

Animation Mentor Fact Sheet

ABOUT

AnimationMentor.com is the only animation school built by professional animators specifically for people who want to become animators. The program teaches students the skills needed to succeed as a professional animator in the studio environment. By graduation, every student has worked in a production-style environment where mentors, who are working studio animators, stand in for directors, and assignments stand in for film or game shots. Students learn how to accept guidance and criticism, to meet deadlines and to budget and schedule their time to succeed in the working world. At the end of the 18-month program, students leave with a professional demo reel they can use as their résumé to land jobs. Upon graduation, Animation Mentor coaches graduates and connects them to job opportunities with major recruiters, video game companies, and film studios.

Animation Mentor delivers a much more personal and interactive learning experience than other online education programs by pairing students up with professional animators and giving them access to highly interactive communication tools. Some primary features are:

- Focus on character animation
- Online mentor/apprentice teaching model
- High level of interactivity with mentors and other students
- Networking opportunities through the online community
- Innovative use of production-style tools and technology
- Web 2.0 proprietary tools such as eCritiques®, and live Question & Answer sessions
- Personal support
- Caring environment

Year founded: 2005

Founders: Bobby Beck, CEO/President/cofounder; Shawn Kelly, cofounder; Carlos Baena, cofounder

Mission: To provide the most personal and fulfilling learning experience on the planet!

Tuition: US\$18,375 | 58 – 87% less than competitors

Registration fee: US\$175

Age requirement: 18 years or older

Language requirement: Must be a fluent English speaker

URL: www.AnimationMentor.com

Headquarters: Emeryville, California

STUDENTS

Number of students accepted per enrollment period: Animation Mentor accepts between 150-200 students per term and has over 900 students enrolled in our core program.

Total enrollment: More than 900 and growing

Country of residence: 55% of Animation Mentor students are from the U.S., and the school has students and graduates from more than 86 countries in every continent except Antarctica. These students live in major urban centers such as New York, San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town, Paris, Sydney, Dubai, Singapore, Mumbai, and in small towns and cities wherever there is high-speed Internet.

Average age range of students: 18-35

Male to female ratio: The student population is about 82% male to 18% female.

Production animation industry pay scale: For individuals who work six months or more each year, pay ranges from US\$45,000 - US\$200,000.

Graduates since inception: Since inception, hundreds of students have graduated from Animation Mentor.

Studios where graduates work: Currently 220 and growing. Studios include Pixar Animation Studios (U.S.), Industrial Light & Magic - ILM (U.S.), Sony Pictures Imageworks (U.S.), Walt Disney Animation Studios (U.S.), DreamWorks Animation SKG (U.S.), Electronic Arts (U.S.), Blue Sky Studios (U.S.), Tippett Studios (U.S.), Aardman Animations (England), Action Synthèse (France), Activision/Shaba Games (U.S.), Bardel Entertainment (Canada), Bungie Games (U.S.), Furia Digital (Spain), Disney Interactive (U.S.), Glasgow Animation (Scotland), HuHu Studios (New Zealand), Ilion Animation Studios (Spain), Iloura Digital Pictures (Australia), Kerozin (Slovenia), Laika Entertainment (U.S.), LucasArts (U.S.), Lucasfilm Animation Singapore, Microsoft (U.S.), Molinare (England), Tata Elxi Limited (India), Ubik Visual Effects (Italy), Ubisoft Entertainment (France), Vetor Zero (Brazil) and more.

MENTORS

Animation Mentor has strong relationships with some of the film industry's best animators from major studios. The school also hires mentors who freelance or own their companies. The school's mentors provide valuable inspiration, guidance, and real-world experiences that enable students to succeed as a professional animator in a studio environment.

Current number of mentors: Animation Mentor has 57 full time and 21 campus mentors in the Winter Term of 2009.

Mentor/student ratio: Animation Mentor maintains a ratio of around 14 students to 1 mentor.

Names of mentors: To learn more, visit <http://www.animationmentor.com/mentors/mentor-roster.html> and click on "OUR MENTORS."

Current mentor studio affiliations: The mentors, who teach students after work and on weekends, are employed at leading studios including: Pixar Animation Studios, Industrial Light and Magic (ILM), PDI/DreamWorks, Blue Sky Studios, DreamWorks Feature Animation, Walt Disney Animation Studios, Sony

Pictures Imageworks, LucasArts, Nickelodeon Animation Studios, Rhythm and Hues Studios, Tippett Studios, Digital Domain, and Reel FX Creative Studios and more.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School awards: 2006 Best Practices in Programming Award Gold Level and the 21st Century Distance Learning Award from the U.S. Distance Learning Association; the official honoree at the 10th and 13th Annual Webby Awards.

National Awards: 2009 PRSA Bronze Anvil Award – Publications Behind the Character: Job Satisfaction, Career Outlook, and Salary Survey Report

School calendar: This is an 18-month program with quarterly starting dates in January, March, June, and September.

Accreditation: The California State Accreditation process is designed only for schools that provide a complete two to four-year liberal arts education. Animation Mentor focuses instead on providing a deep education in a specific skill area, therefore it is not accredited.

Designation: Certificate in Advanced Studies in Character Animation approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Type of animation taught: Character Animation

Learning platform: Animation Mentor has developed a host of proprietary tools to help give better support, guidance and feedback to our students. One of the school's tools is the eCritique®, which allows mentors to critique each frame and draw directly on a student's work to correct lines of action, blocking, and movement, and to provide visual direction for how to improve the piece. Each student receives a weekly eCritique for the assignment. To see an example, go to <http://www.animationmentor.com/11secondclub/mentorcritique.html> where a contest winner receives a free eCritique from a mentor each month.

The school provides direct instruction through rich media lecture and demos, filmed documentary style, with top experts in the field. These are posted on the Web campus for students to download. Students also participate in live, interactive, real-time, weekly Q&A sessions (or classes) with their mentors and up to 15 other students. These sessions make use of Web conferencing technologies, and other tools developed by Animation Mentor. During these sessions, the students and mentors discuss the lecture/demos, their assignments, and other important animation-related topics.

This formal instruction takes place on a Web campus that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and contains many elements of popular social networking sites like YouTube, MySpace and Facebook. All students have personal profile pages where they post their eCritiques, assignments, tests, and thoughts. Students and mentors are constantly cruising the campus, commenting on other's work and offering helpful suggestions as posts, in the chatrooms, or using a new, proprietary Animation Mentor instant messaging tool. Students also find fellow classmates in their city and country so that they can organize local gatherings. There are Animation Mentor students who meet regularly in NYC, Mexico City and London, just to name a few. The school has been the genesis of many close friendships and is an ongoing networking resource for alumni, students and mentors.

Primary software programs taught: Maya, owned by Autodesk, is one of the most popular and advanced high-end 3D computer graphics and 3D modeling software packages used in the animation, film, TV, and computer and video game industries. The open architecture allows users to script and program actions. In 2003 it won an Academy Award for scientific and technical achievement.

Student material requirements: Students need a fast Windows or Macintosh computer, a webcam for online learning, a sketchbook, and two books (*The Illusion of Life* and *The Animator's Survival Kit*).

FINANCIAL

Animation Mentor is a privately held company and does not release financial information to the public.