

May 2009

Dear Student:

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of the School of Film and Animation (SOFA) - Welcome! We are looking forward to meeting you when you arrive in the fall.

Once you have paid your deposit, your academic adviser, Sue Clark will pre-register you for fall quarter classes based on your specific degree requirements. You will receive a copy of your tentative schedule in August. Please do not adjust your schedule yourself. Many of your courses are required to be taken in sequence and at certain times. We are happy to guide you in this process to make sure you get started on the right track. If you plan to participate on an RIT athletic team during the fall quarter, or if you anticipate AP or transfer credits, please let us know by completing the enclosed Course Scheduling Form. If you have any questions, contact Sue at (545) 475-7145 or by e-mail at [susan.clark@rit.edu](mailto:susan.clark@rit.edu).

If you have not yet paid your deposit, you are encouraged to do so. You cannot be pre-registered for fall quarter classes until your deposit is paid. We will be available to help you finalize your schedule and make any required adjustments once your deposit is received.

All entering first-year SOFA students will be taking the same courses. The order for a couple of them will be different, but by the end of your first year you will have all completed our common foundation year. At that point you will have an opportunity to declare a major emphasis of either Production or Animation.

We will supply most equipment and facilities for your classes and production projects. Depending on your choices you should be prepared to spend up to \$500 in the first year for supplies, tape, film, processing, etc. If you are highly directed towards live-action production, we suggest having your own incident light meter. We recommend the Sekonic model L-398A and have enclosed an educational program discount form which should be good wherever it's sold, including Digital Den – the RIT Electronics Store located in the Student Alumni Union. Students also find it useful to have a set of good headphones and a hand-truck or heavy-duty luggage carrier. Also handy are a basic tool kit, still camera, lightweight sturdy tripod, pocket calculator, and flashlight.

We do not recommend that you purchase textbooks, film, software, videotapes, or other supplies until you have met with your instructors and get specific information as to your needs. SOFA's Student Association buys film and supplies in bulk and sells it to students at a considerable discount.

You will need a computer minimally capable of word-processing and internet access. Practically everything we do uses an Apple MacIntosh platform (with the exception of

one Windows lab that supports 3D computer animation) so our basic recommendation is for a Mac. Some students with a personal preference for Windows can easily handle the minimal requirements, but we do teach post-production using Apple only software like Final Cut Pro, Soundtrack Pro, Color, DVD Studio Pro, Shake and Compressor. We have labs with all the software needed, but as you advance, working on your own computer might be preferable and you may find owning your own edit software an advantage. Ideally you should have as much hard drive space and RAM as possible, fire-wire capability, DVD+/-RW capability, and fast CPU speed. Laptops with a wireless internet card can be nice. To save money, consider purchasing at our campus store where full-time students are eligible for academic pricing and can be assured of the latest technology. The other handy computer related item is an external Firewire hard drive. It should have either an internal raid or large frame buffer design so that it can sustain a read/write data speed of 20 MB/sec or more. By the time you are in your second year you will be working in High Definition and even with compression those files requires higher data rates than standard definition DV. If you already own an external drive then this purchase can wait.

Transferring to a new college is exciting, but it can be overwhelming. We encourage you to read the *New Student Survival Guide* that will be mailed to you in June. It contains a checklist of to-do items and information about the many services and resources that will help you make the most of your experience at RIT. And to help you have a successful transition, we recommend that you attend one of the Transfer Welcome programs offered on either July 20 or September 4. More information about this program is in the *Guide*.

It is very important that you attend the advising meeting during Transfer Welcome, as you will learn more about your program as well as meet your faculty adviser, the rest of the faculty, and your fellow students at that time. Our program requires considerable time and hard work, so be prepared to jump in as soon as you get here!

I look forward to meeting you this fall. Until then, I am of course available if you have questions or concerns. Please feel free to contact me at (585) 475-2779 or by e-mail at [mgscdm@rit.edu](mailto:mgscdm@rit.edu)

Sincerely,

Malcolm Spaul, Chair  
School of Film and Animation