**1. What is your broad area of interest?**

My overall idea is to use 2D-Animation juxtaposed with CG backgrounds that will address personal issues such as existentialism, and combine the idea with humor. Regarding the phrase, “Existence precedes essence,” I want to examine the notion that we make ourselves, and we make our impact/essence on society the way we see fit, but not necessarily, how others want us to or how we perceive aspects of our own life. In comparison with humor and the general stigma that existentialism is more of a serious matter when discussed openly, I also want to utilize humor to bring a lighter feel to the mood of an animated short, and have others leave with a different satiated satisfaction for visually philosophical abstraction.   
 **2.** **What is the prototype?**

For the prototype, I will create an animated short that utilizes the interests as stated in Section #1. There will be occurrences of a 2D anthropomorphic bird character that will talk with the audience and ask them to repeat phrases that they necessarily are not comfortable with, but will bring an aura of self-questioning based on the outcome of the animation. For a further explanation:

Objective:   
 As an individual who questions their existence but also laughs at the mundane and often overlooked aspects of life, I want to utilize research derived from each and create an animation that attempts to juxtapose the two in similar settings. As for the impact of this animation, I expect others to question a perspective of their life they may have not questioned for a while, or have not given a second glance recently. Both studies were taken from French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre, and humorist Stephen Leacock; respectfully based on Existentialism and Humor. The imagery and phrases shown in the animation are combined to ask of the audience to contemplate their own interpretation, or to entertain.

Method:   
 In this animation, a cutout style digital 2D character will be present in a single environment [for the intro]. The character is an anthropomorphized bird with a white button-up shirt and a black tie. He is the narrator of the animation; the name of the character is “Chuck”. The background is a blank room with a soft pink glow for the walls. A single stool sits in the center. Chuck looks irregular in the 3D environment, but this is intentional. The juxtaposition of the 2D character and the 3D backgrounds may seem jarring, as these are attempts to merge my 2D character rig and 3D rendered scenes.  
 As the short begins, Chuck introduces himself and the full animation ahead of the audience. After the short introduction, the single sentences/phrases concerning the ‘self’ appear, a few seconds [dependent upon scene] are given for the audience to interpret a meaning after the entirety of the frame is shown. I enjoy having an object that the audience can manifest their feelings towards, I am not a fan of the omnipotent narrator speaking over the audience; hence the reason for utilizing my previously created rig as a testing ground for the mobility of the character and software skills to place him in the scene as described. As for the scenes, the settings are in brightly lit & similarly colored shots (many plastic-like and subsurface scatter backdrops), along with some minimal animation. The size of the walls in the scene is either large or small; this could be interpreted as an important relationship. The shots also utilize the quote said, [on screen] and will be shown along the bottom to solidify or liquefy the idea that there may be a double meaning to the imagery. A couple phrases that I am referencing while creating this animation:

Sartre:   
*>>“I think, therefore I am.”  
>>“Man is condemned to be free.”*

Leacock:  
*>>“Humor, in other words, has changed from a basis of injury or destruction, to what one may describe as a basis of ‘incongruity’ or ‘maladjustment’.”  
>>“The price paid for knowledge is the loss of the eye of innocence. Very likely we enjoy things better if we don’t know too much about them.”***3. What are the objectives of this prototype?**

I want to study Cartoons more associated with these ideals pertaining to existentialism and humor such as “Over the Garden Wall”. In this series, it follows two characters that end up in ‘limbo’ with no apparent way to escape. It all revolves around the idea of ‘death’ being a space that we explore, and not a means to the end of life. Throughout, there are many moments of using Shakespearian literature as the medium of bridging the internal dialogue of the characters, but also to lighten the mood with something familiar and dynamic in its essence.  
 The animation I will create will ultimately be static with subtle movements, and will utilize more front-facing cameras that show the full space of the settings.  
 Books I will read that will further develop my understanding of the history and impact of humor:

* “The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor” – John Morreall (1987)
* “Humor and Humanity” – Stephen Leacock (1938)
* “Understanding Animation” – Paul Wells (1995)
* “Existentialism and Humanism” – Jean Paul Sarte (1946)

**4. What are others doing? Reference Contextual Background**

What I have found that others are attempting to accomplish, is more of an emotional construct based on an animation dealing with self-strife and grievance. I have not necessarily found any animations that ask the audience (in this way) to repeat and think about the phrases said and attempt to conceptualize an understanding of what they just watched.   
 I would like to ask separate professors about what their take on existential theory is and how the extrapolation into an animation provides a somewhat clear understanding of the ideas/theories pertaining to such.  
 The professors (OSU) that I would like to gain some feedback and a clearer sense of direction:  
 Alan Price Matt Lewis Scott Swearingen Kyoung Swearingen  
 **5. What is your approach to making the prototype?**  
 I will utilize After Effects for the compositing of Chuck, and Maya for the creation of the environments and the areas that Chuck will either ‘sit’ in or interact. For the timing and use of spacing the imagery, I compiled a list of what order the animation excerpts would happen based on a dualistic good/bad tone I want to portray [the serious vs. humorous may become one and juxtaposed together in the scenes, thus focusing more on the tone]:

>>SPOON-FED INTRO

1. SERIOUS – ANXIETY
2. SERIOUS – COMPLACENT
3. HUMOROUS – CONFORMITY
4. SERIOUS – DOUBT
5. SERIOUS – METONOMY
6. HUMOROUS – BLISS
7. EXISTENTIAL – CHOICE

Production Calendar

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| **WEEK #:** | **RESEARCH & PROCESS** |
| **1** – >>REFINE ANIMATIC  >>CONTINUE READINGS  >>ASK PROFESSORS FOR FEEDBACK  >>REFINE SCRIPT AND RECORD AUDIO. | -Explore different quotes to ask. -Use readings for research oriented reasoning. -Examine how to address the audience in a more impactful way. -Find a common ground between the 2D and 3D sequencing. -Ask other graduate students about my intentions, and utilize their suggestions for how to have the audience interact and participate. |
| **2** – >>CONTINUE READINGS.  >>CHUCK ANIMATION TESTING.  >>BEGIN SCENE CREATION. | -Use readings for research oriented reasoning. -Utilize the “Chuck” rig and begin to animate. -Begin creating the small backdrops for the actual scenes. |
| **3** – >>SCENE CREATION.  >>CHUCK ANIMATION REFINEMENT. | -Begin creating the small backdrops for the actual scenes. -Utilize the “Chuck” rig and begin to animate. -Refine 2D animation, test Chuck in scene. |
| **4** – >>SCENE CREATION.  >>CHUCK ANIMATION REFINEMENT. | -Continue creating the small backdrops for the actual scenes. -Refine 2D animation if necessary. -Ask for help if something with Maya nCloth or nPhysics goes wrong. |
| **5** – >>RENDERING & COMPOSITING. | -Begin rendering and fix apparent issues. |
| **6** – >>COMPOSITING.  >>PROTOTYPE DONE. | -Test and composite a prototype for the animation.  -Utilize After effects |