

**New York University Tandon School of Engineering**  
Technology, Culture, and Society

**\*Motion Graphics Studio**

DM-UY 2173 ; Spring 2024

Professor Dakota Gearhart

4 - 5:45 / 6 - 7:50 pm

(15 min break at 5:45 pm)

In-person at 370 Jay, **Room 309**

Class Zoom Link: <https://nyu.zoom.us/j/91608853177>

To contact professor:

Personal email: [dakgearhart@gmail.com](mailto:dakgearhart@gmail.com)

NYU system: [tmp9940@nyu.edu](mailto:tmp9940@nyu.edu)

Office hours by appointment only or by email

Zoom Link for Office Hours: <https://nyu.zoom.us/j/91608853177> (same as classroom)

**\*Course Description**

Motion graphics can be found in a wide range of media: broadcast, web, animation, sports broadcasts, and feature films to name a few. We will introduce 2D computer animation and digital graphic design to help students create dynamic motion graphics. The course combines learning software, exploring animation and design concepts, and developing the intellectual tools to analyze moving media.

Through critique, demonstrations, screenings, and discussions this class will promote students' unique authorial voice. We will discuss significant theories of animation and motion graphics and watch important contemporary and historical work to educate students' visual palate and improve their communication. This class integrates design, animation, drawing, sound, text, and photography in order to equip students with a variety of problem-solving tools. Individual creativity will be stressed as well as the understanding and use of industry-standard software for developing motion graphics.

**\*Program Learning Objectives**

1. Develop conceptual thinking skills to generate ideas and content in order to solve problems or create opportunities.
2. Develop technical skills to realize ideas.
3. Develop critical thinking skills that will allow students to analyze and position their work within cultural, historic, aesthetic, economic, and technological contexts.
4. Gain knowledge of professional practices and organizations by developing verbal, visual, and written communication for documentation and presentation, exhibition and promotion, networking, and career preparation.
5. Develop collaboration skills to actively and effectively work in a team or group.

**\*Course Objectives**

1. Understand the basics of major digital media software, especially the industry standard: After Effects.
2. Experiment with design processes.

3. Be exposed to a range of visual practices, expanding students' visual palate.
4. Develop a personal approach to motion graphics.
5. Advanced ability to analyze and critique animation and motion graphics.
6. Experiment and push Motion Graphics into new levels of meaning and aesthetics.

### **Assignments**

- Assignments will be given during the class and are due at the beginning of each following class, even if you are absent.
- \*• If you are absent, it is your responsibility to inquire about missed lectures and assignments.
- It is your responsibility to ask for an extension, and it is up to me whether to grant it to you.
- The watching assignments are also mandatory and will be referenced in the following class.
- Show a high level of understanding of the tools and techniques, originality in their use and a strong sense of aesthetics.
- Late work is lowered one point per week after the deadline.
- Assignments that don't follow the specified output formats will result in grade reduction.

### **\*Attendance**

- Be on time, if you are 15 minutes late you will be marked late.
- Three lates result in one unexcused absence.
- Two unexcused absences result in a letter grade drop and will drop another grade on a third unexcused absence.
- Four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

*(note; due to the ongoing covid situation, these policies are more flexible, but I leave them here for your reference. For our semester, I will be taking attendance because NYU asks me to and because it counts towards your Class Participation points, but I will not be penalizing you for losing building access / being sick.)*

### **\*Grading**

Assignments will be graded on a 0 - 5 point scale.

5: Excellent work. Meets or exceeds all the requirements of the assignment. Shows excellent understanding of topics

covered and is presented in a professional manner.

4: Solid work. Meets all the requirements of the assignment, and displays understanding of the taught concepts.

3: Average work. Meets most of the requirements in a satisfactory manner and shows a basic understanding of the concepts presented in class.

2: Below average work. The assignment is mostly unfinished and does not meet the requirements. Shows little understanding of principles covered.

1: Work is entirely different from what was assigned.

0: No assignment was turned in.

*(note; due to the ongoing covid situation, these policies are more flexible, but I leave them here for your reference. I mostly give out 5s and 4s, and only go lower if there is a blatant disregard or lateness of the assignment. Also, I grade each person's work individually, and not on a curve system, because many people are at different levels and I try to meet you where you are at.)*

### **\*Class Time Structure**

4 - 5:45 / 6 - 7:50 pm

(15 min break at 5:45 pm)

4 pm - 5:45 Demos + Presentations

5:45 - 6 Break

6 - 7 Assignment Sharing (more time may be allotted this based on the circumstance)

7 - 7:50 In-class work session (optional, but recommended for asking questions 1:1, etc)

\* You are welcome to get water, or use the restroom at any time.

\* Please do not eat whole meals in class.

### **\*Final Grade Calculation**

Final Grade Breakdown:

Class Participation: 20%

Assignments: 80% (see increments below)

Collage: 5%

Logo: 5%

Title Sequence: 15%

Kinetic Text: 15%

Puppet Animation: 20%

Final: 20%

### **\*Assignment Timetable**

Collage: 5% - you have one week

Logo: 5% - you have one week

Title Sequence: 15% - you have two weeks

Kinetic Text: 15% - you have three weeks

Puppet Animation: 15% - you have two weeks

Final: 20% - you have four weeks (final) (pitch 5%, final 15%)

### **\*Class Participation**

It is important that you actively participate in class discussions and critiques and be respectful and considerate of your fellow students and me. Therefore I count it as 20% of your grade. During class discussions, I keep a tally system of your verbal comments. I use this information, along with your class attendance, your assignment presentations, your final pitch, and your online comments to determine your participation points at the end of the semester. *(note; you have many ways to contribute to Class Participation regardless of your communication style.)*

Generally, I like these things: Enthusiasm for Motion Graphics; Lively debate; Constructive criticism; Respect for each other; Asking questions about relevant topics; Giving fair critiques to other students. I don't like these things: Never talking; Being overly negative; Being disrespectful of fellow students; Talking a lot about irrelevant topics; Incessant lateness; Cruising the internet during class; Ghosting.

### **\*Accessibility Adjustments**

I welcome students to talk to me about any accessibility adjustments that can be made at

any time. I very much want to support you in your learning and make this class as engaging and accessible as possible! Please email me or speak to me after class if you have any learning needs, questions, or concerns.

## Course Outline

This syllabus is subject to change if deemed necessary during the semester. Changes will be timely communicated in class and via email.

## Course Outline

### Week 1

**1/26** - In-Person

Orientation, Syllabus, What is Motion Graphics, 12 Principles of Animation, Introductions

On your own: Download After Effects, Photoshop, Illustrator, Premiere, Procreate, Cinema Lite, etc

Prepare Assets: dig through previous works and see if you have things you already want to animate

**Motion Graphics Example - Find an example of motion graphics. Post it in the Discussion Board Section on Canvas --- and write a few sentences that tell us why you chose it**

Helpful Links:

*Review:* Essential Motion Design Vocabulary

<https://www.schoolofmotion.com/blog/motion-design-dictionary>

*Watch:* 12 Principles of Animation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDqjldI4bF4&t=3s>

### Week 2

**2/2** - In-Person

AE Basics: Interface, Keyframe Intro, Layers, Exporting, Video Sizing & Formatting

Collage Assignment

**Assignment 1: Collage - Due 2/9**

Create a Collage Animation by using compositing techniques with animated layers. Make a compelling coherent composition. Use at least 10 moving parts. Very good pieces will include one example of both Squash and Stretch and Timing from the 12 principles of animation.

- Format, 750x750, 30fps, h.264.
- Add an audio track.
- Duration 15-25 seconds.
- You can use found footage
- You can create your own assets, but this not necessary
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

*Read:* After Effects keyboard shortcuts

<https://www.schoolofmotion.com/blog/30-essential-keyboard-shortcuts-in-after-effects>

*Watch:* Dakota Gearhart's Collage Animation, If A Rose Could Reflect On The Human Gaze

<https://vimeo.com/387482660>

### Week 3

**2/9** - In-Person

AE Basics: Paths, Shapes, Masks, Kinetic Type Intro, Compositing

Watch and discuss the final versions of Collages.

Logo Assignment

**Assignment 2: Logo - Due 2/16**

Create your own logo using shapes in Adobe Illustrator or Photoshop.

- Duration: 5 seconds
- Add animated type in Ae.
- Use at least 5 moving parts.
- Compositing and post production in Ae.
- Format, 1920 x 1080, 30fps, h.264.
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

*Read:* Effective Logo Design Tips

<https://www.designhill.com/design-blog/powerful-tips-for-effective-logo-design/>

*Watch:* Apple's Intention <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6CarB43x9M>

Week 4

**2/16** - **ONLINE** - <https://nyu.zoom.us/j/91608853177>

In Class: Premiere, Adobe Link, Editing Techniques

Watch and discuss the final versions of your Logos.

**Assignment 3: Title Sequence - Due 3/1**

Recreate the title sequence for a movie of your choice. Use the original soundtrack and text. Format, 1920x1080, 30fps, h.264 with audio. You have two weeks. You must storyboard this project and share your storyboard in class next week.

- Create a storyboard, using your shape and type choices.
- Format, 1920 x 1080
- Duration: 30 seconds
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

*Watch:* How TV Sequences Grew Up

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdtmaqVvWIA>

*Watch:* Evolution of the Green Screen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8aoUXjSfsl>

*Research:* Art of the Title, Iconic title sequences

<https://www.artofthetitle.com/>

Week 5

**2/23** - In-Person

Advanced Kinetic Typography, Effects, Storyboards, Feedback Hour

Storyboard, Idea, and Assets Due: Watch, share, and discuss our in-process your Storyboard for your Title Sequence, design choices, how to improve, etc. for Feedback Hour

<https://www.artofthetitle.com/>

## Week 6

3/1 - In-Person

Watch and discuss the final versions of Title Sequences.

### Assignment 4: Kinetic Text **Due 3/22**

Create a kinetic typography animation of your favorite quote, poem, or song. The animation needs to be accompanied by an audio file. Storyboards due next week.

- Find a spoken quote (poetry, music, film etc) of about 1 minute long minimum.
- Show color, texture and type choices.
- Use at least one advanced technique (not just Position, Scale, Opacity, Rotation)
- Duration: 20 seconds, 1920x1080, 30fps, h.264.
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

*Research:* Edge of The Frame, experimental Motion Graphics blog

<http://www.edgeofframe.co.uk/>

## Week 7

3/8 - In-Person

In Class: Graph Editor, Cameras, Lighting

Watch Kinetic Type Examples, watch Title Sequences, Kinetic Text Storyboards Posted

Helpful Links:

*Research:* Animography

<https://animography.net/collections/typefaces>

3/15 - Spring Break

## Week 8

3/22 - In-Person

Watch and discuss the final versions of Kinetic Text, Feedback Hour

### Assignment 5: Puppet Animation - Includes Part 1 & Part 2 - **Due 4/5**

Part 1 : Create a puppet animation with pin, parenting, null objects, shapes and/or masks. Use original assets you create in Illustrator or Photoshop. You have two weeks.

- Use at last 10 parts.
- Duration 30 seconds minimum, 1920x1080, 30fps, h.264.

Part 2: Add an Environment to your Puppet Animation

Create a detailed world for your Puppet Animation. Must include sound effects. Not music.

- Use at last 10 parts.
- Duration 30 sec minimum, 1920x1080, 30fps, h.264.
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

*Watch:* Puppet Pin Tutorial (beginner)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJWBosNSJv8>

Watch: Rigging with Null Objects in AE (no plugins) (*intermediate*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2W-ZcmU1XM>

Watch: DUIK School of Motion Tutorial (*advanced*)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07wfQa8h-y0>

### Week 9

**3/29** - In-Person

Sound in Motion Graphics, Character Design, Animating your Puppet  
Puppet Storyboards, Idea, and Assets Due, Feedback Hour

### Week 10

**4/5** - In-Person

Watch and present Puppets with Environment + Sound

**Assignment: Final - Due 5/3**

Create a short video (1-2 minutes) using the techniques you have learned over the past 10 weeks.

**You will present a pitch, storyboard/mood board, concept, (due 4/17) and a roughcut (due 4/24).** This assignment can be whatever you choose, an ad, film, experimental video, etc.

- Show color, texture and type choices.
- Must include a thoughtful response to sound.
- Script the movements in thumbnails. (1920 x 1080, jpg)
- Duration 1 minute minimum, 2 minute maximum 1920x1080, 30fps, h.264.
- Naming convention: Stevens\_[yourname] [Example Assignment]

Helpful Links:

Watch: Levi's Fall Collection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4nAPrA0M28>

Watch: CryptoZoo Trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qABQ-xbfPPc>

Reference: The Pitch Deck Essentials

<https://www.awn.com/animationworld/pitch-bible-just-essentials>

### Week 11

**4/12** - In-Person

Professional Practices: Making a Pitch  
Human Body and Motion Graphics

### Week 12

**4/19** - In-Person

Present pitch, concept, and storyboard for Final **(5 min Pitch Presentation Due)**

### Week 13

**4/26** - In-Person

In Class: Share roughcut and get feedback from the group **(50% of Final Due) (your roughcut)**  
Career Opportunities, Course Evaluations, Watch Catch-up Assignments

## Week 14

5/3 - In-Person

In Class: Presentation of Final assignments. Compliments & critiques. **(Your final is 100% Due)**

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### **Potential Switch to Fully Online**

In line with NYU policies around COVID, it is possible that this class may switch to fully online. I will keep you all informed as the semester progresses. If we move fully online, all in person students should use the Zoom link for synchronous class sessions. *(note: Zoom and After Effects being used at the same time is a difficult task for any computer processor. Be aware, when we are online and using After Effects over Zoom, some functionality will be lost. Also, be aware that Zoom can't play high-resolution video over Zoom, which is the exact subject of this class. We will find a way to work around this, but understand this logistical challenge is on-going. I record class and upload them afterwards, usually by Tuesday night. You can watch the class and look at the "Week" folders on Brightspace to catch up with the material we covered.*

### **\*Course Requirements**

Hard Drive, After Effects CC 2018, Photoshop or Procreate, Illustrator, Cinema Lite (comes with AE); i.e. download the Adobe Suite

### **\*Backup**

Please be sure to regularly back up your work, either through the cloud or external hard drive storage. Computer failures happen, and can be devastating. If I do not receive your work, I cannot grade it.

### **\*Resources**

There are no required readings for this class. However, these are some helpful books about motion graphics:

Shaw, Austin.

Design For Motion. 1st ed. New York: Routledge, 2015.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1138812099/>

Williams, Richard.

The Animator's Survival Kit. 4th ed. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/086547897X/>

Robert Russet and Cecile Starr.

Experimental Animation, An Illustrated Anthology. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Inc., 1977.

<https://www.amazon.com/Experimental-Animation-Illustrated-Robert-Russett/dp/0442271956/>

Beckman, Karen.



Animating Film Theory. London: Duke University Press Books, 2014.

<https://www.amazon.com/Animating-Film-Theory-Karen-Beckman-ebook/dp/B00JRUK9RI/>

Betancourt, Michael.

The History Of Motion Graphics, From Avant-Garde To Industry In The United States. 1st ed.

Colombia: Wildside Press, 2013.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1434441504/>

### **List of Studios and Individuals**

Studios: 1. Buck 2. Giant Ant 3. Oddfellows 4. Block & Tackle 5. Gretel 6. We Are Royale 7. Tendril 8. Gentleman Scholar 9. MK12 10. Slanted Studios 11. Pep Rally 12. Impactist 13. NERDO

Individuals: 1. Vucko 2. JR Canest 3. Ariel Costa/Blink My Brain 4. Bee Grandinetti 5. Allen Laseter 6. Tom McCarten 7. Patrick Clair 8. Danny Yount 9. GMUNK 10. Linn Fritz 11. Kevin Dart 12. Elliot Lim

Resources to be continued...

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### **Moses Center Statement of Disability**

If you are a student with a disability who is requesting accommodations, please contact New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at 212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu). You must be registered with CSD to receive accommodations. Information about the Moses Center can be found at [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 3rd floor.

### **NYU School of Engineering Policies and Procedures on Academic Misconduct**

A. Introduction: The School of Engineering encourages academic excellence in an environment that promotes honesty, integrity, and fairness, and students at the School of Engineering are expected to exhibit those qualities in their academic work. It is through the process of submitting their own work and receiving honest feedback on that work that students may progress academically. Any act of academic dishonesty is seen as an attack upon the School and will not be tolerated. Furthermore, those who breach the School's rules on academic integrity will be sanctioned under this Policy. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the School's Policy on Academic Misconduct.

B. Definition: Academic dishonesty may include misrepresentation, deception, dishonesty, or any act of falsification committed by a student to influence a grade or other academic evaluation. Academic dishonesty also includes intentionally damaging the academic work of others or assisting other students in acts of dishonesty. Common examples of academically dishonest behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized notes, books, electronic media, or electronic communications in an exam; talking with fellow students or looking at another person's work during an exam; submitting work prepared in advance for an in-class examination; having someone take an exam for you or taking an exam for someone else; violating other rules governing the administration of examinations.

2. Fabrication: including but not limited to, falsifying experimental data and/or citations.

3. Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute direct quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed facts or information.
4. Unauthorized collaboration: working together on work that was meant to be done individually.
5. Duplicating work: presenting for grading the same work for more than one project or in more than one class, unless express and prior permission has been received from the course instructor(s) or research adviser involved.
6. Forgery: altering any academic document, including, but not limited to, academic records, admissions materials, or medical excuses.