

GAME 230: History of Computer Game Design

Term: Fall 2019
Section: K02
Instructor: Jared Bruhn
Office: G557

Meeting Time: Tuesday / Thursday 4:30pm - 5:45pm
Room: TBD
Email: jbruhn@gmu.edu
Office Hours: TBD

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive survey of the history of videogames. The class begins by exploring ancient games, early mechanical novelty machines, pinball and computers. The bulk of the class examines arcade games, modern console games and game hardware. This class will detail the people, the technology and the companies that have made videogames the multi-billion dollar industry that it is today. Hands-on study and analysis will include writing about, discussing and playing games past and present.

Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the significant early video games
- Identify the advances in the technologies that shaped the games industry
- Write effectively about the history of computer games/video games
- Engage in meaningful discussions regarding key persons in computer game history
- Understand the lineage of notable companies and games in the game industry

Note: Attendance and active participation are vital to your success in meeting the outcomes above. Please come to class prepared for discussion and engagement with the assigned texts, and seize our time together in class as an opportunity to co-create knowledge with me and your peers as we go through the semester.

Requirements and Evaluation

At the beginning of each class meeting, students should be prepared to discuss the assigned readings, topic assignments, and game examples. Class meetings will consist of lectures, discussion, film screening, game play, peer review, and hands on activities that often require collaboration with classmates.

The first half of the semester will involve engagement with our text and the topics contained therein as students begin to develop ideas for an original research paper. As the semester progresses, the original project will be revisited in various forms and formats. Throughout the semester, students will be 'quizzed' on written material in order to promote lasting, deep learning of the material for future coursework.

Required Texts/Materials:

Donovan, T. (2010). *Replay: The history of video games*. East Sussex, UK: Yellow Ant.

- Other assigned readings will be available through Blackboard in pdf format or through the Mason Library

Recommended Materials:

PC Desktop / Laptop (For working on projects outside of class/lab)
USB Flash Drive and/or Online File Sharing Account

Grading

Grading will be based on student performance in the following areas of assessment:

- Attendance / Participation in classroom (25%)
- Quizzes / Homework assignments (50%)
- Final Research Paper (25%)

Final grades will be assigned based on the percentage points earned in the overall course:

<u>Grade:</u>	<u>Percentage Points:</u>
A	94 – 100
A-	90 – 94
B+	87 – 89
B	84 – 86
B-	80 – 83
C+	77 – 79
C	74 – 76
C-	70 – 73
D	60 – 69
F	Below 60

Assignments

Upcoming assignments will be announced in class before becoming available on Blackboard. Students are expected to check Blackboard on a weekly basis to preview their upcoming assignments. Digital assignments must be turned in via Blackboard.

This is a tentative schedule of topics covered and assignments. This is subject to change at the professor's discretion. Make sure to attend class and pay attention to blackboard announcements for communication about changes:

Session #	Topic	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction and Ancient Games Introduce Final Research Paper Assignment	None
Week 2	Ancient Games and Pinball	Reading: Replay Chapters 1-2
Week 3	Bringing Games Into the Home	Reading: Replay Chapters 3-4 Quiz on Weeks 1 & 2
Week 4	Console Gaming Boom Introduce Game Developer Profile Assignment	Reading: Replay Chapters 5-6 Turn in Research Topic
Week 5	Controversy in Gaming	Reading: Replay Chapter 7-8
Week 6	Video Games on the World Stage	Quiz on Weeks 3-5 Reading: Replay Chapters 9-10
Week 7	Enter the Macintosh and Nintendo	Reading: Replay Chapters 11-13
Week 8	(Midterm)	Turn in Game Developer Profile Presentations
Week 9	From Sims to Tetris Introduce Game Postmortem Assignment	Reading: Replay Chapters 14-16
Week 10	Sonic Enters the Arena & Additional Controversy in USA	Quiz on Weeks 6-9 Reading: Replay Chapters 17-18
Week 11	CD-ROMS	Reading: Replay Chapter 19-20 Turn in Classic Game Postmortem Paper

Week 12	3D Games, PlayStation, and Music Games	Reading: Replay Chapters 21-22 Turn in Final Research Paper Rough Draft
Week 13	Virtual Worlds and Virtual Lives Research Paper Feedback	Quiz on Weeks 10-12 Reading: Replay Chapters 23-24
Week 14	Online Gaming Advances	Reading: Replay Chapters 25-26
Week 15	The Rise of Indie Development	Reading: Replay Chapters 27-28 Quiz on Weeks 13 - 15
Week 16	Final Research Paper	Turn in Final Research Paper

Written Material:

All written material must be sure to cite video, games, news, websites, or any form of media also used in the assignments.

All projects must be submitted in the format dictated by the assignment. Generally, this means papers to be produced in the APA style (with title page when appropriate) and submitted as instructed.

Participation & Attendance

Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions, answer questions when prompted, and in general, add to the collective dialogue. Participation in class discussions and activities is necessary for the course.

Each class is a building block for the next. The lecture will cover additional necessary information and discussions that you will not want to miss, so come to class. In the event that you have to miss class, you still are responsible for the material covered that day, including project or homework assignments and changes in schedules.

Late Work and Make-up Policy

Meeting deadlines is one of the most important aspects of game design. Please pay careful attention to the due date and time for each assignment. Assignments must be in before the due date and time to receive credit for the assignment. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from finishing an assignment before the due date and time, the student must contact the instructor before the assignment is due. Late work will only accepted at the instructor's discretion. If it is accepted at all, grading may be adjusted based on the tardiness.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this Honor Code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found on the Committee of Academic Integrity's website at <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/mkaa/cai>.

TITLE IX

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason Korea's Deputy Title IX Coordinator pursuant to University Policy 1202 and 1412. If you would like to speak confidentially with the Mason Korea student counselor, please see <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/mksa/services/counseling/> for more information. For more information about what Title IX is, please see <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/mksa/services/tix/>.

MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information. All digital communication with the professor must be made using your “masonlive” email account.

CAMPUS RESOURCES:

RESOURCES: <https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources/>

DISABILITY RESOURCES

If you are a student with a disability and you need accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at +1-703-993-2474. All Academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Also, you can contact MKASA at 032- 626-5005.

GMUK ACADEMIC RESOURCE CENTER

The Academic Resource Center, GMUK is in the business of looking at your papers and problems to improve your academic achievement in the area of Writing, Mathematics, Accounting, Statistics, and Economics. You are invited to utilize the faculty and student tutor services at a variety of stages in your academic activities, checking to see that your project specifically meets the directions specified by your instructor. While tutors are ‘fixing’ your writing or projects, they do help you become conscious of particular error patterns that emerge in your work. For more information, please contact Professor Eunmee Lee, director of Academic Resource Center (elee45@gmu.edu, office #521)