Information
Location: G313
Time: 2:00-3:15 pm, Mondays & Wednesdays
Instructor: John David McGrew
Email: jmcgrew4@gmu.edu
Office Hours: Tue/Thur 1:45-4:15pm, G553 (email for 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
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
- Develop story ideas that can be implemented into games
- Create a story bible based on an original game idea

Required Software
Microsoft Office (Word/PowerPoint)

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

Grading
Assignments are graded on a point scale, based on the assignment rubric. Criteria for assignments often include Completeness, Adherence to Requirements, Technical Execution, Grammar, and Overall Quality. Grade penalties will be applied for any problems with participation (see below), and professionalism.

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 twice 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 beginning of the final exam time. If the initial submission was turned in late, any late penalties will also apply to the resubmitted work’s grade.

Participation Policy
Class participation is mandatory. Students are expected to ask and answer questions, participate in discussions, and be active in in-class activities. Students who do not participate in class are far less likely to meet course objectives and contribute to the class. If a student does not participate sufficiently in class, they will be subject to a grade penalty.

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.

Mason Core - Writing Intensive Course
As part of the university’s commitment to student writers in all undergraduate programs, at least one upper-division course in each major has been designated as fulfilling the “writing intensive” (WI) requirement. While other courses in the major may require written projects, teachers of the designated WI courses will devote class time to instruction on how to complete assignments successfully, assign and grade a minimum of 3500 words, provide constructive feedback on drafts, and allow revision of at least one graded assignment. See the description of each major for the specific course or courses that fulfill the WI requirement.

Mason Impact + Research & Scholarship Intensive Designated Courses
This class is designated as a Mason Impact + Research and Scholarship Intensive Course, which means that students are given the opportunity to actively participate in the process of scholarship and will make a significant contribution to the creation of a disciplinary-appropriate product. Students will create original content for games while researching best practices for writing in the game industry and reflecting on their own creative process.
As a Mason Impact + Research and Scholarship course, the class includes the following student learning outcomes:
Students who successfully complete GAME 332 RS will be able to...
1. Understand knowledge creation.
2. Engage multiple perspectives.
3. Investigate meaningful questions.
4. Create an original scholarly or creative project.
5. Communicate knowledge from the project through public presentation or the publication.
Engage in scholarly inquiry by:
• Articulating and refining a question: How do my experiences and knowledge inform my perception of story in games? In light of current trends in the games market and popular culture, what is considered “good” writing for games and how might we define it? How do storytelling, collaborative writing, and narrative design enhance the skills I hope to use post-graduation?
• Applying appropriate conventions of the discipline: What does good game writing do and who is producing it? How is this work identified/recognized? What does this recognition indicate?
• Situating the creative work within a broader context: What are the cultural implications of narrative in games today? To what extent do social constructs, ideology, identity, and current events affect content in game narrative?

**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.

**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:

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- 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.

*This GAME 332 course and syllabus are adapted from materials provided by the Computer Game Design Program and Professor Joshua Lebowitz of the GMU*