Character Design

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Visual Research for YOUR Animation Idea (20 Min.) – do visual research for your animated film idea
- Character Design Thumbnails (20 Min.) – create thumbnail designs for your main character

Homework:

- Week 05 Reading
- Character Model Sheet –create a character model sheet for the main character in your film idea

Week 06, Feb. 11 - 18

Topic: Major and Minor Beats, Storyboards

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Major & Minor Beats (20 Min.) – break your film idea down into a series of major and minor beats
- Shot Types (10 Min.) – assign initial shot types to each of your minor beats

Homework:

- Week 06 Reading
- Storyboard Thumbnails for Act 1 – use your list of minor beats and shot types to create storyboard thumbnails for the 1st act of your film

Week 07, Feb. 18 - 25

Topic: Storyboard Thumbnails

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding Act 2 of Your Film! (20 Min.) – timed exercise to create thumbnail storyboards for Act 2 of your film
- Background Design Thumbnails (20-30 Min.) – thumbnail designs for the primary environment in your film idea

- Feedback: Storyboard Thumbnails Act 1 (30 Min.) – give and receive feedback on the storyboards for act 1 of your film

Homework:

- Week 07 Reading
- Storyboard Thumbnails for the REST of Your Film – storyboard acts 2 and 3 of your film

Week 08, Feb. 25 – March 4

Topic: Storyboard Revisions & Background Design

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding Your Film! (20-30 Min.) – timed exercise to create thumbnail storyboards for the rest of your film and/or polish existing thumbnails
- Feedback: Storyboards for REST of Your Film (30 Min.) – give and receive feedback on the storyboards for acts 2 and 3 of your film

Homework:

- Week 08 Reading
- Final Storyboards – revise all of your storyboards based on feedback to produce final panels. Includes adding, revising, polishing and adding value to panels

Week 09, March 4 - 11

Topic: Sound and Animatics

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Exercise: Music/SFX/Dialogue Ideas (10-15 Min.) - list the sounds needed for your film
- Review Final Storyboards – give and receive feedback on final storyboards

Homework:

- Week 09 Reading
- Rough Animatic with Temp Soundtrack – create a rough animatic for your film with a temp soundtrack

Week 10, March 11 - 18

Topic: Animatic Revisions

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Feedback: Rough Animatic w Temp Soundtrack (20-30 Min.) – give and receive feedback on your rough animatic and soundtrack

Homework: Animatic Revisions – revise your animatic based on feedback

Week 11, March 18 - 25

Topic: Work on Final Presentations

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – timed, weekly storyboarding practice
- Review: Revised Animatics (20-30 Min.) – review and feedback session for revised animatics

Homework: Final Presentation – polish your animatic with final sound, credits and production design work showcase for review

FINAL: Tues. 3/25, 9:15am - 11:15 AM in AT 102

Screen Final Presentations

*Schedule subject to change at Instructor's discretion