

## **MIDPOINT REVIEW GUIDELINES – ANIMATION – 2D ANIMATION, 3D ANIMATION, MODELING & VISUAL EFFECTS**

The thesis project provides the final assessment of the student's educational program. It is meant to be resolved, cohesive, and represent a major direction or development in the student's work. Like the provisional and final review presentations, the project should incorporate the totality of the student's academic experience to date and exhibit substantial development throughout the program. The thesis should demonstrate that the student has acquired a thorough knowledge and mastery in the discipline and is prepared to be involved in the field at an advanced level, exhibiting critical thinking and ability over and above the product and expertise expected at the undergraduate level.

### **PORTFOLIO PRESENTED**

- Mandatory for students to present demo reel on DVD before the review committee.

### **Display Material**

This is your Preproduction Artwork that you created and will hang up or display in some way before the start of your presentation. It should be large enough to be clearly visible from a distance of 6 feet. Professionally presented means, no folds or wrinkles, no torn edges, nicely mounted onto clean (and possibly thicker paper) paper. One-sided material so it can all be seen at once.

The visual component of the Midpoint Review will vary depending on the subject matter and production techniques of each proposal. Students should present work that:

1. Proves their technical and artistic ability to complete the proposed project
2. Illustrates the visual style, narrative, and concept of their proposal.

All artwork created for this proposal should be of **portfolio quality**. Items to present include (but are not limited to):

- **Concept Sketches** (initial brainstorming pages that illustrate the evolution of the proposal.)
- **Class work/Professional work** (previous work that demonstrates the technical and artistic skill needed to complete your project)
- **Script** (If the project includes dialogue, a script should be included.)
- **Storyboard** (If required for the project.)
- **Animatic or Animation Reel** (If required for project.)
- **Character Designs** (Finished designs for the main characters of the project. Rough sketches as well as color renderings. These should present multiple views.)
- **Scenic Designs** (Designs of the environment and/or objects in your piece. Artwork that shows what a completed scene might look like.)
- **Color Breakdown** (If required for project.)
- **Reference Materials** (photographs, photocopies, technical articles, fabric swatches—whatever. Items/images that illustrate the content, emotional tone, color, or style of your project.)

# PRESENTATION

## WRITTEN

The Final Project Proposal is a brief, written document that includes an autobiography, resume, project proposal, and production schedule. All written materials should be double-spaced and checked for spelling and grammar. Six copies of the proposal need to be submitted and each copy should be submitted in a binder or folder with the written and visual presentations organized in a professional manner. (Have someone other than yourself proof read your materials. Written presentations that are sloppily put together will be returned for resubmission.)

### Cover Sheet

- Name
- ID Number
- Specialization
- Date and Time of Midpoint Review
- Title/Topic of Final Project

### Autobiography

- Personal Narrative (Keep this **brief**. 1 page at most.)
  - Where are you from? What is your background? What personal/professional/educational experiences have influenced your pursuit of animation/modeling/special effects?
  - What are you studying at The Academy?
  - **What are your career/artistic goals?**
- Resume (1 page)
  - Personal contact information
  - Objective (optional)
  - Education
  - Professional Experience
  - Skills (software, artistic, and otherwise)
- Honors (optional--academic and professional)
- Storyboard
  - Include short descriptive alongside each image of basic action
  - Descriptive could include type of camera move (if any)
  - Descriptive could include dialogue (if any)
  - Beat Boards
  - Beat boards are images that describe each major “beat” in your film
  - Should include EMOTION of characters in that scene
  - Need to convey that something is happening in the story
  - Moments of conflict or resolution
  - Can help define the type of relationship characters have w/ each other.
- Shot Breakdown
  - Using ShotPlanner software or something similar, break down each thing that has to happen in order to complete one particular shot.

## PROPOSAL

- Abstract (1 page)
  - Summarize your project.
  - Briefly describe your concept and relate your narrative.
  - Briefly describe how you will produce your project.
  - What skills are you looking to showcase with this project? (Modeling, animation, compositing, etc.)
- Project Proposal (1 page)
  - Define the project in practical terms.
  - Describe your personal interest in this topic.
  - Present background on this topic if appropriate (attach reference/research materials, bibliography, filmography, etc.).
  - What form will your final project take? What deliverables will you actually present at your final review? List these items. Be specific.
  - Do you have plans to submit your finished piece to competitions, websites, etc.?

## PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

- Production Breakdown
  - List all deliverables for your final review.
  - List under each deliverable the assets and/or tasks needed to complete it. (Be specific and thorough – include such items as 3D models, textures, lighting, costumes, sound effects, actors, music, camera animation, etc. If your project is narrative, list each scene in your project that will require its own setup; shoot; etc., then list all items or tasks required for each scene. Base your projections on storyboards and sketches.)
  - List general tasks for your project (assembling final presentation materials, transferring animation to video, etc.)
  - If students decided to have assistance or some of the work (modeling, rigging, etc.) be done by other people, then the review committee needs to be notified and students need to consider when assembling the timelines.
- Realistic Timeline/Schedule
  - Plug the items listed in your Production Breakdown into a calendar that matches the length of your project (in most cases 3 full semesters).
  - **Edit the subject matter of your project to fit within your timeline.**
  - Should be in the form of a filled out Calendar. This should be figured out to the day! Each shot has a set amount of time needed to be completed. Be sure to not schedule on major holidays and don't forget to schedule in breaks!
  - Make sure that time breakdown is Gantt style chart with overlapping data.

You may want to separate the calendar into different sections....

- First part will probably be MODELING & SETUP
- Second part may be a TESTING phase
- Third part may be SCENE SETUP
- Fourth part may be BLOCKING OUT the entire piece in animatic form.
- Fifth part may be ANIMATION
- Sixth part may be LIGHTING
- Seventh part may be TEXTURING & EFFECTS
- Eighth part may be TITLES & CREDITS
- Ninth part may be RENDERING
- Tenth part may be SOUND DESIGN
- Eleventh part may be EDITING AND SOUND MIX
- Twelfth part may be TRANSFER to DVD or CD or TAPE
- Thirteenth part may be LABEL & PACKAGING / PROMOTIONAL
- Last part may be ARCHIVAL

It would be a good idea to include a list of each for the project:

- List of all things Characters that need to be created.
- List of all Props and Items in Environment that need to be created.
- List of all things that will need to be done with Effects/
- List of all items that will create or cast light

### **AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN**

Either difficult in nature, or difficult with you're particular skill level or skill set.  
(This can help us find you a direct study)

- Areas of Concern
  - List any technical, artistic, conceptual, or production elements of your project that might be of concern. What strategies could be used to solve these issues should they become a problem?

### **DEMO REEL**

This is an edited compilation of your best work to date. Demo Reels shouldn't exceed 3 minutes!!  
Ideally, quality over quantity.... leave them wanting more, not nodding off!

### **ANIMATION DEMO REEL (2D AND 3D CHARACTER ANIMATORS):**

- First thing on there should be your **NAME** and **PHONE #**
- Don't give yourself movie type credits, that'll come later in your career
- You don't need to loop or repeat each piece. Just once is fine. (If they want to look at it again, they will rewind- you only have their attention for so long)
- If you have animated to dialogue – be sure that the **sound is clear** and loud enough.
- Do not put loud, trendy or crazy techno music over the entire reel. Pick something that most people won't find annoying or offensive. (Remember- it's not for you)
- Try to put your **best work first** and your **second best piece last**..start strong and end strong!!!
- Stylistically you have 2 choices... the "**montage**" and "**by flow or subject**"
  - A **montage** is really only done when you have such a large body of work accumulated, that you couldn't possibly show it all in it's entirety. Typically true of freelance artists who work on many different jobs in a year.

By subject or flow means either just that. Group by the show that you worked on or the project that you worked on. Or, base the order on what pieces create the Best flow- either visually, or make seem to make sense together.

An Ideal Animation Demo reel will include:

- Action showing off the principals of animation.
- Action showing knowledge and understanding of Weight.
- Acting both Pantomime Acting and Acting to Dialogue.
- Walk Cycle with Personality
- Several different Characters with different body types.
- Present the final demo reel on DVD

NOTE: This is a suggestion for students who have the interest and capability to create a website for yourself to demonstrate your work to potential employers.