

GAME 230 Policies & Course Overview Fall 2017

History of Computer Game Design
GAME 230 Section 001\ MW 10:30—11:45 \ 2003 Art & Design

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REQUIRED TEXTS

Donovan, T. (2010). *Replay: The history of video games*. East Sussex, UK: Yellow Ant.

- Other assigned readings will be available through Blackboard in pdf format or through the Mason Library.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive survey of the history of videogames. The class begins by exploring ancient games, early mechanical novelty machines, pinball and computers. The bulk of the class examines arcade games, modern console games and game hardware. This class will detail the people, the technology and the companies that have made videogames the multi-billion dollar industry that it is today. Hands-on study and analysis will include writing about, discussing and playing games past and present.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- A) Demonstrate a broad understanding of the significant early video games
- B) Identify the advances in the technologies that shaped the games industry
- C) Write effectively about the history of computer games/video games
- D) Engage in meaningful discussions regarding key persons in computer game history
- E) Understand the lineage of notable companies and games in the game industry

Note: Attendance and active participation are vital to your success in meeting the outcomes above. Please come to class prepared for discussion and engagement with the assigned texts, and seize our time together in class as an opportunity to co-create knowledge with me and your peers as we go through the semester.

REQUIREMENTS and EVALUATION

At the beginning of each class meeting, students should be prepared to discuss the assigned readings, topic assignments, and game examples. Class meetings will consist of lectures, discussion, film screening, game play, peer review, and hands on activities that often require collaboration with classmates.

The first half of the semester will involve engagement with our text and the topics contained therein as students begin to develop ideas for an original research paper. As the semester progresses, the original project will be revisited in various forms and formats. Throughout the

semester, students will be ‘quizzed’ on written material in order to promote lasting, deep learning of the material for future coursework.

The student’s final grade will consist of the following assignments:

- 30% Quizzes (three worth 10% each)
- 10% 1st-half Participation Reflection: Bb Assignment
- 10% Idea / Topic Memo (Research Paper)
- 10% Abstract & Annotated Bibliography (Research Paper)
- 10% Digital Story Revision (Research Paper)
- 30% Final Paper—Due on Bb by 11:59 PM, WEDNESDAY 12/6

- *NOTE: (October 20th) Midterm Progress Reporting Due—(Quiz 1, Quiz 2, Participation Reflection 1, and Topic Memo; together these account for only 40% of your final grade).*
- *Please consult with your instructor for questions regarding your grade in the class if you are confused. Though every attempt will be made to keep Bb records timely and accurate, the instructor will keep a separate standing record of grades that will be used to calculate marks at the end of the course.*

POLICIES of NOTE

Formatting/Professionalism

All projects must be submitted in the format dictated by the assignment. Generally, this means papers to be produced in the APA style (with title page when appropriate) and submitted as instructed.

- Some written will be submitted via (paper) hard copy in class—usually for peer review.
- All written work submitted through Blackboard must be in PDF or .doc(x) format.
- Video submissions must be in .mp4 format.
- All files submitted must be named to include: *student last name, the assignment, and the date.*
 - Examples: *Hudson_Mission_One_031516; Jane Doe Final Paper May 5th 2017; etc.*

Assumptions

It is assumed that students are familiar with APA format or are familiar with resources that contain such guidelines for writing assignments. It is also assumed that students have regular access to email and the Internet, so they will be able to receive updates and participate electronically when necessary. Any issues with email or Bb access should be taken up with university ITU.

Late Work

Late work will only be accepted without penalty in the case of a documented medical illness or another situation that is out of your control. Other late work will be reduced by a letter grade for each class period it is late. Assignments are due at the beginning of class, and cannot be worked on during class time unless the instructor gives permission.

Class Participation

Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions, answer questions when prompted, and in general, add to the collective dialogue. Participation in class discussions and activities is necessary for the course. Some of the information for the course can be found in the text, but not everything. The lecture will cover additional information and facilitate discussions that you will not want to miss, so come to class.

This course will utilize Qwickly, a Blackboard tool for taking attendance. At the outset of each class meeting, students will be given a unique code to 'check-in' as attending class. This code is entered on Bb and your attendance is recorded.

Online Participation

Blackboard (Bb) will be your friend in finding information, exchanging ideas, and submitting work during the term. If you have questions on using Bb please ask. I hope you utilize the technology to take our discussions past two meetings a week and to get feedback on your assignments.

Email Policy

Students must use their MasonLIVE or gm.u.edu email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

Students With Disabilities

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

Honor Code

George Mason University has an Honor Code that requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

University Catalog

Students are to be aware of the policies listed in the University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>. University dates concerning withdrawal are not negotiable by the professor. Other questions regarding university and program policies can be directed towards the Assistant Director of CGD (me) outside of class time.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Our experience this semester is YOURS—make the most of it. I am very excited about our semester and think I've crafted a rewarding, useful, intellectually stimulating, (fun?), course. Please don't be afraid to discuss your ideas with me, respectfully, and always make me aware in clarifications are needed. Taking each assignment, even those not associated with your final mark for the course, seriously and completing it to the best of your ability is the only way to maximize the benefits of this course. As an individual you have an important contribution to the class; as a group you can maximize the benefits of our time together.

Never hesitate to contact me—I'm here as your resource.