

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30am-10:50am

Class Location: Basil 101 (“Mac Lab” schedule posted on door and on Brightspace)

Network (Server) Address for Media Storage: smb://w2k12-cj/video

Pre-requisites: COMM 231 (Video Storytelling)

Instructor: Roblyn Powley (rpowley@sjf.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment (in-person or on Zoom), and I am generally flexible before and after class for impromptu questions and feedback.

Required Course Materials:

- Sketchbook and pencil/pen/marker
- You will need headphones once we begin incorporating audio
- Adobe AfterEffects (via computer labs)

Catalog Course Description

This course introduces motion graphics as a creative and communicative tool within media and film production. Students will learn the fundamentals of motion design—storyboarding, animatics, sequencing, composition, typography, and animation principles—while gaining hands-on experience with industry-standard software. Emphasis is placed on how motion graphics enhance storytelling, clarify information, and support audience engagement across media contexts. Through a combination of design exercises and project-based learning, students will develop skills in integrating text, image, audio, and video into compelling time-based compositions.

Media and Communication Major Goal

Communicate effectively through verbal, written, and visual modalities, including the use of tools and technologies associated with the profession (assessed by 3 motion graphics projects, and final process document).

Film and Television Studies Minor Goal

Recognize and apply key concepts in motion graphics and animation theory to the film and television production process (assessed by skills based mini assignments and 3 motion graphics projects).

Valuable Course Resources

- [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) (seriously, there is a tutorial for every possible thing you can do in AfterEffects)
- Royalty-free music and sound (attribution mandatory!): freemusicarchive.org

Communication

All course content will be posted in Brightspace.

Class wide announcements will be posted in Brightspace. Individual correspondence will be via Fisher email. I try to respond to emails within 36 hours M-F.

Brightspace can be accessed using your Fisher ID and password at brightspace.sjf.edu.

If you cannot access COMM 290 on Brightspace, please let me know as soon as possible.

Be sure to check your Fisher Email and log-in to Brightspace every day.

About This Class

This course is an introduction to Motion Graphics both conceptually and practically, with a strong focus on research and planning. Students will create their own motion graphics that relate to their work in other classes; considering message, narrative, basic animation principles, and technical proficiency.

Work assigned will include skills-based Mini-Assignments as well as larger Projects that will include project-specific in-progress deliverables. Additionally students will be required to create a Process Document, outlining the process and iterations of each Project through the semester, and including a personal reflection on the work.

Each class session we will meet in the computer lab, for some combination of lectures, demonstrations, studio work time, discussion, and critique. Attendance and participation are critical (and make up a significant portion of your grade).

Participation means showing up on time, prepared and engaged; and contributing meaningfully to discussions and critiques/feedback sessions.

Missing class means missing important information as well as feedback.

You **WILL** need to work in the computer lab outside of class time.

This class is structured so that participation, hard work, and forward progress are the keys to success.

Class Policies:

- Attendance is mandatory on days where we will be screening/critiquing projects.
- If you expect to be late or miss class, please email me ahead of time.
- Deadlines: Mini-Assignments and Project Deliverables will be submitted to Brightspace by 8:00am on the due date.
- Late work will not be accepted.
- Save everything! (screenshots, sketches, storyboards, animatics, notes, etc) This will make putting together your process document so much easier.
- We will meet during the week of April 27th ("Culminating Experiences Week," a.k.a. Final Exam Week) at a date and time officially assigned by the University.

Grades

Your grade will be calculated based on the following:

Participation	20%
Mini-Assignments	15%
Projects	50%
Process Document	15%
= 100%	

Final Grades Assigned as Follows:

Final Grade Range			B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	Under 60
	A	Over 92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
	A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Course Calendar *Course Calendar and Assignment Dates are subject to change.*

Up-to-date schedule and all Project Outlines may be found in Brightspace

Projects, Progress Deliverables, and Mini-Assignments are due on days that we meet before 8am.

COMM 290•Motion Graphics

Tues. 9:30am-10:50am, Thurs. 9:30am-10:50am

Instructor: Roblyn Powley

Semester Schedule*

WEEKS 1-4

*Subject to change

TUESDAY

Jan. 13

IN CLASS:

- Course Introduction
- Syllabus & expectations
- Motion graphics overview

ASSIGNED:

- Mini Assignment #1: A Motion Graphic You Love

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Jan. 15

IN CLASS:

- AfterEffects Intro and Workspace
- Intro Project 1: Production Vanity Card

ASSIGNED:

- P1 Research & Brainstorming

DUE TODAY:

- **Mini-Assignment #1**

TUESDAY

Jan. 20

IN CLASS:

- Animating Properties

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #2: Bouncing Ball

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Jan. 22

IN CLASS:

- Shape Layers; Mattes and Masks

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #3: Masking

DUE TODAY:

- **P1 Research & Brainstorming**

TUESDAY

Jan. 27

IN CLASS:

- Visual Composition
- Storyboards and Animatics

ASSIGNED:

- P1 Storyboards & Animatics

DUE TODAY:

- **Mini-Assignment #2**

THURSDAY

Jan. 29

IN CLASS:

- Adding Audio
- Motion Hierarchy

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #4: Parenting

DUE TODAY:

- **Mini-Assignment #3**

TUESDAY

Feb. 3

IN CLASS:

- Transitions and Easing

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #5: Easing

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Feb. 5

IN CLASS:

- Studio Time/Instructor Check-ins

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- **P1 Storyboards and Animatics**

COMM 290•Motion Graphics

Tues. 9:30am-10:50am, Thurs. 9:30am-10:50am

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Semester Schedule*

WEEKS 5-8

*Subject to change

TUESDAY

Feb. 10

IN CLASS:

- Studio Time/Instructor Check-ins

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #4

THURSDAY

Feb. 12

IN CLASS:

- P1 Watch Party & Feedback
- Intro P2: Lower Thirds

ASSIGNED:

- P2 Research & Planning

DUE TODAY:

- Project 1: Vanity Plate

TUESDAY

Feb. 17

IN CLASS:

- Type and Motion

ASSIGNED:

- P2 Layout/Styleframes

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #5
- P2 Research

THURSDAY

Feb. 19

IN CLASS:

- Track Mattes & Text Animators

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #6: Track Mattes

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

TUESDAY

Feb. 24

IN CLASS:

- 3D Space in AfterEffects

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- P2 Layouts/Styleframes

THURSDAY

Feb. 26

IN CLASS:

- Cameras and Lights in AE

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #7: Cameras

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #6

TUESDAY

Mar. 3

Spring Break, NO CLASS

THURSDAY

Mar. 5

Spring Break, NO CLASS

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Semester Schedule*

WEEKS 9-12

*Subject to change

TUESDAY

Mar. 10

IN CLASS:

- Studio Time/Instructor Check-ins

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #7

THURSDAY

Mar. 12

IN CLASS:

- P2 Watch Party
- Video Integration in AE

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- P2: Lower Third

TUESDAY

Mar. 17

IN CLASS:

- Intro P3: Title Sequence
- Moodboards

ASSIGNED:

- P3 Planning (Moodboards, Storyboards, Animatics)

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Mar. 19

IN CLASS:

- Transitions and Effects

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

TUESDAY

Mar. 24

IN CLASS:

- Rotoscoping

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #8: Rotoscoping

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Mar. 26

IN CLASS:

- Studio Time/Instructor Check-ins

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

TUESDAY

Mar. 31

IN CLASS:

- Motion Tracking

ASSIGNED:

- Mini-Assignment #9: Motion Tracking

DUE TODAY:

- P3 Planning Due

THURSDAY

Apr. 2

Easter Break, NO CLASS

COMM 290•Motion Graphics

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Semester Schedule*

WEEKS 13-Finals

**Subject to change*

TUESDAY

Apr. 7

IN CLASS:

- Refinement and Polish

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #8

TUESDAY

Apr. 14

IN CLASS:

- Special Topics Lecture/Demo

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Mini-Assignment #9

TUESDAY

Apr. 21

IN CLASS:

- Work-In-Progress Full Group Critique

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- WIP: 80% Complete

FINALS WEEK

Begins Apr. 27

OUR FINAL DATE PER SJF FINALS CALENDAR

DUE:

- P3 Final Deliverables
- Final Process Document

THURSDAY

Apr. 9

IN CLASS:

- Small Group Progress Feedback

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Apr. 16

IN CLASS:

- Studio Time/Instructor Check-ins

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

THURSDAY

Apr. 23

IN CLASS:

- Final Studio/Export Prep

ASSIGNED:

- Nothing New Today

DUE TODAY:

- Nothing!

Mental Health Resources

College is a time of transition and growth. Students may experience situations that require additional support. Support can come in the form of both formal and informal help. If you are overwhelmed, anxious, stressed or worried, know that these emotions may be a natural response to a specific stressor. If you find yourself struggling with your daily routine, your academic performance, athletic performance, friend or family relationships you may want to seek formal support. "It's ok to not be ok" but there is help and support available.

For your benefit, various no cost and confidential resources to support you are listed below:

- If you or someone you know needs emergency mental health assistance, please contact the Office of Safety and Security at (585) 385-8111. During the academic year, there is an on-call counselor that may be contacted to assist in assessing the urgency of the situation. This individual is accessed through the Office of Safety and Security or a residential director. <https://www.sjf.edu/student-life/health-and-wellness-center/faculty-and-staff-resources/> If you are off campus and need emergency help please call 911.
- The Counseling Center page on sjf.edu includes information for accessing a mental health counselor on campus. Please review our website and contact the Health and Wellness Center directly with any questions: healthcenter@sjf.edu.
- NY Project Hope is a no cost confidential website that is available to all NYS residents.
- Lifeline is a 24/7 warm local phone support line that is accessed by calling 211.
- 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress.
- Additional local and national resources are listed on this webpage.

University Policy on Accessibility & Accommodations

St. John Fisher University has a continuing commitment to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities who may need some accommodation to fully participate in this class are urged to contact the Student Accessibility Services Office, as soon as possible, to explore what arrangements need to be made to assure access. The Student Accessibility Services Office (Kearney 300) can be reached by phone (585-385-5252) and email (sas@sjf.edu). Additional information can be found [here](#).

Statement on Academic Integrity

All students, regardless of level or school, are responsible for following the St. John Fisher University Academic Integrity Policy in addition to any other individual school's or program's academic expectations and/or professional standards. Every student is expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all academic pursuits at all times. If a student suspects that another student has violated the Academic Integrity Policy, he or she should contact the instructor for that course and provide support for that suspicion. Any finding of responsibility and associated sanctions for a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is retained per the University records policy. All students are expected to be familiar with the details of the Academic Honesty Policy.