

GAME DESIGN PRACTICES 1

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| COURSE NUMBER: DIG3713 | CREDIT HOURS: 3 |
| SEMESTER/YEAR: FALL 2016 | CLASS LOCATION: NRG 0120 |
| | CLASS MEETING TIME(S): TUE: 5,6 THUR: 6 |
| INSTRUCTOR: Assoc Prof Marko Suvajdzic | OFFICE LOCATION/HOURS: TBA |
| | CONTACT EMAIL: MARKO@DIGITALWORLDS.UFL.EDU |
| CONTACT PHONE: (352) 294-2000 | COURSE WEBSITE: DIGITALWORLDS.UFL.EDU/PROGRAMS/BA-IN-DAS/ |

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Fundamentals and core practices of traditional game design. Course includes theories and organizing frameworks of game design and the how to of the technical and organizational process of creating a game. Students build technical skills in conceptualization, visualization, prototyping and user testing. While game design is the primary focus, skills and knowledge acquired will apply to other design-centric activities and constructs in the digital arts and sciences. Topics covered include iteration, rapid prototyping, mechanics, dynamics, flow theory, the nature of fun, game balance, story telling, and user interface design.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

None

PURPOSE OF COURSE

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the industry practices in applied creativity and game design.

COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:

- Describe and articulate major trends and trajectories in the field of video games production.
- Use different perspectives to analyze and investigate events, communities and production cycles in video games production process.
- Present findings from your own research into some particular aspect of video games culture.
- Identify the core principles of digital and non-digital game design including rules, mechanics, chance, and goals, and understand how to use them in DAS design practice.
- Effectively implement core principles of the game design process like iterative design, interface design, and play testing.
- Identify the function of flow theory and decision-making in game design
- Critically analyze the construction of digital and non-digital games from a designer's perspective.
- Take a game design from the conceptualization through to a prototype phase.
- Link the principles of the course to computer and video games on a variety of platforms.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM IN THIS CLASS. INSTEAD, THERE WILL BE A FINAL PROJECT IN LIEU OF THE FINAL EXAM. THE FINAL PROJECT IS DUE ONE WEEK BEFORE THE LAST CLASS AT 11:59PM.

| Week | Topic | Assignments/Quizzes |
|------|---|--|
| 1 | Class Introduction In class group exercise Overview/What is a game? Roles in video games industry <i>Chapter: 1</i> | |
| 2 | Formal elements of game (game atoms) Puzzle Design In class exercise <i>Chapters: 2,3</i> | Mobile Game Review |
| 3 | The role of chance in games The role of skill in games In class exercise <i>Chapters: 5,6,7,8</i> | |
| 4 | Quiz Writing for games What is intellectual property Creating sequels Targeting a market <i>Chapters: 9,10,11</i> | Quiz1: 1,2,3,5,6,7,8 |
| 5 | History of story telling Story arcs In class discussion <i>Chapter: 13</i> | Multimedia presentation 3-5 min (game designer or studio) |
| 6 | Interactive story telling Review of students' multimedia presentations | |
| 7 | Writing a GDD Review of students' multimedia presentations In class discussion | |
| 8 | Quiz Creating a User interface | Quiz2: 9,10,11,13 + "I Have No Words & I Must |

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|----|---|---|
| | <i>In class exercise</i> <i>Chapter: 16</i> | Design: Toward a Critical Vocabulary for Games" |
| 9 | Games as art <i>In class exercise</i> <i>Chapter: 17</i> | Existing video game - Concept proposal pitch |
| 10 | Games as a teaching tool Serious games Chapters: 18,19 | Final project proposal (1 pager) |
| 11 | Casual games HOPA games In class discussion <i>Chapter: 20</i> | |
| 12 | Quiz In class exercise | Quiz3: 16,17,18,19,20 |
| 13 | Presentations of the final projects in progress | |
| 14 | Presentations of the final projects in progress | Final Project Submission |
| 15 | Playing Games (final projects) In class discussion | |

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND SOFTWARE:

1. Book: "Challenges for Game Designer", Brenda Brathwaite, Ian Schreiber
2. Online article: "I Have No Words & I Must Design: Toward a Critical Vocabulary for Games", Greg Costikyan (<http://www.costik.com/nowords2002.pdf>)

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

1. Campbell, Joseph, "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" - related readings:
 - a. <http://www.dabhub.com/datas/media/The%20Hero%20with%20a%20Thousand%20Faces.pdf>
 - b. http://changingminds.org/disciplines/storytelling/plots/hero_journey/hero_journey.htm
2. "Level Up!: The Guide to Great Video Game Design", Scott Rogers

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEES:

Material and supply fees are assessed for certain courses to offset the cost of materials or supply items consumed in the course of instruction. A list of [approved courses and fees](#) is published in the Schedule of Courses each semester. (UF-3.0374 Regulations of the University of Florida)

Material and supply and equipment use fee information is available from the academic departments or from the schedule of courses (Florida Statutes 1009.24). The total M&S for this class is \$54.26

EVALUATION OF GRADES

| Assignment | Total Points | Percentage of Grade |
|--|--------------|---------------------|
| Mobile game review | 100 | 10% |
| Multimedia presentation 3 min (game designer or studio) | 100 | 10% |
| Quizzes | 300 | 30% |
| Existing video game - Concept proposal pitch | 100 | 10% |
| Final Project | 300 | 30% |
| Participation – Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions | 100 | 10% |

GRADING SCALE:

| Letter Grade | % Equivalency | GPA Equivalency |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| A | 94 – 100% | 4.0 |
| A- | 90 – 93% | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87 – 89% | 3.33 |
| B | 84 – 86% | 3.00 |
| B- | 80 – 83% | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77 – 79% | 2.33 |
| C | 74 – 76% | 2.00 |
| C- | 70 – 73% | 1.67 |
| D+ | 67 – 69% | 1.33 |
| D | 64 – 66% | 1.00 |
| D- | 60 – 63% | .67 |
| E, I, NG, S- U, WF | | 0.00 |

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

COURSE POLICIES:**PARTICIPATION / ATTENDANCE POLICY**

We value participation more than mere attendance. Each Instructor is responsible for communicating the specific details of what percentage of your grade (if any) will be assigned to participation, and how class participation will be measured and graded. Real Time [RT] interaction with your peers and the Instructor will empower you to greater achievement.

MAKE-UP POLICY

Presentations may not be presented late. Documented emergencies or medical situations may be the only accepted reasons for an excused absence on the day of a presentation.

COURSE TECHNOLOGY

The students will be required to have access to, and use a personal computer with the access to the Internet. Word editing software will be required for written assignments.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS

Students can communicate directly with the Instructor regarding the course material through the course management system (CANVAS).

UF POLICIES:

UNIVERSITY HONESTY POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge that states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

CLASS DEMEANOR

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

STUDENTS REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

NETIQUETTE COMMUNICATION COURTESY

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats, more information can be found at: <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

VIDEO LECTURE CAPTURE

High-quality video lecture capture of this course is available only for enrolled students. These video captures are edited and posted within 24-48 hours of the class meeting for the benefit of the Your Own Time [YOT] students and to offer the potential for review by on-campus and Real Time [RT] on-line students. For the on-campus and RT students, watching lectures in lieu of attending and participating in class is NOT acceptable.

Your Instructor will provide you with this semester's login information during the first week of class. It is not permissible to share or distribute video login information to anyone other than officially enrolled students of this course. Lecture videos can be found at <https://vimeo.com/digitalworlds>.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

U Matter, We Care

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints Campus:
https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf

On-Line Students Complaints:
<http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents the instructor's current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.