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ART 108: Introduction to Games Studies

Spring 2017

Art/CS 108, Introduction to Game Studies, Section 1, Spring 2017

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San José State University
Department of Art & Art History,
Department of Computer Science
Art/CS 108, Introduction to Game Studies
Section 1, Spring 2017

Course and Contact Information

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instructor: | James Morgan |
| Office Location: | ART 325 |
| Telephone: | 408-924-4590 (do not call this number) |
| Email: | james.morgan@sjsu.edu (preferred contact) |
| Office Hours: | M/W 1345 – 1445 |
| Class Days/Time: | M/W 1800 - 1915 |
| Classroom: | ART 135 |
| Department Offices: | ART 116; MQH 208 |
| Department Contacts: | Website: www.sjsu.edu/art Email: art@sjsu.edu Website: www.sjsu.edu/cs/ Email: info-compsci@sjsu.edu |

Course Format

This course will be taught primarily face to face, but students are expected to have reliable Internet connections for use of the Canvas Learning Management System (Canvas or LMS) and for use of online resources.

Course Description

Introduction to the systems, design, history, and cultural analysis of games with emphasis on development, technological literacy, markets and impact on society.

In this course we shall read about, write about, play and design traditional paper based and video games.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- LO1 Demonstrate an appreciation for the cultural value of the technologies and strategies used in games through writing and projects;
- LO2 Investigate and research user experiences of their own games and those of others;
- LO3 Apply researched information to improve player experience;
- LO4 Speak and write clearly about their own and others' work;
- LO5 Demonstrate and apply technological and information literacy;
- LO6 Translate different kinds of subject matter into gaming environments;

LO7 Create original and creative content through the medium of games.

Selected Readings

These readings represent contemporary thinkers in the fields of game design, media studies and others. This is a selection of what we will be reading and discussing in class. All readings are due at the beginning of the listed class session. I reserve the right to add or change readings with proper notice to accommodate recent events and advances in gaming. This list is provided as a reference.

Articles with links:

Ian Bogost, "Persuasive Games: The Proceduralist Style,"
http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/3909/persuasive_games_the_.php

Ian Bogost, "Gamification is Bullshit" http://www.bogost.com/blog/gamification_is_bullshit.shtml

Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," http://interactive.usc.edu/blog-old/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Jenkins_Narrative_Architecture.pdf

Jesper Juul, "Games Telling stories?-A brief note on games and narratives,"
<http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/>

Books most of which are available as epubs whose links can be found
<http://www.refworks.com/refshare2?site=037051143000000000/422131408431531578/art-cs-108> :

Bogost, Ian (2007). Persuasive games. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Brathwaite, B., Schreiber, I., & Books24x7, I. (2009). Challenges for game designers. Boston, Mass.: Charles River Media.

Brathwaite, B., & Schreiber, I. (2012). Breaking into the game industry :Advice for a successful career from those who have done it.

Castronova, E. (2007). Exodus to the virtual world :How online fun is changing reality (1st ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Castronova, E., & ebrary, I. (2005). Synthetic worlds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fullerton, T., & Safari Books Online. (2014). Game design workshop (3rd ed.). Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

Huizinga, J. (1955). Homo ludens;a study of the play-element in culture [Homo ludens.English]. Boston: Beacon Press.

Koster, R., & Safari Books Online. (2013). A theory of fun for game design (2nd ed.). Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media.

McGonigal, J. (2011). Reality is broken :Why games make us better and how they can change the world. New York: Penguin Press.

Rouse, R., (2005). Game design (2nd ed.). Plano, Tex.: Wordware Pub.

Salen, K., & Zimmerman, E. (2003). Rules of play: Game design fundamentals The MIT Press.

Salen, K., & Zimmerman, E. (2006). The game design reader :A rules of play anthology. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Please also be aware that the library has tremendous resources relating to games and game studies. We have a lib guide at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/GameStudies>

Library Liaison

Rebecca Kohn, Rebecca.Kohn@sjsu.edu Tel: (408) 808-2061 Website: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/art>

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

General Advice –

Fail early, and fail often. If you take chances in your proposal and draft there is always room to fix it in your final. A mediocre idea that is work-shopped through your peers on time creates a better project than an amazing idea that is realized the night before.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Game labs- 20%

Game labs are structured play or design sessions often followed by brief reflective writing, and in-class discussion. These sessions are done as a group and are very difficult to make up. LO2, LO3.

Blog - 20%

Students will be asked to maintain a weblog to publically post writings and responses to readings. Students will write no less than 200 words (approximately one 'typed' page and include images). Points will be given for both postings and peer review. LO1, LO4, LO5.

Participation - 10%

Active participation within groups and in discussion is expected. Performance can be tracked in CANVAS beginning the second week of class. LO4

Game 1: paper prototype – 10%

Design, play test and turn in a paper based game using the readings and your group as a development guide. Games will be evaluated according to the game rubric. LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7.

Game 2: videogame prototype - 10%

Design, play test and turn in a digital game using the readings and your group as a development guide. We shall use Game Maker for this prototype so that we can see the advantages of a toolkit like GM. Games will be evaluated according to the game rubric. LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7.

Midterm -10%

Midterm will cover essential vocabulary and concepts. The class will work on a study guide throughout the semester. LO1.

Final - Paper, Presentation, Game or Exam – 20%

The final project of this course will be negotiated between the individual and the instructor. It may be a formal paper, presentation (video or in person), third game or written exam. This form will be determined by the midterm. LO7.

Attendance

NOTE that University policy F69-24, "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading."

Grading Policy

Projects

Each project will be evaluated according to the following formula:

Technical Skill (20%) + Aesthetic Quality (20%) + Conceptual Depth (20%) + Writing (20%) + Followed Directions (20%) = 100% (multiply by points for project)

| | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| technical | Project exhibits considerable skill, innovation or extraordinary improvement in skill level and handling of the techniques compared to drafts and previous projects. | Project exhibits some skill or moderate improvement in skill level and handling of the techniques as measured from the drafts and previous projects. | Project is sloppy, rushed or doesn't use techniques learned in class. |
| aesthetic | Project exhibits considerable or extraordinary understanding of color, format, print quality, composition and other formal elements appropriate for project. Formal elements support conceptual theme of project. | Project exhibits a working understanding of color, format, print quality, composition and other formal elements appropriate for project. Formal elements partially supports conceptual theme of project. | Little or no consideration for the visual qualities of the work. |
| conceptual | Project exhibits a depth of knowledge and theme. Extraordinary relevancy and knowledge of subject. Visual elements support an idea. | Ideas represented in project are not clear or not realized. | Project is shallow and shows no consideration for a central idea. |
| writing | Readable and relevant to the work, the writing provides insights and clarity to the nature, production or ideas about the work. Writing is in a grammatically relevant writing style. | Writing is unclear or unnecessarily short, contributes little to meaning or understanding of work. | Writing is not readable, not understandable, not in English or not present. |
| project direction or process | Attention to details of project description and intention, deviations are pre-approved by instructor. | Project requirements are taken into consideration but work deviates from assignment without pre-approval of instructor. | Little or no requirements of project assignment are exhibited. |

| Letter Grade | Range |
|--------------|--------|
| A | 94-100 |
| A- | 90-93 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 84-86 |
| B- | 80-83 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 74-76 |
| C- | 70-73 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 65-66 |
| F | 0-64 |

Classroom Protocol

Student Responsibilities

- Students are responsible for all information presented in lectures and demonstrations, and through assigned readings and web related research.
- Students will present and critique their projects, drafts and proposals in class and on-line.
- Students are responsible for finding time to come in to the lab to complete assignments or use their own computer. Computer use and software is made available to students, it is your responsibility to take advantage of this or to purchase your own machines and software.
- Students are responsible for actively engaging in the course material by completing all course assignments and readings.
- In the course of the semester we will undoubtedly talk about things, which are not in the mainstream and may be controversial. If at any time you find the subject or content of this course objectionable you are encouraged bring that into the discussion. If however you find a presentation offensive you are permitted to quietly, without disrupting the class, excuse yourself. It is then your responsibility to contact the instructor for make-up work.
- Students will create a web portfolio that will display all assignments from this course on line - this portfolio is REQUIRED to pass the class.
- Additionally students are responsible for their own well-being. If you need help, it is your responsibility to ask for it.

Late Assignments

Assignments are to be turned in on time and complete. An assignment will not be considered complete until all elements are uploaded and fully working. Assignments that are turned in on time may be redone for full credit until the last week of class. It is most important to present your work publically. Note that project presentation days are mandatory, if a project is not presented on a critique day it may be considered late. Late assignments may receive a one time 10% penalty. University Policies.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Polling Technology

I will be using REEF Polling as a student response system in class this term. REEF Polling helps me to understand what you know and gives everyone a chance to participate in class. I will use REEF Polling to keep track of participation. Participation with REEF Polling will account for no more than 10% of the final grade.

Device Options:

You will have several options available to participate in clicker sessions, all options are available to you at **NO COST**: REEF Polling App: Allows you to use your smart phone, tablet, or even laptop in class as a clicker to participate. Clicker Remote: You can request to borrow a Clicker remote from eCampus (eCampus@sjsu.edu) for free. Remotes are to be returned to eCampus at the end of the semester.

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: <http://www.sjsu.edu/art/> or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, 408-924-4320, art@sjsu.edu

Art/CS 108: Introduction to Game Studies

Spring 17, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice. All changes will be publicly announced in the class forum and noted in CANVAS.

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jan 30 | Intro / prototyping exercise Library Pin Adopt a classic arcade game: https://archive.org/details/internetarcade |
| 1 | Feb 1 | DUE: Rules of Play: Chapter 7 & 8 (What is a game? What is a Videogame) – linked in Canvas DUE: Blogpost 1: Make a blog, and a post: Session Report Arcade Game ludology (what is a game, what is play, how is it related to culture?) game lab 0 (Design a game Today!) |
| 2 | Feb 6 | DUE: Reading: Johan Huizinga, "Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon," Homo Ludens linked to the CANVAS Site. playing games – and blogging about it. (Session Reports) |
| 2 | Feb 8 | EXERCISE: game lab 1 (card game/board game/ physical game) |
| 3 | Feb 13 | Blogpost 2 Due Boardgame Lab Challenges for Game Designers, Ch 1 (Braithwaite & Schreiber) |
| 3 | Feb 15 | Board Games / Card Games |
| 4 | Feb 20 | DUE: Ch 7 Fullerton: Prototyping game design 1 (paper prototype) |
| 4 | Feb 22 | Paper prototype playtest Blog 3 (Paper Prototype) |
| 5 | Feb 27 | DUE: Reading: MDA Framework: http://www.zubek.net/robert//publications/MDA.pdf Game analysis |
| 5 | Mar 1 | EXERCISE: game lab 2 – video game play Blog 4 (Video Games Played) |
| 6 | Mar 6 | video game engines/ toolkits |
| 6 | Mar 8 | DUE: Reading: Raph Koster, Chapter 4:"What Games Teach Us," A Theory of Fun for Game Design. epub through library, linked to Site. |
| 7 | Mar 13 | game design 2 Video Game Design Document |
| 7 | Mar 15 | virtual worlds / minecraft MMORPG |
| 8 | Mar 20 | casual games |
| 8 | Mar 22 | Videogame First Playable Blog 5 (first playable) |
| 9 | Mar 27-29 | Spring Break |

| Week | Date | Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | April 3 | game mods Modded Gameplay |
| 10 | April 5 | serious games / games for change |
| 11 | April 10 | DUE: Video Game Prototype Blog 6 (video game prototype) |
| 11 | April 12 | rpg / arg / larp |
| 12 | April 17 | Proposal for Final Project Due |
| 12 | April 19 | ARG / Transmedia Storytelling |
| 13 | April 24 | DUE: Reading: Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," ludology vs. narratology |
| 13 | April 26 | game lab 3 – GPS Games blog 7 (technology based non-video games) |
| 14 | May 1 | Midterm |
| 14 | May 3 | Draft of Final Blog 8 (final project) games as art/ art as games / game art |
| 15 | May 8 | gamification and marketing DUE: Reading: Ian Bogost, "Gamification is Bullshit" http://www.bogost.com/blog/gamification_is_bullshit.shtml |
| 15 | May 10 | Final Presentations |
| 16 | May 15 | Final Presentations |
| Final Exam | May 22, 1715-1930 | (Final Presentations / Final Play) Blog 9 (course reflection) |