

MotionDesign

assistant professor

Cass Reese
creese@pennwest.edu
(please allow 24h
response time;
availability 8am–8pm)

student consultation hours

REMOTE

W 1:00–3:00

DH 213

TTR 10:30–11:15

BEEHIVE

TTR 4:45–5:30

calendly.com/cassreese

course location

online (asynchronous)

M @noon

(select W @noon)

FINAL

T @midnight

course website

motion.cassreese.com

PW: MotionE25!

course description

This course introduces the fundamental concepts for motion graphics, focusing on the choreography of typography and imagery within time-based media. The course explores the development of motion graphics utilizing motion-based computer graphic applications, sequences, and techniques in the creation of creative concepts to convey meaning. **3 sem. hrs.** Prerequisites: ART2008 Typography

course objectives

- Interpret and utilize effectively the role of motion in communication.
- Discover the basic tenets of animation and movement for time-based media.
- Develop competency in the utilization of the industry-standard motion design software, After Effects, including the interface, terminology, asset creation, file management, the timeline, effects, transitions, rendering for output, and animation techniques.
- Utilize the design process including ideation, sketches, storyboards, styleframes, prototypes, motion comps, and creation of final renderings to conceptually plan and manage motion-based projects.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate typography, illustration/photograph, video, and audio files to create industry-relevant projects.

I. Introduction to Motion Graphics

- A. What is Motion Design?
- B. Motion Design Applications
- C. Communicating with Motion
- D. Motion Design Components

II. Motion Design Conceptual Process

- A. Concept Development
- B. Understanding the Workflow
- C. Ideating: Mind Maps, Word Lists, Sketches, Mood Boards
- D. Storyboarding
- E. Style Frames
- F. Narrative Structure
- G. Deliverables

III. History of Motion Graphics

- A. The Pioneers of Cinema + Early Optical Devices
- B. Early Experimental Techniques
- C. Masters of the Film Title Sequence
- D. Time-Based Media and Animation

IV. Working with After Effects

- A. Overview/Interface
- B. Understanding Keyframes
- C. Compositions
- D. File Organization
- E. Animating
 - i. Text Animation
 - ii. Masks/Alpha Mattes
 - iii. Compositing

- IV. Graph Editor
- V. Track Mattes
- VI. Motion Tracking
- VII. Camera Tool
- VIII. Lights
- IX. Puppet Pin
- F. Rendering and Output
- G. Audio
- H. After Effects Exercises
- IV. Project Summaries
 - A. Kinetic Typography
 - i. The Role of Type in Motion
 - ii. Masters of Kinetic Typography
 - B. Principles of Design in Motion
 - i. Primary Object Motion, Translation & Direction
 - ii. Basic Principles
 - C. Explainer Video / Motion Infographics
 - i. Research Methods and Data Collection
 - ii. Structure Methods
 - iii. Using Visual Analogies
 - v. Misleading Visuals
 - vi. Narrative and Script
 - D. Motion Posters
 - i. Motion in the Environment
 - a. Augmented Reality
 - b. Projection Mappings
 - c. Interactive Installations
 - d. Retail Ambiance
 - e. Moving Posters

course structure and guidelines

Navigating this virtual learning environment requires a clear understanding of the course dynamics. Take the time to thoroughly read the syllabus and review the weekly updates posted on our course website. Your active involvement is crucial—make it a habit to engage with the course content multiple times per week. If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out for explanations via email, Zoom, or phone.

In this online setting, fostering a strong learning community and maintaining focus are paramount. Remember, the virtual format doesn't mean less time and effort; your commitment remains integral. All deadlines will be communicated through our course website and our initial Monday Zoom sessions. As certain components involve independent work, you bear the responsibility of adhering to deadlines; timely submission is your obligation. Structuring your work schedule and maintaining an organized approach are steps towards achieving success.

Our asynchronous and recorded Zoom sessions serve as the backbone of our course meetings. These sessions embrace various formats—lectures, group critiques, discussions, demonstrations, collaborative work, and one-on-one interactions. Consistently meeting professional standards with your assignments is expected. To meet project deadlines, allocate several hours outside of class for focused work.

Our scheduled meetings occur on Mondays and Wednesdays, providing a steady rhythm for your engagement and progress. If you're unable to attend live sessions, it's imperative to watch the recordings promptly to stay aligned with the weekly agenda. Your active participation, even in this virtual landscape, is key to your success.

cultural and historical context statement

Cultural and historical context for course assignments will be provided through lectures, presentations, and group discussions.

attendance policy (AC013)

Motion Design will follow an **asynchronous online** schedule this term, giving you flexibility and control over your learning experience. Our live sessions are scheduled for every Monday and Wednesday at noon; attendance for these is optional. The structure allows you to engage with course content and assignments at times that work best for you, while still meeting all deadlines and course requirements.

While the course is fully online, active participation is still expected each week. This includes:

- Accessing and reviewing posted lectures, demos, and weekly review videos in a timely manner.
- Participating in scheduled critiques — either live via Zoom or through the designated D2L discussion boards — by the required deadlines.
- Submitting assignments on time, even if you are unable to attend live sessions.

Recorded Sessions: All live sessions will be recorded and posted to our course website. Recordings must be reviewed within the same week to stay aligned with current course content. Weekly access opens every Monday at 11AM with deadlines the following Monday at noon. Zoom recordings will be accessible through our dedicated course website, ensuring you have access to the material covered.

Critique Participation: If you cannot attend a live critique, you are required to complete the alternative discussion board critique in D2L. Missing critique participation without an excused reason may impact your grade, as peer feedback is an essential part of the course.

Responsibility for Missed Content: If you miss a live session, you are responsible for reviewing the recording, following any instructions given, and completing related work on time. For those unable to attend Zoom critiques, an alternative option through discussion boards will be provided.

Remember that **proactive engagement** is key to your success in this asynchronous environment.

Please note that the last day to withdraw from the course is Friday, October 31st, 2025. It is advisable to withdraw rather than receive an F. Please check with the Registration Office in Hamilton Hall to determine if withdrawing will affect your student loans.

deadline policy

All assignments, unless otherwise noted, are due by **Monday at noon** (or Tuesday at noon during holiday weeks). Assignments are expected to be turned in on time. Work turned in after a given deadline will be lowered by **2.5%** (quarter letter grade) **for every 24 hours late**. Academic dishonesty, Plagiarism, or another student completing your work will result in a F for the project, and referral to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and a hearing before the Committee of Fact for disciplinary action.

materials

physical/digital sketchbook | flash drive* | headset | internet access | Adobe CC | Mac computer access**

*remember to back up your files in another place (i.e., Google Drive) as well! Lost/corrupted files is not acceptable as an excuse for unfinished assignments.

**students using PC computers are responsible for learning any differences in software.

course websites

Go to <http://motion.cassreese.com> to access course materials, lectures, readings, handouts, and relevant resources. **Course password: MotionF25!**

D2L will be used for project submissions, discussion post critiques, and grades.

recommended books*

Motion Graphic Design: Applied History and Aesthetics | Jon Krasner | 2013

Adobe After Effects CC Classroom in a Book | Lisa Fridsma | 2015

Designing Interaction Animation: Meaningful Motion for User Experience | Val Head | 2016

Design for Motion: Fundamentals and Techniques of Motion Design | Shaw | 2015

Motion Graphics: Principles and Practices from the Ground Up | Crook and Beare | 2016

*articles, handouts, online readings, etc. may be assigned throughout the course of the semester, if appropriate, for certain projects.

assignments

Projects:

Kinetic Typography (100pts): Explore the role of typography in motion, focusing on creating engaging and meaningful text animations.

Principles of Design in Motion (100pts): Apply fundamental design principles to motion graphics, emphasizing object motion and interaction.

Motion Infographic / Explainer (100pts): Create informative and visually appealing explainer videos or infographics using motion design techniques.

Motion Poster (50pts): Design dynamic motion posters that incorporate various animation techniques and principles. (Potential for Exquisite Corpse format)

Exercises: Creative investigations utilizing various components of After Effects. Each exercise is designed to build technical craft and conceptual design skills through experimental approaches.

Exercise 1: Basic Shape Movement and Composition (15pts): Introduce fundamental motion design principles using shape movement, composition, and text integration.

Exercise 2: Object Motion and Audio Synchronization (15pts): Develop skills in synchronizing motion with audio and understanding principles of weight and timing in animation.

Exercise 3: Effects and Masking (15pts): Enhance proficiency with effects and masking techniques.

Exercise 4: Puppet Pin Tool and Advanced Animation (15pts): Develop character animation skills using the Puppet Pin tool.

(By participating in this class you grant permission to the instructor to publish your work online or in print; any published work will be credited to you.)

assessment and evaluation policy

Your final grade is an amalgamation of your performance throughout this course. Flourishing in this online environment involves embracing new concepts, actively sharing ideas, and nurturing your work both individually and collectively.

Projects are evaluated on competencies spanning process, research, concept, design, originality, preparation, participation, critique, presentations and implementation as demonstrated through sketches, preliminary and final designs.

Individual grades are based on a variety of criteria including:

- **critique engagement:** Effective online communication entails both speaking and listening. Critique sessions, whether via Zoom or discussion boards, serve as vital platforms for diverse perspective exchange. Your

grading scale

A	93–100
A–	90–92
B+	87–89
B	83–86
B–	80–82
C+	77–79
C	73–76
C–	70–72
D+	67–69
D	63–66
D–	60–62
F	<60

capacity to express ideas, defend design choices, and employ project-specific vocabulary is enhanced. Active involvement is expected, explaining your project's concept, design process, justifications, and discarded ideas. Pose questions for valuable insights and attentively listen to responses. Critique participation is mandatory, either through live Zoom sessions or discussion boards, contributing to your grade.

Constructively engage with all presented projects, discussing your process and sharing supportive mockups.

- **preparation and quality of work:** Each week, be equipped with the requisite process materials. Inadequate preparation affects your final grade. Projects must be fully completed as stipulated. Partially finished work incurs grade deductions, irrespective of eventual quality. Consistent progress is crucial; attempting eleventh-hour project completion undermines both your work and its outcome.
- **presentation and verbal participation:** Enthusiastic, self-driven participation significantly influences evaluation. Actively engage in critiques, exhibit professionalism while presenting your work, and make consistent efforts to incorporate design terminology. On project due dates, you'll present to the class. Strive to integrate relevant terms, expound on your process and strategy, and clarify the underlying concept. Approach presentations with readiness and professionalism.
- **deadlines:** Timely submission of assignments is expected. If challenges arise, it's your responsibility to communicate proactively.
- **academic dishonesty:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism or having another student complete your work, merits an F for the project. Such cases will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs, entailing a disciplinary hearing before the Committee of Fact. Refer to the academic integrity section for details.
- **attendance and punctuality** (*see attendance policy below*)
- **final grade:** The final grade for the semester is determined by dividing the equivalent numerical total of all grades by the number of projects.

Final letter grades will be based on the following components:

4 Projects	350 pts
4 Exercises	60 pts
Total*	410 pts

*This is a tentative point scale and is subject to change. Any and all changes will be communicated.

(By participating in this class you grant permission to the instructor to publish your work online or in print; any published work will be credited to you.)

course policy

To succeed in this course, the following is expected of you:

- **communication:** Maintain regular communication through office hours, email, or text to address any queries or concerns.
- **completion of assigned content:** Complete all assigned course materials to ensure a comprehensive learning experience.
- **thorough project research:** Thoroughly research and explore multiple design solutions for your projects to enhance creativity and depth.
- **integration of skills:** Successfully integrate skills and knowledge gained from previous projects into your subsequent work, fostering a progressive learning trajectory.
- **effective file management:** Back up your files on the class computer, your home computer, and a jump drive. Maintain a professional approach to file organization
- **preparedness and participation:** Be prepared each week, actively participate in critiques, and provide constructive feedback to your peers' work.

- **deadline adherence:** Meet all project deadlines by effectively managing your time. Initiate your assignments well in advance.

- Cultivate patience, creativity, and a helpful attitude towards yourself and your fellow students.

Embrace a spirit of collaboration and enjoyment in the learning process.

internet outages

In the case of an Internet outage, always have an Internet source back-up plan to submit coursework. Local coffee shops or EU campus locations may offer wifi. As an internet outage is never an acceptable excuse for missing due dates, it is important to locate where you can go in the case of an outage.

technology support

EU Technology Help Center | 814.732.2111 | Ross Hall | itservices.pennwest.edu

title IX reporting requirements and the faculty member

Pennsylvania Western University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to comply with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the University's commitment to offering supportive measures in accordance with guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires University faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator; Amy E. Salsgiver (asalsgiver@pennwest.edu). The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a university-approved research project. **Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred, to the person designated in the University Protection of Minors Policy.**

Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is available on the Office of Compliance and Title IX website at [TITLE IX \(pennwest.edu\)](http://TITLE IX (pennwest.edu)).

On the Edinboro campus, reports can also be sent to Andrew Matt, Associate Director of Compliance and Title IX amatt@pennwest.edu. On the Clarion campus, reports can also be sent to Amy Salsgiver, Executive Director of Compliance and Title IX asalsgiver@pennwest.edu. On the California campus, reports can also be sent to Marissa Fouser, Employment Services and Contract Manager, fouser@pennwest.edu. For Global Online, reports can also be sent to Andrew Matt, Associate Director of Compliance and Title IX amatt@pennwest.edu.

course-related policies

Pennsylvania Western University has multiple course-related policies addressing issues such as accommodations for students with disabilities, class attendance, and grade appeal, among others. The Student Code of Conduct also addresses issues of cheating and plagiarism, and the consequences of such behaviors. These policies may be found using search keyword **Policies** through the PennWest web page.

student starfish dashboard

Below is a direct link and QR code that will take you to your Starfish dashboard. From there, you can view your courses and can schedule Writing Center, Tutoring Center, and Supplemental Instruction appointments/view availability of those supports for each of your courses. https://calu.starfishsolutions.com/starfish-ops/dl/student/dashboard.html?bookmark=widget_b



student disability accommodations

Pennsylvania Western University offers services to meet the accommodation needs of students with many types of disabilities. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) provides services to students based upon documentation of a disability and a request for accommodations based on this disability. Please refer to PennWest's Equity and Title IX website for additional information and links to the campus OSD websites.

This policy is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students reserve the right to decide when to self-identify and when to request accommodations. Students requesting approval for reasonable accommodations should contact OSD. Students are expected to adhere to OSD procedures, providing documentation and requesting accommodations in a timely manner.

For questions about accommodations please contact:

PennWest California- (TBA) at Osd-cal@pennwest.edu

PennWest Clarion- Ronald Radaker at Osd-clr@pennwest.edu

PennWest Edinboro- Sharon Conklin at Osd-edn@pennwest.edu

academic integrity

It is expected that all work submitted through this course is the student's original work, generated for the express purpose of completing the requirements of this course. All papers submitted in this course may be screened for originality using plagiarism detection software.

Students are to be aware that academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this course and should be familiar with the following definitions:

Cheating. The use of unauthorized materials, information, ideas, study aids, etc., in any academic exercise. May include, but is not limited to: copying answers from another student's exam; using notes, books, or other resources for an exam when not expressly permitted to do so; using electronic devices when not expressly permitted to do so; fraudulently obtaining or sharing an exam; submitting a term paper or other assignment written by someone else; plagiarizing the work of others; submitting the same term paper or other assignment to more than one instructor without obtaining prior permission to do so; or having someone else take an online course or online exam for you.

Plagiarism. The representation of the work of another as your own, without proper credit and/or citation. When an individual submits work that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate and specific references, and if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or other accepted citation practices.

Additional violations of academic integrity may be found in PennWest's Policy AC059: Academic Integrity, which also includes potential sanctions faced by the student for violations of the policy.

support services

The following support services are available on campus to assist you towards success. Please take advantage of these services. If I can help you in any way please come talk to me, it is my desire to have you succeed. Please self-identify should you have special considerations.

Professor – Do not wait, contact your professor for help!

Academic Advisor – Contact your Advisor for help you may need while attending Edinboro University, (beyond scheduling)

Success Coaching / Student Success Center – **Appointments are made through Starfish** | Office hours are 8 a.m.–4 p.m., Monday–Friday, and locations are 103 Noss Hall (California), Becht Hall (Clarion) and the Baron-Forness Library (Edinboro). Office to help students reach academic

goals and succeed in coursework - time management, study skills, attendance, stress reduction, etc. For **Peer Mentoring Program**, contact: mentoring@pennwest.edu, 724-938-1682

Writing Center – 240 Baron-Forness Library (second floor), students from many majors gain invaluable assistance with writing from a variety of courses. Tutors are available via Zoom meetings. Students can sign up for appointments through Starfish under their My Success Network. Email edinborowriting@pennwest.edu for more information.

Center for Career Development and Experiential Learning– 814-393-2323, career@pennwest.edu, career.pennwest.edu. 241 Baron-Forness Library (Edinboro), 138 Natali Student Center (California), 419 Becht Hall (Clarion). Mon–Fri, 8 a.m.–4 p.m. Services include career and major exploration, job search support, resume and cover letter writing, mock interviews, job placement, interest assessments, career coaching, graduate school advising, internships, job fairs, and workshops.

Tutoring – Appointments are booked through Starfish. In-person peer tutoring is offered at 110 Noss Hall (California), 312 Becht Hall (Clarion), and 255 Baron-Forness Library (Edinboro). **For 24/7 online tutoring**, PennWest now uses Tutor.com, which students can access through Starfish or D2L Brightspace.

Campus Police – 911 Scotland Road, Available 24/7 for emergencies, crisis situations, investigations, and parking services. For **on-campus emergencies**, call **732-2911**. Off campus, call 911. **Non-emergency on-campus matters**, **814-732-2921** or police-edn@pennwest.edu.

IT Help Desk / Technology Support – **The Edinboro IT Help Desk is 814-732-2111** and is located in the Ross Hall main lobby. California and Clarion campuses use 724-938-5911 and 814-393-2640. itservices.pennwest.edu. Support for ZOOM can be attained via "live chat" within ZOOM client.

Ghering Health and Wellness Center – 814-732-2743 for appointments, McNearney Hall, 1st Floor, healthcenter-edn@pennwest.edu. Open Mon–Fri 9 a.m.–7 p.m. (spring/fall). Houses Student Health Services and Counseling & Psychological Services.

Alternate Medical Care and Health Education – If closed, contact Campus Police or visit Millcreek Community Hospital, Saint Vincent Hospital, UPMC Hamot, or Meadville Medical Center.

Counseling and Psychological Services CAPS - 814-732-2252, healthcenter-edn@pennwest.edu. Individual and group counseling; assessment. Open Mon–Thu 9 a.m.–7 p.m., Fri 9 a.m.–5 p.m. In a crisis, call 814-732-2911 (on campus) or 911.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7) – Call or text 988 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Visit suicidepreventionlifeline.org. For additional support, see halfopus.com or ulifeline.org.

Crisis Intervention (24/7) – Erie County (incl. Edinboro): **814-456-2014** or 800-300-9558 (Safe Journeys Behavioral Health). Crawford County: 814-724-2732 or 888-275-7009. For Crisis Hotline/ Meadville Medical Center: Text "HOME" to 741741 or visit crisistextline.org.

Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault Resources – keyword search "sexual assault resources" on pennwest.edu. Counseling is available through CAPS, Ghering Health and Wellness Center, 814-732-2743. Community resource: 814-455-9414, www.cvcerie.org

Safe Journeys – 814-438-2675 (24/7), domestic and dating violence services

SafeNet – 814-454-8161 | 24hrs, safeneterie.org, provides free confidential services including counseling, legal advocacy, education, shelter to victims domestic violence

Gaudenzia – 814-459-4775 | gaudenzia.org Confidential counseling, substance abuse treatment services, support, drug rehab, alcohol rehab and recovery center

course schedule

This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. Any and all changes will be communicated.

week 1

8.25–8.31 Introduction/Syllabus Overview
Intro to Motion Design + Kinetic Type Research
AE Demo: Intro to After Effects + Basic Setup
ASSIGN P1 Kinetic Typography

week 2

9.2–9.7 AE Demo: Interface Review, Keyframe Basics, Layers, Compositions,
(9.1 no class) Shapes, Text Layers, Importing, Rendering
Lecture: Motion Design Process
Styleframes
P1 Crit #1 – Styleframes
Exercise 1

week 3

9.8–9.14 AE Demo: Precomposing, Nesting, Text Masks, Text Animators,
Easing + Interpolation, Graph Editor
Storyboarding
AE Demo: Compositions + Masks; Small Group Crit
P1 Crit #2 (15s rough cut)
Exercise 2

week 4

9.15–9.21 AE Demo: Track Mattes
Lecture: History of Motion Graphics
P1 Final Crit #3 (30s)

week 5

9.22–9.28 Lecture: Principles of Motion Graphics
ASSIGN P2 Principles of Motion Graphics
SUBMIT P1; P1 Final Presentations

week 6

9.29–10.5 AE Demo: Review Pen Tool, Bezier Shapes, Adjustment Layers, Masks on images, Effects
P2 Small Group Crit #1 – Styleframes + Storyboard
Exercise 3
Audio

week 7

10.7–10.12 P2 Crit #2: Revised Storyboard + 15s
(10.6 no class) AE Demo: Cameras, 3D Layers, Importing PSD, Light Layers, Merge Paths
Exercise 4

week 8

10.13–10.19 P2: Final Crit #3: 30s
ASSIGN P3 Motion Infographic / Explainer
Lecture: How to Write a Motion Narrative
Due: P3 Big Questions, Narrative Script Drafts

week 9

10.20–10.26 **SUBMIT P2**; P2 Final Presentations

(Clarion Autumn Leaf Festival
Fri 10/24)

Lecture: Motion Infographics + Explainers
Due: Storyboards, Thumbs, Ideation, Styleframes
AE Demo: Trim Paths, Repeaters, Puppet Pin Tool
P3 Crit #1: 3 Styleframes + Storyboard

week 10

10.27–11.2 P3 Crit #3: First 15s
Lecture: Motion Unconstrained

week 11

11.3–11.9 P3 Final Crit #4: 30s
AE Demo: Motion Tracking

week 12

11.10–11.16 **SUBMIT P3**; P3 Final Presentations
ASSIGN P4 Moving Posters
Due: P4 Moodboard, Thumbs, Ideation

week 13

11.17–11.23 P4: Rough Poster Crit
AE Demo: Stop Motion

week 14

11.24–11.30 No Class on Wednesday/Thursday (Thanksgiving Break)
P4: Static poster & initial motion critique

week 15 Last Week of Classes

12.1–12.7 P4 Motion Test
P4:Final Crit

week 16 Finals Week

12.8–12.12 **SUBMIT P4**; P4 Final Presentations