

F/TV 70A “The Storyboard & Visual Development for Animation”

CRN 35083, De Anza College, Winter 2025

Course

Time: Thurs. 12:30 – 2:45 (Lecture)
Thurs. 3:00 – 4:15 (optional Q&A)
Location: Online via Zoom/Canvas
Final Exam: Thurs. March 27, 11:30 - 1:30

Instructor

Name: Mark Hamer
Email: hamermark@fhda.edu
Phone: 408.864.8519
Office Hours: Mon. 1:00 – 2:00 PM
(Online via Zoom)

Prerequisites

Advisory: F/TV 67A

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Students will apply principles of cinematography and visual storytelling using storyboard panels.

Course Description

Techniques of animation pre-production as applied to story development, character design, storyboards, environment, and prop design, with application to both digital and traditional rendering techniques.

Welcome!

Welcome to “The Storyboard & Visual Development for Animation” 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 Structure

This is an online course with a synchronous lecture every Thursday from 12:30 – 2:45 pm, and I will be available for Lab/Q&A after the lecture until 4:15 pm. The course will be divided into 11 units. Each unit is 1 week long. For each week’s assignments, look in the Weekly Modules. Each week will contain a lecture, readings, discussion, and assignments. Weeks begin on Thursday at 12:30 pm and end the following Thursday at 12:30 pm.

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

Learning online is dependent on technology. The following sections provide basic guidelines for determining if you have the right equipment to support online learning, but I'd also like to caution that technology is dynamic, and needs may change dependent upon tools and resources you use.

Internet Connection

Although Canvas has been carefully crafted to accommodate low bandwidth environments (minimum of 512 kbps), I recommend a Broadband/DSL connection to view the online videos and participate in video conferences most effectively.

Computer

In addition to an adequate internet connection, you will need a fairly recent Mac or PC (preferably not more than three years-old) with a current operating system to complete some of the course activities. Because it is built using web standards, Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, Android, or any other device with an up-to-date web browser. An up-to-date browser not only provides a better user experience, it also protects your data. To ensure your computer is up to date:

Please run the [OEI Computer Readiness Test](#)

Canvas also provides minimum requirements for your computer on the following page: What are the [basic computer specifications for Canvas](#) & which browsers does Canvas support?

Phone and Tablet

All the content in this course is fully accessible from the Canvas Student App, which you can download for free. I suggest you install and try the Canvas Student App; it works wonderfully on both tablets and smartphones.

Webcam and Microphone

We may be in different places, but I still want to see you! Video conferencing is extremely powerful. A quick conference call can help you overcome a technical barrier that seemed insurmountable, and it can help you connect with peers and mentors across the system.

We will be using Zoom for Office Hours, which means you will need a camera and microphone. Most computers have integrated cameras and mics, but please check your computer to ensure both work and to familiarize yourself with the settings.

Please sign up for [Zoom](#) and install it on both your desktop computer and your phone or tablet:

Office Hours are terrific times to check if your webcam and microphone are working. I'm happy to meet with you to help you test your camera, microphone, and speakers!

Adobe Reader

Some material in this course may be presented in PDFs. To view these materials, you will need the most current version of [Adobe Reader](#)

Word Processor

You may have assignments in this class that prompt you to use a word processing application. There are numerous options available when it comes to word processing software; I have included links to three free options here you may use:

Microsoft Office 365 - [Microsoft Office 365](#)

Google Docs - [Google Docs](#)

Apache Open Office - [Apache Open Office](#)

Required Materials

- Regular access to Canvas
- A webcam and microphone to join Office Hours. These are built into most computers and all phones. Please test yours and make sure they are working.

Required Texts

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

Recommended Texts & References

1. Beiman, Nancy. "Prepare to Board!", Focal Press, 2012
2. Blazer, Liz. "Animated Storytelling." Peachpit Press, 2016.
3. Glebas, Francis. "Directing the Story: Professional Storytelling and Storyboarding Techniques for Live Action and Animation." MA: Focal Press, 2012.
4. Paez, Sergio and Jew, Anson. "Professional Storyboarding: Rules of Thumb." Focal Press, 2013.

Software Recommendations

Adobe Photoshop is a recommended software for this class. It will be available free through Adobe Creative Cloud for De Anza students. You will need to request a free Adobe license through me during Week 1 of our class, more details to be provided.

- Please [check the system requirements](#) to ensure it will run on your computer

If you don't want to use Photoshop, or it doesn't run on your machine, you are welcome to work on paper and photograph your work, or use any other digital drawing and image editing program or app of your choice.

- [Gimp](#) is a free alternative to Photoshop. You can download a free copy here

Storyboarder is also a recommend software for this class. Storyboarder is a free application that provides tools and templates that make digital storyboarding easier. You can [download a free](#) copy here

Canvas & MyPortal

All of our course content will be delivered through Canvas, which is accessible through MyPortal. If you've never used Canvas or MyPortal, please read the [MyPortal login tips](#)

Once you have logged in to Canvas, please take the time to get familiar with our Canvas site, starting with the Home Page and the Orientation Module. You can download the Canvas Student Mobile App to complete some tasks in this course as well.

Grading

Your final grade consists of:

- 85% Assignments
- 15% Participation

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). 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.

A central element of this course is peer-to-peer interaction and sharing. Whenever we share, we put ourselves at risk. This is especially true when we are trying something new, and when we are working with technology. This course provides a safe and supportive environment to learn, and I ask every participant to join me in this. Please treat all your peers with the utmost respect. Be supportive of growth by offering constructive feedback and open sharing. Please extend respect to all participants, including me! Like you, I am teaching, taking care of my family, and balancing work, life, and this course.

Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior is engaging in any activity which degrades the learning environment for everyone. Since our learning environment is online, disruptive behavior includes posting content that is unrelated to our course subject, posting graphic, sexual, demeaning, offensive or violent content, using disrespectful or hurtful language, and excessive domination or repeated interruption of class discussions or any form of online intimidation of classmates.

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

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required at the weekly lecture, Thursday 12:30 – 2:45 in our Zoom Meeting room.

- I will be available to answer questions during our scheduled lab time, from 3:00 – 4:15 in our Zoom Meeting room, *but attendance is not required during this time*

- My Office Hours are optional and can be used for extra help and questions.

Here are the guidelines we will follow to define student participation and attendance in this class:

- Attend the mandatory weekly lecture, Thursday from 12:30 – 2:45 (online)
- Check in to the Canvas course at least twice a week
- Participate in all discussions and respond to classmates when required to do so by the instructions
- Connect with me beforehand if you are going to be disconnected from the course for more than 5 days
- Turn in all assignments by their designated due dates

While some online courses are self-paced, our course follows a weekly schedule. Each week you will attend a lecture via zoom and complete a series of activities and assignments for your homework. The weekly schedule allows us to learn from one another, and it keeps everyone on a path toward our learning goals.

With each of your assignments, I may provide feedback, which opens another opportunity for learning and growth. Working within our weekly schedule allows both you and me to plan our time (please see the Submission Policy for more details on late work). Please plan to log in to the course several times each week, we have regular due dates for discussion posts and response as well as weekly due dates for assignments.

Your participation is an important part of the success of this course, but I also recognize that you each have other classes, family, and friends to visit with, and because we're human, sometimes we're just swamped or under the weather. If you've reached a point where you can't meet a deadline, please contact me and we will work together to make a path to success.

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 participation in online discussions, activities and critiques. Disruptive behavior will lower this score.

10 points	Maximum participation. Attended the online lecture, arrived on time and stayed for the entire session. Timely and helpful responses to discussions, checked in to the class at least twice a week
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6 points	Minimal participation. Arrived late or left early to the online lecture, unhelpful responses to discussions, only checked in to the class once in a week
0 points	Non participation. Did not attend the online lecture, did not respond to discussions, engaged in disruptive behavior, or failed to check in to the class at all during a week

Submissions

Plan on submitting your work on time! 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.
- 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
- **All assignments, designs, and ideas submitted should be your own new, original work, written in your own words by you and/or designed and drawn by you.** 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 or with someone else, or by an AI application such as ChatGPT; this is considered cheating and is taken very seriously by De Anza College
- Assignments turned in on time may be eligible for revision. Please contact me for more information on revising work.

Late Assignment Policy

- 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 are automatically given a 0 until the work is submitted
- Late assignments may 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 class, 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 until the work is submitted

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 (See "Important Dates")

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

- Missing our first online class meeting during Week 1 (Thurs. Jan 9)
- Failing to log in to the Canvas course by the end of the first week of the quarter (Sun. Jan. 12 at 11:59 pm)
- Failing to log in to the course for 2 weeks, regardless of the reason
- Missing 2 assignments, regardless of the reason
- Severe or chronic disruptive behavior, as defined in the Disruptive Behavior section of this syllabus

Grade Definitions and GPA

A+	Excellent: 4.0 points
A	Excellent: 4.0 points
A-	Excellent: 3.7 points
B+	Good: 3.3 points
B	Good: 3.0 points

B-	Good: 2.7 points
C+	Satisfactory: 2.3 points
C	Satisfactory: 2.0 points
D+	Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 1.3 points
D	Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 1.0 point
D-	Not Passing, less than satisfactory: 0.7 point
F	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.

See more about [De Anza's Grading Policy](#) here

Academic Integrity

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).

Compute 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 room AT205 on Tuesday from 12:20 – 1:20pm, space permitting

For more information on lab hours and equipment availability, please contact the F/TV Lab Technician: Fernando Perez in Room AT109, 408.864.8391, perezfernando@fhda.edu

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 and digital drawing 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 Room AT109

Lab Software

Autodesk Maya
Autodesk Mudbox
Adobe CC Animate
Adobe CC Photoshop
Adobe CC Illustrator
Adobe CC Premiere
Adobe CC After Effects
Adobe CC Audition
Toon Boom Harmony 22
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 starting Week 3, including:

ITEM	LOCATION	ACCESS
Wacom digital drawing tablets	AT 110	Check out by the hour or for the whole quarter

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 the Quarter
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
MAR 27	We will meet online on Thursday, 3/27 from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM to review your Final Projects

[College-wide listing](#) available here

Weekly Schedule of Topics, Homework and Exams:

Week 01, Jan. 9 - 16

Topic: Orientation & Welcome, Storyboard Basics

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise
- Visual Language Pt 1 (20 – 30 Min.) – a series of exercises in visual language focused on visual cues, line and shape

Homework:

- Week 1 Orientation activities

- Week 1 Reading
- Storyboard Exercise #1 – students practice storyboarding an action with a simplified human figure based on video reference

Week 02, Jan. 16 - 23

Topic: Framing, Shot Composition & Perspective

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise
- Visual Language Pt 2 (20 – 30 Min.) - a series of exercises in visual language focused on conveying space, perspective, motion and tone

Homework:

- Week 02 Reading
- Storyboard Exercise #2 – students storyboard a simple scenario (character waiting for the bus) using a series of required shots to get practice with composition and visual storytelling

Week 03, Jan. 23 - 30

Topic: Character Design Pt 1

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise
- Choose Your Story Setup (10 Min.) – students select a story setup that will guide their assignments for the rest of the quarter
- Visual research for Your Characters (20 Min.) – students do visual research to find reference and inspiration materials for the design of the two characters in their chosen story setup

Homework:

- Week 03 Reading
- Character Design Roughs – students create rough designs for the two main characters in their chosen story setup, following the process of thumbnails, silhouettes, and roughs

Week 04, Jan. 30 – Feb. 6

Topic: Staging, Poses, Character Design Pt 2

In-Class Activities:

- Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise
- Feedback on Character Design Roughs (20 Min.)

Homework:

- Week 04 Reading
- Storyboard Exercise #3
- Character Model Sheets

Week 05, Feb 6 - 13

Topic: Prop Design Pt 1, Tone & Shading

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise
Homework: Week 05 Reading, Visual Research for Props & Set Dressing, Prop Design Roughs

Week 06, Feb 13 - 20

Topic: Prop Design Pt 2, Digital Painting

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Feedback on Prop Design Roughs (30 Min.)

Homework: Storyboard Exercise #4, Prop Design Model Sheet

Week 07, Feb 20 - 27

Topic: Background Design Pt 1

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Homework: Week 07 Reading, Visual Research for Background Design, Background Design Roughs

Week 08, Feb. 27 – March 6

Topic: Background Design Pt 2

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Feedback on Background Design Roughs

Homework: Week 08 Viewing, Final Background Design

Week 09, Mar 6 - 13

Topic: Story Development

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Story Beats & Shot Types (20 Min.)

Homework: Week 09 Reading, Thumbnails for Your Chosen Story Sequence

Week 10, Mar 13 - 20

Topic: Conversation Scenes

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Thumbnails for Your Story Sequence (30 Min.)

Homework: Week 10 Reading, Storyboard Revisions and Polish

Week 11, Mar 20 - 27

Topic: Work on Final Presentation

In-Class Activities: Speedboarding (10 Min.) – a weekly, timed storyboarding exercise

Review Storyboards

Homework: Final Presentation

Finals Week – We will meet online on Thursday, 3/27 from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM to review your Final Projects

*Schedule subject to change at Instructor's discretion