

Character Animation Basics

ART - 1670 001

Course Description

Expanding on principles of animation, body mechanics, and acting to create animated performances for both traditional and 3D application.

Prereq: ART 1620 (for 2D) or ART 2640 (for 3D) and instructor approval

Semester: Fall

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate basic SOLID DRAWING skills for character animation.
- Demonstrate basic principles of ANIMATION used in character animation.
- Demonstrate basic principles of BODY MECHANICS, visually representing the physical, external forces that move characters.
- Demonstrate basic principles of ACTING for animation, visually representing the internal forces that move characters.
- Demonstrate following basic TECHNICAL skills relating to creating animation.
- Demonstrate fundamental PRODUCTION workflow skills relating to creating animation.

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisites

ART 1620 Intro to Animation if you intend to do your animation in a traditional medium or
ART 2640 if you intend to create 3d animation

ART 1260 Figure Drawing is not required but can aid in posing and animating a human character.

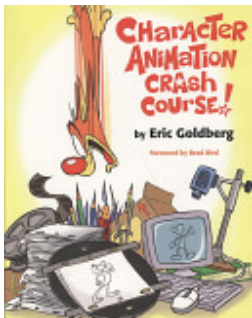
Student's responsibility to examine each course description for details of prerequisite classes.

- C grade or better in pre-requisite classes is needed to continue.
- Some 4-year institutions require a C+ or better for transfer.

Upon completion with a C grade or better, you can take:

- ART 1670 Character Animation Basics
- ART 2640 3D Animation & Rigging, with ART 1630 Computer Graphics Essentials
- suggested before ART 2620 Motion Graphics, with ART 1280 Photoshop
- suggested before ART 1660 Storyboarding, with ART 1110 Foundation Drawing 1

Required Text or Materials



Title: Character Animation Crash Course!

ISBN: 9781879505971

Authors: Eric Goldberg

Publication Date: 2008-01-01



Title: The Animator's Survival Kit

ISBN: 9780865478978

Authors: Richard Williams

Publisher: Macmillan

Publication Date: 2012-09-25

Edition: any

Title: See Required Material page on Canvas for other optional material and list of required supplies

For more information on textbook accessibility, contact Accessibility & Disability Services at ads@slcc.edu.

Attendance

Credit Hours: 3

9 hours/week of work expected - 3 lecture, 2 lab, 4 homework

Attendance is not graded directly, but it is crucial in a studio class, where class time is dedicated to creating evidence used in your final. Missing classes means missing this evidence. While there is some catch-up time in the last week, it is limited.

- You must be enrolled in this section of the course to attend. Do not bring others to class unless they too are enrolled.
- Expected you will be **p**unctual, **p**repared, **p**articipate, & **p**resent (on task) for the duration of classes.
- Visual Art & Design Attendance Policy: 80% attendance is required for passing. Meet 2x per week for 16 weeks = **Max 6 absences**
- No need to disclose the reasons for absences.
- Dropped if you don't attend 1 of the first 2 classes.

Incomplete

Instructors are not compelled nor required to give an Incomplete, especially when withdrawal may be more appropriate. Incomplete grades not changed before the deadline will be automatically changed to an E. More information on applying for an "Incomplete" Grade.

- Criteria: unavoidable unforeseen extraordinary unfortunate circumstances, passing grade at the time of the request, past withdrawal date.
- Process: Work with the instructor to complete coursework within a year.

Course Policies

Lab Usage

- Keep your personal area tidy, clean up at end of time
- No removal of school property
- OpenLab SCM 1-051 during open campus hours
- Card access is a privilege, don't mess it up for those who follow

All students are allowed the following

- Use of headphones if they can hear general spoken instructions.
- Leaving class at any time for any reason without warning or permission, with the understanding that missed content will not be repeated.
- Consumption of food and drink, provided it does not create a mess or near school computers.
- Use of fidget devices
- Pacing during instruction if it does not obstruct other students.
- Freedom to sit and move around the classroom as needed.
- Permission to record class sessions by notifying instructor for your private study only.
- Permitted to bring medical equipment to class

Accessibility

Every known effort has been made to format this course to be as accessible as possible, but not all visual elements within a course can be formatted in an accessible way that allows students needing audio or visual assistance sufficient accommodations to use them independently. Students needing additional accommodations should work with the Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS) on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Honesty

Academic Honesty will be strictly enforced in this course. Any behavior deemed unethical or that does not abide by reasonable academic honesty will result in action by the professor. Students caught cheating in this course will forfeit their right to pass this course!

Usage Rights

- Work submitted may be used anonymously for future examples/promotions/assessments for the department, school, or college. Contact me if you do not want this to happen.
- All images used in this course are created by the instructor unless otherwise notated. Exceptions are credited to the creators to the best of our knowledge.
- Course material developed by the instructor and any recordings you make in class are the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without approval.

Engagement Plan

My commitment to you:

- Please communicate in person, through Canvas Inbox, or the Watercooler discussion board, and **not** email, phone, text, or submission comments.
- I will log in at least daily and be online to facilitate this course during scheduled times. I will also be available during office hours or by appointment to meet IRL or virtually.
- I will grade and return your assignments with feedback before the next assignment comes due.
- As we do discussion boards, I will read through what has been posted on the days and times scheduled.
- I will respond within 24hrs to messages received on a weekday. Weekends will take longer but will get to everyone by the end of Monday. I cannot do remote technical support.

My expectations of you:

- It is expected you will log in daily to receive messages and announcements.
- It is expected you will turn in assignments on time and complete peer reviews on time
- As we do discussion boards, it is expected you will contribute to discussions by posting and replying multiple times each week.
- It is expected you will have read the assignments, reviewed the course content, and the posts in the Watercooler discussion board, and tried to do the assignment before messaging me directly with questions about the course or the assignments. "I'm confused" is not a question. Ask me exactly what you want to know about, only then can I help you.

Brief Description of Assignments/Exams

You will be asked to demonstrate the course outcomes through several projects that explore aspects of animation that will show evidence of your ability to apply the principles covered in this course and by and participating in critiques and discussions. **Meaning you will publicly share your drawings and animation.** All submissions will be uploaded directly to Canvas, shared in person or over video meeting, or as a link to syncSketch. **Do not use Google Drive, YouTube, or Office 360 to submit assignments.**

Assignments – 80% of grade

This is a studio class with all the assignments outlined on a page on Canvas when completed will be presented for a peer review. Part of that grade will also reflect your participation in group critiques.

Sketchbook - 20% of grade

The sketchbook assignment runs the entire semester. There will be a specific topic or challenge each week Requiring you to explore aspects of observation, gesture, verb, acting, force, character exploration, and clear communication in your drawings. They will often support or add to the current assignment you will be working on. Review the required topics as listed in the Canvas schedule. Drawings around that weeks theme will be due the first of class each week.

Final

You will compile a progression reel of all animations completed this semester, and complete an End of Course Survey.

Deadlines & Revisions

On-time is more important than finished.

Deadlines are defined on Canvas only, not what you thought, not what the instructor mispoke, nor what your friend told you.

Deadline Window

Begins with the due date and ends when assignments are graded, a minimum space of two days. If your work is not finished, you are still expected to submit it and participate.

On-time work: submitted within the Deadline Window

- Critiqued on the due date.
- Can be repeatedly fixed and resubmitted for better scores till the end of the semester.

Late work: submitted after grading

- May not receive a critique
- May not get graded, if graded it cannot be resubmitted for a better score.

Exception to revisions

- sketchbook checks
- milestones
- iteration assignments
- the final

Use [What-If scores](#) to see how grades might be affected by upcoming or resubmitted assignments

Grading Scale

My professional experience and aesthetic preferences are factors that influence my judgment.

Project grades will foremost be based on the excellence of the project work.

[You can view your grades right in Canvas](#)

Specific objectives for each project will be outlined on Canvas and graded using [rubrics](#), generally using a 4-point scale.

Rubric Example

Criteria	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Criteria	Excellent	Adequate	Needs Work	Inadequate	No Submission
Criteria	Every time	Most times	Few times	No times	No Submission
Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Submission

Percentage breakdown for Final grade

- A (93% - 100%)
- A- (90% - 92.9%)
- B+ (86% - 89.9%)
- B (83% - 85.9%)
- B- (80% - 82.9%)
- C (70% - 79.9%)
- D (60% - 69.9%)
- E (0% - 59.9%)

Student Academic Calendar

As students you should be aware of all important dates in the semester, such as the day that courses begin and end, as well as the drop date and the last day to withdraw. To learn more about those dates, navigate to the Student Academic Calendar below:

[SLCC Student Academic Calendar](#)

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Critiques & Revisions	Quiz	0
	Roll Call Attendance	Assignment	100
	Solid Drawing: Putting It All Together	Quiz	0
	Water Cooler Discussion (Optional)	Discussion	0
8/28/25	Vanilla Walk	Discussion	40
9/2/25	Sketchbook Theme: Excitement	Discussion	4
9/4/25	Personality-Character Walk Cycle	Discussion	40
9/6/25	Syllabus Quiz	Quiz	6
9/9/25	Sketchbook Theme: Action Analysis	Discussion	4
9/16/25	Sketchbook Theme: Balance	Discussion	4
9/18/25	Weight & Balance	Discussion	40
9/23/25	Sketchbook Theme: Strength	Discussion	4

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
9/30/25	Sketchbook Theme: Devastated	Discussion	4
10/2/25	Strength, Push, Pull, Lift Weight	Discussion	40
10/7/25	Sketchbook Theme: Observation	Discussion	4
10/9/25	Flour Sack Pantomime	Discussion	40
10/14/25	Sketchbook Theme: Facial Expressions	Discussion	4
10/21/25	Sketchbook Theme: Disgust	Discussion	4
10/23/25	Lip Sync	Discussion	40
10/28/25	Sketchbook Theme: Animals	Discussion	4
11/4/25	Sketchbook Theme: Innocent	Discussion	4
11/6/25	Talking Animal Monologue	Discussion	40
11/11/25	Sketchbook Theme: Embarrassed	Discussion	4
11/13/25	Dialogue Decisions	Discussion	20
11/18/25	Sketchbook Theme: Pick your own Verb	Discussion	4
12/2/25	Sketchbook Theme: Exhaustion	Discussion	4
12/4/25	Dialogue	Discussion	40

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
12/16/25	College Course Evaluations	Assignment	0
12/16/25	End of Course Survey	Quiz	20
12/16/25	Final	Discussion	40
12/16/25	Sketchbook Compilation	Assignment	60

Advising and Counseling Support Services

At our institution, we are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth. That's why we offer a range of advising and counseling services to help you navigate the challenges of college life. To learn more about the resources available to you and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Advising and Counseling Support Services tab. Our advising team and the support centers across campus are here to support you in achieving your goals and overcoming any obstacles you may face.

Advising

- [advising office](#) organize a plan to finish your program in a timely manner
- [Degreeworks](#) & [Official Catalog](#) is a resource to know how all this fits together
- Faculty can help you make sense of the catalog

This class is part of the following credentials.

- Required for [Visual Art & Design - Animation: AS](#) degrees are intended to transfer to the four-year schools.
- Elective for [Visual Art & Design - Animation Emphasis: AAS \(CTE\)](#) helps you prepare for an entry-level career.
- Elective for [Game Development: CP \(CTE\)](#) are short-term programs where you focus on gaining specific skills, They are stackable with the AAS degree and may be done

together.

Institutional Policies

As members of our academic community, we would like to invite you to review the Institutional Syllabus which covers important policies and procedures. This document contains important links for students on the code of student rights and responsibilities, academic integrity, and grading policies, Title IX and other important acknowledgements. By familiarizing yourself with this information, you can help us create a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

For more information, navigate to the Institutional Policies tab on the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page.

Learning Support and Tutoring Services

We are pleased to offer a range of tutoring and learning support services to help you achieve your academic goals. Whether you need assistance with a specific subject or want to improve your study skills, you have many options for tutoring or other support.

To learn more about the services we offer and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Tutoring and Learning Support tab. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources to help you succeed in your studies. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tutoring session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you in any way we can.

Catch All

- I don't claim to know everything and am a fallible human being.
- Don't wait to address a problem!
- Role as a teacher/coach, not a taskmaster, competitor, umpire, or prosecutor
- Items on this syllabus and schedule may be amended to better achieve the course goals and meet the needs of participants as needed