

## **GAME 410: Advanced Game Design**

Term: Fall 2017

Section: 001

Prerequisites: GAME 310. 330

Room: Art & Design Building 2002

Meeting Time: M/W 4:30PM – 5:45PM

Instructor: James Casey

Office: Art & Design Building

Email: <mailto:jcasey9@gmu.edu>

Office Hours: By Appointment (Friday)

### **Course Description**

This course is for Computer Game Design Majors and serves as the second studio design course and the design capstone for the Major. This course expands on knowledge gained in the prerequisites GAME 310 and GAME 330. It serves as a capstone of design and as a precursor or supplement to GAME 490, the capstone for the Major.

This is a team project based class. As such, there are no tests, just projects. The most important being the midterm and final projects which are team based. Each student is responsible for their own work on each project, but also responsible for meeting the team's goals.

The primary focus of this course is the process of game development, which is learned by doing. Learning how to progress from the design to the prototype to the production phases will occur on each project assignment. For each project, students will learn to meet milestones and create a polished final game which meets design goals and is user friendly.

The goal of the class is to adopt the feel of a prototype team or indie development team.

### **Course Objectives**

- Understand and apply Schell's "Lens" approach to game design.
- Understand and develop professional game documentation and processes.
- Understand and implement the team-based game development process.
- Produce prototypes of designs in a team-based environment to demonstrate the above objectives.
- Apply critical thinking skills in each phase of development.

### **Requirements and Evaluation**

At the beginning of each class, students should be prepared to discuss any assigned reading, topics, or assignments. In addition, students should be prepared to discuss with the class the status and stage of their ongoing project(s). Lectures or class time dedicated to project development will follow along with, where possible, guest presentations or topic discussions.

## Required Texts/Materials:

Schell, Jesse, *"The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses"*

*NOTE: You can download for free the accompanying deck of cards to your iOS or Android device, just look for "art of game design" either in the Google Play or App Store.*

Access to a PC Desktop/Laptop – For project and coursework outside of class.

Access to a platform specific device – For development, testing, and presentation of project (as applicable).

Details on presentation requirements and course schedules will be available on Blackboard under Course Content.

## Recommended Materials:

USB Flash Drive – 2 GB for storing and transporting project data

Google Drive Account

## Grading

Grading will be based on the following criteria:

Class attendance / participation: 15%

Mid-term presentation / project: 20%

Assignments: 25%

Final presentation / project: 40%

Presentation is an important part of the grade. The midterm and final both require students to pitch their projects. Generally, this is done in front of the class to allow peer participation through questions and answers. The presentations are recorded for review of content and presentation style. This footage is viewed only by the instructor and the student or group involved, who receive a copy of the footage for their own evaluation.

The following scale is used for grading:

To receive a grade of "A" a student must achieve a minimum average grade of 90%.

To receive a grade of "B" a student must achieve a minimum average grade of 80%.

To receive a grade of "C" a student must achieve a minimum average grade of 70%.

To receive a grade of "D" a student must achieve a minimum average grade of 60%.

Failure to receive a "D" grade will result in a grade of "F".

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

## **MASON 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.

## **OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

## **OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:**

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200;  
<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES "Ask a Librarian"

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;

<http://caps.gmu.edu>

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

The University Catalog, <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/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.