

Design Lab 5: Game Media

PUDT
3101 B
Fall 2005

Instructor Info

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Course Description

With revenues exceeding \$9 billion dollars in 2004, the rapid growth of the game industry signals seismic shifts in the importance of games within the definitions of media and technology. Digital games use many different kinds of media in the creation of experiences for players from animation and character design, to lighting, visual effects, sound, interaction design, and storytelling. This Design Lab course offers students the opportunity to examine games as media, unified spaces for interaction, narrative and social networks. The course will examine the history of game design and analyze different types of digital games, including first-person shooters, MMPORPGs, puzzle games, real-time strategy games and more. The studio encourages the use of quick prototyping and testing for ideas and analysis, as students obtain a basic knowledge of the aesthetics, systems, terminology and narratives used to develop games.

Course Outline

week 1

- Introductions
- Class structure + philosophy
- GameMaker Tutorial & Lab #1
- Assignment #1: Story and GameMaker assignment

week 2

- History of video games overview
- Game examples #1
- GameMaker tutorial & lab #2
- Assignment #2: Reading and presentations

week 3

- Presentations + discussion of reading
- Meaningfully play, design and systems
- GameMaker tutorial #3
- Assignment #3: Reading and extended game

week 4

- Abstracting action lecture
- Core mechanics
- Identifying core mechanics
- Game examples #2
- Assignment #4: Reading and interactive sketch

week 5

- Interactive Sketches review
- Rules of Games

- Identifying rules
- Rule exercise (index card swap / brainstorm)
- Creating a Game Design Document
- Assignment #5: Complete Game Design Document

week 6

- Game genres and innovation
- Alternative interactive techniques
- Working lab: Midterm games
- Assignment #6: Core mechanic for midterm game

week 7

- Midterm mechanic game play and critique
- Level Design
- Working Lab: Midterm games
- Assignment #7: Complete game

week 8

- Midterm Critique
- Level Design #2
- Assignment #8: Come up with teams for final project

week 9

- Assignment #9: Create design Document with team

week 10

- Player Experience.
- Assignment #10: Reading and Design Document

week 11

- Game design and Narrative Lecture
- Review Design Documents

week 12

- Work on final games

week 13

- Work on final games

week 14

- Final game presentations

Learning Outcomes

- For students to learn a vocabulary for talking about and critically evaluating games.
- For students to learn the fundamentals of game design.
- For students to learn how to create games in GameMaker and other softwares.

Assessable Tasks

Students will keep website where they will respond to weekly readings and critically evaluate games. Students will also have weekly labs to complete in class, and assignments to complete during the week. In addition, students will be making two games during the course of the semester: a game for a midterm, and one for a final.

Assignments and Labs can be found here: <http://www.feedtank.com/2005/gamemedia>

Evaluation and Grading

- A Work of exceptional quality
- A- Work of high quality
- B+ Very good work

B	Good work; satisfies course requirements
B-	Below average
C+	Less than adequate
C	Well below average; lowest possible passing grade
F	Failure, no credit

Readings and Resources

Required text: *Rules of Play* by Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman.

Additional readings will be provided as needed.

Materials and Supplies

Access to Parsons 'A' server. A website / blog to post answers to assignments.

School, Department and Class Policies

Failing Grades

Failing grades are given for required work that is not submitted, for incomplete final projects or for examinations that are not taken (without prior notification and approval). Final semester grades are determined by averaging grades received throughout the semester. Make-up work or completion of missed examinations may be permitted only with the approval of the instructor and the major department Chair.

Incompletes

A grade of I (Incomplete), signifying a temporary deferment of a regular grade, may be assigned when coursework has been delayed at the end of the semester for unavoidable and legitimate reasons. Incomplete grades are given only with the written approval of the instructor and the major department Chair. **The Request for an Incomplete Grade form must be filled out by the student and instructor prior to the end of the semester.**

For graduate students, the deadline for completion of an incomplete is one year. A grade of I will automatically convert to a permanent unofficial withdrawal (WF) after a period of four weeks.

Faculty may not post an Incomplete ("I") in ALVIN unless they have first completed the incomplete approval process. Please contact your department for complete instructions and approval forms for awarding an incomplete. Students who have not been attending your class should have already been reported to your department.

Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy

The purpose the Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy is to protect the rights of authors, artists and fellow members of the academic community as well as to support the education of the individual student, who derives no educational benefit from cheating. Studio faculty are expected to educate students about the legal and ethical restrictions placed upon creative work and about the consequences of dishonesty in the professional world. Faculty assigning papers are expected to educate students about the appropriate incorporation of quoted material and other thinkers' ideas. Most important, students are expected to keep themselves informed on these matters, to seek clarification from instructors regarding academic honesty and its relationship to specific assignments, and to conduct themselves accordingly. All incoming students are required to sign an Academic Integrity Statement declaring that they understand and agree to comply with this policy.

Students who cheat in any way primarily cheat themselves; but they also compromise the academic climate for all members of the Parsons community. Dishonest students, whether directly or indirectly involved in an act of cheating, will be held accountable for violations of the Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy. “Academic dishonesty” is defined as:

- cheating on examinations, either by copying another student’s work or by utilizing unauthorized materials.
- any act of plagiarism, that is, the fraudulent presentation of the written, oral or visual work of others as original.
- theft of another student’s work.
- purchase of another student’s work.
- submitting the same work for more than one course.
- destruction or defacement of the work of others.
- aiding or abetting any act of dishonesty.
- any attempt to gain academic advantage by presenting misleading information, making deceptive statements or falsifying documents.

Students who cheat will first receive a 0 on the assignment. If found cheating again, they will fail the course.