GAME 230: History of Computer Game Design

Term: Fall 2021
Meeting Time: Monday & Wednesday 10:30 - 11:45
Section: K01
Room: G313
Instructor: Jared Bruhn
Email: jbruhn@gmu.edu
Office: G557
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 15:00 - 17:00

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 semester will involve engagement with our text and the topics contained therein. Throughout the semester, students will be ‘quizzed’ on written material in order to promote lasting, deep learning of the material for future coursework.

Students will be expected to lead an in-class discussion

Required Texts/Materials:

• 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 (20%)
• Quizzes (25%)
• Student-Led Discussion & Activity (20%)
• Projects (35%)
For easy comprehension, there are exactly 100 points available in the course. Therefore, point values for assignments on blackboard correspond DIRECTLY to their percentage value.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 – 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 – 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84 – 86</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80 – 83</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74 – 76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 73</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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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: Check CALENDAR on Blackboard for an updated version with dates!

General Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction and Ancient Games</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Introduce Lecture, Student-Led Discussions,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and Non-linear History Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Ancient Games and Pinball</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapters 1-2</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Bringing Games Into the Home</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapters 3-4</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Console Gaming Boom</td>
<td>Quiz on Weeks 1 - 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduce Game Developer Profile Assignment</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapters 5-6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Template</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Controversy in Gaming</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapter 7-8</td>
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Fall Recess

| Week 6    | (Midterm)                                       | Turn in Game Developer Profile     |
|           | Presentations                                    | Presentations                      |
| Week 7    | Video Games on the World Stage                  | Quiz on Weeks 4-5                  |
|           | Introduce Game Postmortem Assignment             | Reading: Replay Chapters 9-10      |
| Week 8    | Enter the Macintosh and Nintendo                 | Reading: Replay Chapters 11-13     |
| Week 9    | From Sims to Tetris                             | Reading: Replay Chapters 14-16     |
| Week 10 | Sonic Enters the Arena & Additional Controversy in USA | Quiz on Weeks 7-9  
Reading: Replay Chapters 17-18  
Turn In Game Postmortem Assignment |
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>CD-ROMS</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapter 19-20</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>3D Games, PlayStation, and Music Games</td>
<td>Reading: Replay Chapters 21-22</td>
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| Week 13 | Virtual Worlds and Virtual Lives | 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 |

**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](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/](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](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...
SPECIAL SYLLABUS SUPPLEMENT FOR COVID-19: FALL 2021

In the interest of everyone’s safety, students and faculty must follow these guidelines during the Fall 2020 semester.

1. Use the basement entrance to enter and exit Mason’s building. Your temperature will be screened each time you enter the building. Allow additional time before class to complete the entrance screening procedure. Carry your student ID card with you at all times and be ready to show it when you enter and exit the building. Do not prop doors or let others enter the building through doors on the ground floor.

2. Wear a face mask at all times. Remain 6 feet apart from others. Clean your seat and desk space with disinfectant wipes before you begin class. Use hand sanitizer regularly, and avoid shaking hands or other forms of physical contact. Do not share pens, pencils or other personal items. Limit your use of the elevators, and use stairs to travel between floors of the building. Students are expected to purchase their own masks for personal use. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.

3. Classrooms are marked to indicate appropriate seating to allow for social distancing. Only sit in allowable seats, and maintain current set-up of classroom furniture. If you are asked to re-arrange classroom furniture by your professor for in-class exercises, return furniture to its original position when you are finished.

4. Observe these rules at all times during the class period and while in Mason’s building or other public areas of the campus. This includes during class breaks, in small group work (in or out of class), meetings with your professors during office hours, tutoring sessions at the Academic Resource Center, socializing in common areas, or any other activities on campus.

5. Make sure windows and doors remain open during the class period to promote circulation of outside air. Classrooms without windows have mechanical systems that vent air, but doors should be kept open at all times.

6. The safest option for studying is to study alone in your dorm room or at home. If you must study in the building, alone or in groups, observe these rules at all times.

7. All faculty and students must abide by these rules in the classroom. If you see others who are not observing the rules outside the classroom, you may report this to your instructor, student affairs or academic affairs.

8. Do not enter the Mason building or come to class if you have symptoms such as fever, chills, sore throat, persistent cough, shortness of breath or other respiratory difficulties. If you must miss class for this reason, send an email immediately to the professor prior to the beginning of class. You will not be penalized for missing class for this reason, but you may be asked to provide documentation that you sought medical diagnosis or treatment. You are responsible for making up any missed assignments or tests as a result of your absence.

9. Students who come to class with visible signs of illness will be asked to leave the classroom immediately and seek assistance from the IGC Health Clinic. Faculty will report your name and symptoms to the Office of Student Affairs (mksa@gmu.edu) to confirm that you have sought medical assistance.

10. Failure to comply with any of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action through the Student Code of Conduct.

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/.

MAKING 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)

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