GAME 230 – History of Computer Game Design

Information
Class Time | Location: 10:30-11:45 am, Mondays & Wednesdays | G313
Instructor: John David McGrew
Email: jmcgrew4@gmu.edu
Office Hours | Location: Tue/Thurs, 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm | G553 (by appointment)

Instructional Mode
The course is currently designed as a face-to-face course in the Mason Korea building but may be adjusted to accommodate or adhere to changing conditions.

Description
Introduces history of computer game design including games as a new medium for education, entertainment, and communications. Students will analyze trends, constraints, and context that informed the evolution of game development. Topics include game criticism and social issues in game design such as game violence and addiction. Limited to three attempts.

Succeeding in this Course
Students that attentively attend each class, participate, take notes, read & follow instructions to prepare before each class discussion, start and turn in assignments on time, spend adequate time (9+ hours per week) outside of class on projects, and communicate with the instructor are far more likely to succeed in this course.

Objectives
- Build a broad understanding of the significant early video games
- Identify advances in technology that shaped the game industry
- Write about the history of computer/video games effectively
- Identify and discuss key persons in computer gaming history
- Understand the lineage of notable companies and games in the game industry

Required Texts, Software & Hardware
There are not any required textbook purchases for this course. Assigned readings are located on Blackboard under Course Content.

Access to Microsoft Word and Powerpoint.
Removable/cloud drive for backup.

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

- Participation in classroom discussions and activities
- Homework assignments
- Midterm presentation and project
- Final presentation and project

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. An assignment turned in within the first week after the due date will receive a 10% grade penalty. An assignment turned in within the second week after the due date will receive a 20% grade penalty. Any assignment turned in more than two weeks after the due date will receive a failing grade.

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 the scheduled final exam. If an initial submission was turned in late, any late penalties will also apply to the resubmitted work’s grade.

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.

Diversity, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion

This class strives to provide an equal and equitable learning atmosphere for all students. Communication and actions among students, the instructor, and anyone else in the class is to be respectful and free of any malice, discriminatory language or actions, derogatory language, or hate speech. Students are evaluated based on the merit of their class work, without regard to gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, sexual identity, religion, or political affiliation.

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.

*This GAME 230 course and syllabus are adapted from materials provided by the Computer Game Design Program and Professor Stephanie Kane of the GMU Fairfax Campus.
**Course Modality:** The Korean Ministry of Education's recommendation that higher education instruction be conducted in person this semester reaffirms Mason Korea's instructional modality. This course has been designed for in person instruction and learning. Course sessions will not be recorded to fully engage in an interactive learning environment. This course will follow all policies and guidance set by Mason Korea. Should any class sessions need to be adjusted or canceled due to health and safety concerns, students will be notified by email and can continue to check Blackboard for course materials and updates.

**Safe Return to Campus during COVID-19:** All in the Mason Korea community play an important role in keeping our classroom environment and one another safe during the current conditions. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with Mason Korea building safety protocols and local government regulations. Your faculty recognizes that local COVID-19 conditions and individual situations can vary throughout the semester. Should you need academic accommodations, immediately communicate with your faculty and academic advisor for case-by-case arrangements. For counseling, students can contact Jan Lee (jlee227@gmu.edu, 032-626-6142).

Also here are some notes that I have adapted from my course technology/materials section of the syllabus:

- Should any class sessions need to be recorded, students will be notified in advance. Any recordings will be stored on Blackboard and will only be accessible to students taking the course during this semester.
- A selection of certain works (e.g., articles, podcasts, videos, book chapters) will be available to students through Blackboard and remain subject to all rights and restrictions of the publisher and are to be used solely for academic purposes.
- Course materials and recordings are not to be distributed, sold, or employed for any other purposes.