

**CSC 303**  
**Animating Global Cultures**  
**International/Global Studies, Certified Writing**

**Course Description** – This course introduces students to the design, scripting, programming, and sharing of an animation project. In addition to reading and viewing popular cultural and historic materials, students will work with global or non-Western partners to develop the content, characters, and script for the animation project, all drawn from myth, folklore, and other symbols made evident through this interaction.

**Course Objectives**

1. Through readings, videos, and interactions with assigned partners from a non-Western culture, students will demonstrate their knowledge of this specific non-Western belief system and world view.
2. Through interactions with assigned partners from a non-Western culture, students will portray a willingness to learn about another culture, by asking pertinent questions and practicing active listening skills.
3. Through interactions with assigned partners from a non-Western culture, as well as personal research, students will identify major mythological and folkloric characters common to that culture, and will describe the features of those characters as well as their most commonly-attributed behaviors.
4. Students will demonstrate how to plan, design, and construct a character using a common graphics software package, and to upload it to an animation software package for later use.
5. Students will demonstrate the practice of writing and editing a script for animation.
6. Students will demonstrate knowledge of how to program a freely-available animation software package to create movement and dialogue, as determined by the script.
7. Students will demonstrate their technology skills by sharing their characters and animations in a publically-accessible context. This will provide a way for others to learn something about the non-Western culture, and to develop their own animations.

**Required Work**

Each semester, students will focus on a culture different than their own. This could be a Native American culture (the Oglala Lakota Sioux, for example), an Hispanic culture (the Dominican Republic, for example) or other non-Western cultures.

Each student will read/watch/listen and participate in discussions and other in-class and out-of-class activities based on the assigned readings, movies, and audiotracks.

Each student will interact with a partner, either one-on-one or in groups, from a non-Western culture, using Internet technology such as video conferencing, chat, or skype. This equipment and software will be provided in the classroom.

Each student will participate in reflection activities, to help integrate the reality of the student's experiences both in interacting with partners from a non-Western culture, as well as in creating this animation project.

Working with assigned partners from a non-Western culture, students will determine mythological and folkloric characters common in that culture, and will help develop accurate and non-prejudicial portrayals of these characters.

Working with assigned partners from a non-Western culture, students will develop a story idea and script based on their knowledge of the characters they have built. Each student will be required to develop a story idea and write a script. Several drafts of this script will be expected before it will be approved for production.

Working in one or more teams, students will help generate the programming code to animate these characters in a way that is faithful to the approved script.

Working in one or more teams, students will upload both the characters as well as the finished animations into a publically-available space.

### **Grading Criteria**

Script – An animation script will be required for each student, which should provide all of the directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects needed to illustrate the story the student has chosen. This story should be approximately 10 minutes long, which will roughly require a 20 page script.

The writing in your script will be graded as to the quality and depth of the English prose, as well as the efficacy of that written work in communicating what will happen in the animation. Expect your script to go through several drafts. Feedback will be provided on the rough draft and at least two subsequent drafts.

Specifically, these criteria will be used in grading written work:

A – Exceptional creativity and flow of action, resulting in a truly spectacular script, replicable in the given animation package. Directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects are cleanly delivered. Grammar, spelling, and attention to the required scriptwriting format are impeccable.

B – Good creativity and flow of action, and good approach to the assignment. Directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects are adequately delivered. Grammar, spelling, and attention to the required scriptwriting format are good.

C – Adequate creativity and flow of action, and adequate approach to the assignment. Directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects are delivered and comprehended with some effort by the reader. Grammar, spelling, and attention to the required scriptwriting format are acceptable.

D – Minimal creativity and poor flow of action, and minimal approach to the assignment. Directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects are delivered and comprehended with only great effort by the reader. Grammar, spelling, and attention to the required scriptwriting format are barely passable.

F – If submitted at all, the script reveals a profound lack of creativity and poor flow of action. Directions, dialogue, behavior, and special effects are absent or badly ineffective. Grammar, spelling, and lack of attention to the required scriptwriting format show a lack of care for this project.

In addition to the script, these items will be graded according to these criteria:

Attendance – Attendance is expected. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence, except for sessions where interaction with our non-Western partners has been scheduled. An unexcused absence during one of these sessions will result in the reduction of one letter grade in the student's final grade for the semester.

Reading and Viewing – Reading and viewing of culturally-relevant materials are required, most of which will happen before interaction sessions with non-Western partners take place. A minimum of 1 book, 1 movie, and 1 animated video (or collections of smaller works therein) will be assigned. Quizzes will test the student's comprehension of these materials.

Character – Artistic skill is not required in this course. However, the character the student creates must be functional and must illustrate the required features as set forth by the student's partner during their interactions. The character must be created in a graphic arts package (Photoshop, etc.) by the deadline, and made available (in the correct file format) to the other members of the class for their animations. A brief (5-7) page paper will be required about the character, which will include information gained from interaction with the non-Western partner, discussion of the creation of the character, and an initial assessment of how the character might be used in an animation.

Your writing will be graded as to the quality and depth of the English prose on this paper. Additional drafts past the rough draft are required for this paper. Specifically, these criteria will be used in grading written work:

A – Exceptional depth and insight, and well-thought approach to the assignment. Text is a clear statement of what you believe, well-supported throughout with relevant facts. Grammar, spelling, and style are impeccable. An inspiring read.

B – Good depth and insight, and good approach to the assignment. Text is a good indication of what you believe, and reasonably supported with relevant facts. Grammar, spelling, and style are polished. An easy read.

C – Adequate depth and insight, and adequate approach to the assignment. Text is a reasonable indication of what you believe, though it may fall short in support for your statements. Grammar, spelling, and style are passable, though some problems in this area are evident. A painless read.

D – Little depth and insight, little investment in the assignment. Text is of little value to understanding your personal approach to the material on nearly every level. Or, your thesis may be stated but not supported by relevant fact. Grammar, spelling, and style are poor, and get in the way of your attempt to communicate. A painful read.

F – If submitted at all, the text is plagiarized or a regurgitation of gobbledygook. Text drives reader away from wanting to understand your position, through a clear lack of care for the assignment and the reader. Grammar, spelling, and style are very poor, adding to the evidence of carelessness on this project. An impossible read.

Interaction – This course provides an opportunity for interaction with a person from another culture than the student’s own. Therefore, it is an important facet of the course. Students will be required to be present when these interactions are scheduled, and to participate in them with proper academic decorum and respect for our non-Western partner’s as well as the other members of the course. Interactions will be monitored for appropriateness. An 8-10 page summation and analysis paper will be required at the end of the interaction period of the semester. Grading criteria for this paper will be the same as provided for the “character” grading above.

**\*\*Note:** Interactions will occur in the classroom during classtime, using low-bandwidth technology such as Wimba, Skype, and IRC chat. The non-Western partner site will be chosen with this course in mind, and connectivity will be tested on both ends. Interactions will be scheduled at a time amenable to both parties, and will be locked in by contract. In the event of technology failure with the planned activities, other lower-bandwidth activities, or asynchronous activities will be substituted as required.

Production – Each student is required to participate in the production of the animation, in a group setting. The animation will be judged according to how faithfully it honors the script and the characters contained therein. At the completion of the animation, each group will be required to present the animation, and discuss its creation and production with the remainder of the class.

Sharing – Each group is required to share the characters (via a community sharing site) and animations (via YouTube or another public video sharing channel) created for the project.

The weight of the grading will be:

Quizzes on readings and viewings: 10%  
Character creation, delivery, paper: 25%  
Interaction with non-Western partner, paper: 25%  
Script (15% plus 5% for each draft beyond the rough draft): 25%  
Production of animation, quality: 10%  
Sharing of character (and animation video): 5%

Total: 100%

### Grading Scale

A 93% to 100%  
B+ 89% to 92.9%  
B 83% to 88.9%  
C+ 79% to 82.9%  
C 73% to 78.9%  
D 63% to 72.9%  
F 62.9% and below

### Academic Honesty

We are all required to uphold the standards of Academic Honesty set forth in the University bulletin.

Engagement in the course material requires a personal investment into the readings, viewings, discussions, interactions, and other activities in the course. An attempt to cheat in this course work disengages you from the community of scholars, and you can expect to be treated as such by your peers.

Although the students in this course will be using folktales, myths, and other symbolic treasures from the non-Western culture with which they will be interacting, existing images, written stories, and video clips must be attributed if used. It is expected, as a creative project that the primary source of the content is within each student. There are certain guidelines as to the fair use of materials in terms of parody and academic research. These guidelines will be covered in class, and sources will be provided for further research by the student as needed. Failure to adhere to the guidelines of attribution and fair use will result in a 0 for the affected part of the project, and whatever civil liabilities that may be directed to the students from the owners of those materials.

In terms of quizzes, attempts to cheat on a quiz will result in a 0 for the entire quiz grade (which results in the lowering of the final grade one entire letter).

### **Cancellations and Other Timely Information**

If inclement weather strikes, or other emergencies arise that require a class session to be cancelled, immediate notice will be given via an email message and posted to the syllabus in BlueLine. Please check your Creighton University mailbox and BlueLine before heading down the slippery roads to class. Of course, if the television and radio media announce Creighton University as closed, class will not be held, and no special posting will be made. In all cases, if a class session is cancelled by your instructor, you will receive notice via email and in BlueLine, posted by your instructor. Do not trust hand-written signs on the door of the classroom, or on the white board in the classroom.

### **Topics (by week)**

Readings and discussions on non-Western culture – book discussion  
Viewing and discussion on non-Western culture – video discussion  
Interactions with non-Western partners I – meet and greet  
Interactions with non-Western partners II – folklore and myths  
Creating a character – graphic software tutorial  
Writing a script – format and function  
Interactions with non-Western partners III – character share and critique  
Creating an animation – animation package tutorial  
Viewing and discussion on non-Western culture – animated video discussion  
Presentation and critique of Animations  
Animation re-work  
Interactions with non-Western partners IV – animation share and critique  
Animation re-work  
Final presentation and critique of animations  
Sharing graphics and video – tutorial

Example Resources (using Oglala Lakota Sioux culture as an example) which could be assigned:

Books:

**Ten Little Indians** by Sherman Ale  
**Lakota Woman** by Richard Erdoes with Mary Crow Dog  
**The Antelope Wife** by Louise Edrich  
**On The Rez** by Ian Frazier

Movies:

**Skins** starring Eric Schweig, Graham Greene. *Directed* by Chris Eyre.  
**Smoke Signals** starring Adam Beach, Evan Adams, Irene Bedard, Gary Farmer.  
*Directed* by Chris Eyre.  
**Dance Me Outside** starring Ryan Rajendra Black, Adam Beach. *Directed* by Bruce McDonald.

**Powwow Highway** starring A. Martinez, Gary Farmer. *Directed* by Jonathan Wacks

Audiotrack:

**Wakan Olowan-Lakota Pipe Ceremonial & Spiritual Songs** by Calvin Standing Bear  
(MP3 Download)