

ART 409: Advanced Animation Production Studio

Spring 2026 | 3 Credits | Instructor: Stephan Leeper

Syllabus

This course simulates a professional animation studio environment. Over the course of a single semester, students will function as production artists and animators, contributing to a single, unified production under a Producer and Director.

Course Objectives

Learning Outcomes & Competencies: By the end of this production cycle, you will demonstrate the ability to:

1. **Collaborate effectively** by utilizing interpersonal and production skills within a complex team environment.
2. **Apply professional skill sets** to create high-quality assets for a large-scale production.
3. **Manage individual workloads** strictly according to production goals, standards, and schedules.
4. **Execute a directorial vision**, creating work that serves the larger narrative within limitations established by the Producer.
5. **Complete a comprehensive project**, resulting in strong portfolio pieces that provide credibility for future employment in the industry.

Performance Evaluation

Professionalism & Deadline Management Professional interaction with peers and strict adherence to production goals and established deadlines.	25%
Communication & Participation Regular contribution to weekly production meetings, ongoing communication with Producer/ fellow artists, and responsiveness to directorial reviews/dailies.	25%
Production Quality Final output displaying a high level of production quality and industry-level aesthetics.	50%

Software & Tools: Industry-standard tools including, but not limited to:

- Dragonframe
- Autodesk Maya
- Toon Boom Harmony
- Adobe Creative Cloud (Premiere, Photoshop, After Effects)

Production Meetings, Deadlines, and Attendance

Studio Culture: Attendance at weekly production meetings is mandatory. Additionally, artists are expected to collaborate with teammates outside of class hours to meet designated deadlines.

Absence Policy: Regular tardiness is unacceptable. You must notify the Instructor and Line Producer in advance of any absences. Unexcused absences and excessive tardiness will negatively impact your grade and, more importantly, put the completion of the entire production at risk.

Credit & Usage Rights

- **Production Credit:** Students will receive full screen credit for their contributions in all public screenings and releases of the work produced in this class.
- **Portfolio Usage:** Students are entitled to use any media assets—both in-progress and final footage—for self-promotion, provided they annotate the assets to give credit where it is due.
- **University Rights:** By participating in this production, students agree that all work and behind-the-scenes media may be used as promotional material by Central Michigan University and the College of the Arts and Media.