GAME 332 – Story Design for Computer Games (Fall 2021)
George Mason University Korea

Information
Location: G204, Zoom - gmu.zoom.us/j/98578886963?pwd=ODIITHIUVGk0eGpOR1lOTytZMVFuZz09
Time: 4:30-7:10pm, Tuesdays
Instructor: John David McGrew
Email: jmcgrew4@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm, G553 (email for appointment)

Description
Use of narrative structure and new media for designing computer game scenarios and stories. Traditional narrative techniques (text stories, novels, films) will be examined, as well as translations of the traditional to interactive, non-linear modes of communications. Analysis of current computer game story design theories, philosophies, and techniques will be covered. Limited to three attempts.

Succeeding in this Course
Students that attentively attend each class, participate, take notes, read & follow instructions, start and turn in assignments on time, spend adequate time (~10-15 hours per week) outside of class on projects, and communicate with the instructor are far more likely to succeed in this course. Story design goes beyond memorizing facts and requires students to learn how to problem solve and take on new creative challenges.

Prerequisites
Completion of 30 credits within major or permission of the instructor.

Objectives
- Build an understanding of the principles of story design
- Identify story elements in computer games
- Create a story bible based on an original game idea

Required Software
Microsoft Word

Required Hardware
Laptop computer

Required Texts
"Interactive Storytelling for Video Games: A Player-Centered Approach to Creating Memorable Characters and Stories" (2012) by Josiah Lebowitz

Assessment
90% or above will receive an “A” grade.
80-89% will receive a “B” grade.
70-79% will receive a “C” grade.
60-69% will receive a “D” grade.
59% or below will receive a grade of “F”

Late Work and Resubmissions
Deadlines are a key aspect of the game and film industries. Students are expected to turn in all work by the due date. The first late assignment a student turns in will receive a 10% grade penalty. The second late assignment will receive a 25% grade penalty. After the first two late assignments, a student will receive a failing grade on any additional assignments that are turned in late.

Students can resubmit any assignment once for a new grade. Resubmissions must be turned in no later than two weeks after the initial submission was graded. In case of the final project, the deadline for resubmissions is no later than December 15, 2021. If the initial submission was turned in late, any late penalties will also apply to the resubmitted work’s grade.

Attendance Policy
Class attendance and participation are mandatory. Students who frequently miss or do not participate in class are far less likely to meet course objectives and contribute to the class. Absences are subject to following grade penalties.

1-3 Absences: No grade deduction
4 Absences: -10% off Final Grade
5 Absences: -20% off Final Grade
6 Absences: Automatic “F” grade

Three tardies are counted as one absence. Students that miss more than 20% of the scheduled class time or leave before class is dismissed will be counted absent.

If you must miss all or part of class for a university approved event or medical issue, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible and provide documentation with proper signatures and dates. Upon reviewing the documentation and student’s attendance record, the instructor will decide whether an absence will be excused beyond the initial 3 absences.

Course Schedule
The class schedule is available on the course’s Blackboard shell. Please consult the schedule often and attend class regularly to ensure you meet all class requirements.

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/resources-and-services/cai/overview.

Title IX
Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking
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 a Mason Korea counselor, please see https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/counseling-and-
wellness for more information. For further information about what Title IX is, please see https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/resources-and-services/title-ix.

Disability Services and Accommodations
This course is meant to be accessible and the instructor will make reasonable efforts to remove barriers to learning that a student brings to his attention. If at any point in the semester you would like to apply for specific accommodations relating to physical, learning, and/or psychological disabilities, please contact the Director of Academic Affairs (Jiye Chang - jchang22@gmu.edu), who will connect you with Disability Services on the Fairfax campus.

Changes to Syllabus and Schedule
The instructor reserves the right to make changes and adaptations to the syllabus and schedule as needed. Any changes will be announced in class.