

UNC Greensboro
Freshman Seminar in Fine Arts

FMS 131-x History and Art of Animation

Fall 2011 Syllabus

Credits: 3:3

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: none

For Whom Planned: This is an elective course for freshmen of all majors and satisfies the Writing Intensive (WI), Global (GL) and Fine Arts (GFA) requirements of the General Education Core course work.

Instructor Information: Eleanor L. Cowen

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Office: 25 Foust Building

Office Hours: by appointment (as an academic advisor, I am typically on campus 8-5 M-F)

Catalog Description: Analysis of significant works of the world's animators, examining animation styles, techniques, and social influence.

Detailed Course Description: Animation is an art form that brings fanciful imaginings to vivid realization. As a popular form of entertainment for children and adults, animation captivates our imagination and influences our way of perceiving the world. In this class we will look at the historical progression of animation techniques, the social characterizations presented in popular cartoons, and the artistic brilliance of animators from around the world.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify and assess various animation methods and their aesthetic impact
- Demonstrate an understanding of historical context and cultural values communicated in various animated works
- Recognize the diversity of cultural expression in the themes, characters and visual styles of international animators
- Articulate how animated productions can influence personal world views
- Appreciate the dedication and artistry involved in this time consuming art form
- Improve writing through practice and revision
- Write clearly, coherently, and effectively about animation as an art form

Teaching Methods and Assignments for Achieving Learning Outcomes:

Class content will include film screenings, lectures, and discussions on animation historical progression, content, and influence. Reading assignments from selected

book chapters and articles will inform and help guide students on subject matter. In addition to periodic exams, students will write two essays and a term paper on different aspects of animation. Students will submit first drafts of all writing assignments for review, and will then revise for final submission and grading.

Required Texts/Readings/References: Reading assignments will be compiled from a variety of sources, and posted on Blackboard for student access.

Conduct: Studying animation is fun and worth your time and attention! Please come to class prepared and ready to learn. Engage with class discussion and do not use cell phones during class time.

Academic Integrity: For all work in this class, you are expected to abide by the UNC Greensboro Academic Integrity policy. Any violation will be reported to the university for appropriate disciplinary action, and you will fail the course. Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Integrity policy and attend to issues of intellectual honesty. Claims of ignorance regarding this policy will not be accepted as an excuse for any violation.

For detailed information on the Academic Integrity policy at UNCG, please see the following web site: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is required. Every student will be allowed to miss two classes without penalty. Every absence after the first two will result in three points being deducted from the student's final grade. Upon the sixth absence, you will be withdrawn from the course.

If you have absences due to verified college athletics or validated medical reasons, please contact me as soon as possible to arrange make-up assignments for missed class time.

Arrive to class on time. Attendance is taken at the beginning of the class period, and chronic tardiness is not acceptable. Excessive late arrivals may be counted as absences.

Evaluation Methods:

Grading Breakdown:

8%	Essay 1
12%	Essay 2
5%	Reading responses (4 @1.25 % each)
5%	Term paper outline
20%	Term Paper
10%	Quizzes (2 @ 5% each)
15%	Midterm Exam
25%	Final Exam

Quizzes and Exams: The format for quizzes and exams are primarily short answer and essay questions. There may be some multiple-choice questions on occasion.

Reading Assignments: Class lectures and screenings will be based on reading assignments for each class. Please read the materials in advance of class periods for which they are posted to be prepared for class discussions. Any material covered in the reading assignments may be included in examinations.

Writing Assignments: All papers should be written in MLA format with a standard 12-point font and 1" margins. ALWAYS put your name on your paper!

Do not cite Wikipedia as a source. However, it can be useful to check the references at the bottom of Wikipedia pages for valid sources. Check the University Libraries' Research Guides by Subject for good reference sources.

Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation are expected. Take advantage of the University Writing Center! They are in 3211 MHRA building. You will receive better grades if you work with the Writing Center to help construct and proof your papers. (Hint: film titles should be italicized!) For help with writing structure, please consult the University Writing Center.

<http://www.uncg.edu/eng/writingcenter/resources.html>

- **Essays** will be reviewed in class for constructive feedback from classmates. Students will submit the first draft, feedback forms and revised paper for grading. **First drafts** are worth 75% of essay grade (no late papers accepted), and **revisions** make up the remaining 25%.

First drafts of essays must have two paper copies delivered on due date.

- **Reading responses** will be conducted in class on days that first drafts of essays are due. There is no allowance for make-up on reading response grade if you are absent.
- **Research paper** grade will be based on timely submission of **outline** (graded separately @ 5% of course grade), **first draft** (25% of the paper grade), and **final revision** (75%).

Research papers, drafts, and outlines may be delivered electronically as a Word document using the Blackboard digital drop box no later than the posted deadline. If you do not have Microsoft Word, you may submit a paper copy.

When submitting electronic copies, save the word document using your name, last name first (example: Cowen_essay1_draft.docx).

For paper revisions, there will be a 15-point penalty for late delivery of up to 24 hours. Papers will not accepted if submitted beyond 24 hours late. For electronic

submissions, do not wait until the last minute to upload your paper, as computer problems will not be accepted as an excuse for late delivery.

Essay #1 Animation Classic Characters

- Write 1-2 page essay about a popular **animated character** from American animation from the 1900's-1980's.
- Identify the artist's background, **description of the character** (species, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, geographical origin), and character longevity
- Discuss the **social norms, commentary, or stereotypes are conveyed through the cartoon and character.**
- Keep any plot summaries to a minimum, only as needed to explain social significance.
- Cite any sources from which you draw any information.

Essay #2 Popular Culture in Television Animation

- Write a 2-3 page essay about a **television cartoon series or special feature** from the 1950's to present.
- Do not use a series that includes the character you wrote about in Essay 1
- Do not use a series that is listed in Wk 5 of the syllabus.
- Identify the animators and studios involved in the creation of the series.
- Include production and distribution dates.
- Address the **historical context** of the production.
- Describe the **animation style and technique(s)** employed in the production.
- Discuss what **social norms, commentary, or stereotypes are conveyed through this series.**
- Discuss whether and why cartoon is still popular with today's audience.
- Cite a minimum of one published analysis or review of the series, and cite any other sources from which you draw any information.
- Keep plot summary to a minimum.

Research Paper on International Animator

- Write an 8-10 page paper (plus a works cited page) researching an **animation artist from a country other than USA.**
- Discuss the animator's professional accomplishments and animation style.
- Provide historical and cultural context of their work.
 - Who did they learn from? Whose work influenced their work?
 - What is/was going on in the world during the artist's productive years?
 - Are cultural traditions and/or social commentary expressed in their work?
 - What is the response to their work? Include praise, awards, and criticisms
- Describe why you selected this artist and how their work has influenced you.
- Cite all sources (three minimum) from which you draw any information.

- Include a works cited page using MLA format.

Calendar:**Wk 1 The Beginnings of Animation**

Mon Aug 22 Early Animation
Persistence of vision, **Exercise: Thaumatrope/Zoetrope**
Magic Lantern, Theatre Optique up to Eadweard Muybridge

Wed Aug 24 The first special effects in film: Stop Motion animation
Mary, Queen of Scots
George Melies: Voyage to the Moon (1902)
Ladislaw Starevicz – Russian stop motion animation

Wk 2 Early Studios, Cell Animation, and Classic Characters

Mon Aug 29 **Winsor McCay: Gertie the Dinosaur**
Otto Messmer: Felix the Cat
The Fleischer Brothers: Koko the Clown, Popeye the Sailor,
Betty Boop, Gulliver's Travels

Wed Aug 31 Visit Writing Center
[Discuss Essay 1 & Quiz 1](#)
Character critiques: *Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny* and more

Wk 3 Silhouette, Pin-screen Animation

Mon Sept 5 **Quiz #1**

Wed Sept 7 Chinese Shadow Puppetry to Silhouette Animation
Lotte Reiniger: Hansel & Gretel, Adventures of Prince Achmed
Alexandre Alexeieff & Claire Parker: Le Nez

Wk 4 Walt Disney, Innovations in technique

Mon Sept 12 **Essay #1, first draft due**
Draft workshop

Wed Sept 14 Creative and technical approaches to animation
Multi-plane animation stand. Screening: *Bambi* bonus features
Rotoscoping. Screening: *Sleeping Beauty* bonus features

Wk 5	Zeitgeist of Saturday Morning Cartoon Classics
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Mon Sept 19 **Essay #1, revision due**
The Rocky & Bullwinkle Show (1959-61 ABC, 1961-64 NBC)
Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids (1972-1985 CBS)

Wed Sept 21 *The Jetsons* (1962-63 ABC, 1985-87 syndication)
Scooby Doo (1969-1991, 2002-present)

Wk 6	American Television Animation Specials
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Mon Sept 26 **Arthur Rankin and Jules Bass:** *Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer*,
Frosty the Snowman, *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town*,
Here Comes Peter Cottontail, *Little Drummer Boy*,
 (Feature: *The Last Unicorn*)

Wed Sept 28 **Chuck Jones :** *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*,
The Cat in the Hat, *Horton Hears a Who*
Charles Schulz: *A Charlie Brown Christmas*,
It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown

Wk 7	Contemporary Prime Time Television Animation
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Mon Oct 3 **Discuss Essay 2 & Midterm Exam**
The Simpsons, *South Park*, *King of the Hill*, *Family Guy*

Wed Oct 5 **Midterm Exam**

Wk 8	Canadian Animator
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Mon Oct 10 FALL BREAK

Wed Oct 12 **Frederic Back:** *The Man Who Planted Trees* + bonus features,
The River

Wk 9	British Animators
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Mon Oct 17 **Discuss Term paper & outline**
Terry Gilliam: *Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969-1974),
Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975)
Nick Park, Aardman Studios: *Wallace & Gromit* (1989)

Wed Oct 19 **Essay #2, first draft due**
Draft workshop

Wk 10 French/Belgian Animator

Mon Oct 24 **Michel Ocelot:** *Kirikou and the Sorceress* (1998) 74 min

Wed Oct 26 **Essay #2, revision due** Discussion on *Kirikou*

Wk 11 Russian, German, Polish Animators

Mon Oct 31 **Term Paper outline w/sources due**
Yuri Norstein: *Hedgehog in the Fog* (1975),
Tale of Tales (1979)

Wed Nov 2 **Oskar Fischinger:** *Motion Painting No. 1* (1947) 11 min
Jerzy Kucia: *The Ring* (1978)

Wk 12 Japanese, Chinese Animators

Mon Nov 7 **Quiz #2**

Wed Nov 9 **Hayao Miyazaki:** *Howl's Moving Castle*, *Spirited Away*, etc.
Kihachiro Kawamoto: *House of Flame*

Wk 13 African Animators

Mon Nov 14 **Term Paper first draft due**
Ebele Okoye: *The Essence* (2010) Nigeria
Thezi Ndhrazi: *Bhovas and Sam "Thando"* (2009) South Africa

Wed Nov 16 Student choice screening

Wk 14 Disney Renaissance

Mon Nov 21 **Term papers returned**
Disney Renaissance, 1980's-1990's

Wed Nov 23 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Wk 15**Pixar**

Mon Nov 28

John Lassiter: *Tin Toy, Knicknack*, commercials,
and other shorts

Wed Nov 30

Toy Story (1-3), Monster's Inc., Finding Nemo, The Incredibles,
*Cars, Ratatouille, Wall-e, Up***Wk 16****Dreamworks**

Mon Dec 5

Revised Term paper due*Shrek (1-3), Flushed Away, Antz, Shark Tale, El Dorado,*
Prince of Egypt
Review for Final**Final Exam TBD**