

## Introduction

These benchmarks were developed in the Spring of 2017 by the DDA faculty currently teaching Seminar and Thesis courses. The benchmarks are intended as a guide to help instructors and students keep to a schedule of development and production for their thesis project work.

These benchmarks are not intended as a substitute for a syllabus. Rather, it is assumed that individual instructors will develop their syllabi as they see fit in order to help students achieve these benchmarks. Consequently, the benchmarks are detailed enough to provide guidance, but not so detailed as to overly constrain the instructor.

Below are benchmarks for Seminar II and for Thesis I. They assume that all students will complete their thesis projects by the end of Thesis II. For each of Seminar II and Thesis I, there are separate benchmarks for each of the three MFA concentrations – Animation, Imaging, Interactive.

Prof. Michael O'Rourke, May 2017

# Seminar II Benchmarks

## Animation (Seminar II)

General comments:

Students should be “ready to go into production” at end of Seminar II  
Students should start developing stories in Seminar I

Benchmarks:

1. Polished animatic
  - complete & including developed soundtrack
  - if dialogue, include dialogue
2. Vertical slice within the animatic
  - 15 consecutive seconds
  - fully animated & rendered with final models (rigged if appropriate)
  - of a typical scene => including all primary animation elements
  - Some final models and/or drawings within vertical slice
3. Design sketches/Concept art
  - detailed & full-color
  - for all significant characters, environments, props
4. Color palette for entire animation
5. A short paper summarizing project
  - Length of paper to be determined by Seminar II instructor
  - First draft at mid-term Seminar II
  - Final draft at end of semester
6. Weekly production schedule for entire project (Thesis I and Thesis II)
7. Samples of past work demonstrating abilities relevant to project

## Thesis Process Benchmarks

### **Imaging (Seminar II)**

#### General Comments:

May be still working out intentions and ideas  
Imagery may change/develop as project progresses

#### Benchmarks:

1. Extensive sketches of intended imagery
2. Minimum 3 final images in digital form
  - (These images may or may not be eventually used in final exhibition)
3. One final artwork in final form, final materials, final size
  - If artwork involves multimedia, include video and/or audio
4. Mockup or simulation of a specific real-world installation of project
5. A 5-10 page paper outlining...
  - Ideas, issues, emotional feel driving project
  - Tentative goals of project
  - Relevant historical art precedents
  - Draft 1 due at mid-term Seminar II
  - Final due at end of semester
6. Monthly production schedule for Thesis I
7. Two-three completed past artworks
  - demonstrating relevant abilities and interests

### **Interactive (Seminar II)**

#### General Comments:

May be still working out intentions and ideas  
Project may change/develop during Thesis I,II

#### Benchmarks:

1. Two-three finished and working interactive projects
  - demonstrating relevant abilities and interests
2. A 5-page paper outlining...
  - project orientation, intentions
  - issues interested in
  - relevant historical precedents/context
  - Draft 1 due at mid-term Seminar II
  - Final due at end of semester
3. Full-size tests or mockups
  - if relevant to the intended project

# Thesis I Benchmarks

## Animation (Thesis I)

Benchmarks:

1. Weekly schedule for Thesis II
  - in order to completely finish by end of Thesis II
2. Thesis Paper drafts
  - Correct formatting as per Library guidelines
  - Outline of entire paper
  - 30% of paper written w correct English
3. If 3d animation,
  - 70% of animation completed
  - 50 % of rendering completed
4. If 2d animation,
  - 100% of animation is at second draft or clean up -25%-50% is colored and rendered for presentation
  - Backgrounds are well developed.-Lip sync audio is complete
  - stop motion projects will be expected to have at least 50% of the the camera artwork completed and shot

## Imaging (Thesis I)

Benchmarks:

1. Weekly schedule for Thesis II
  - in order to finish by end of Thesis II
2. Thesis Paper draft
  - Correct formatting as per Library guideline
  - Outline of entire paper
  - 30% written with correct English
3. Significant technical issues have been solved/addressed
4. 50% of artwork/project is completed
  - If project is a series of images,
    - 2-3 completed pieces
  - If project is multimedia,
    - all components at 50% completion
5. Detailed plan for installation/exhibition of project
  - If actual exhibition space not yet known,
  - may use any real space to develop a mock exhibition plan

## **Interactive (Thesis I)**

Benchmarks:

1. Weekly schedule for Thesis II
  - in order to finish by end of Thesis II
2. Thesis Paper draft
  - Correct formatting as per Library guidelines
  - Outline of entire paper
  - 30% written with correct English
3. Significant technical issues have been solved/addressed
4. 50% of project is completed
  - details vary depending on project
5. Detailed plan for installation/exhibition of project
  - if actual exhibition space not yet known,
    - may use any real space to develop a mock exhibition plan