

# GAME 300: Portfolio Preparation

George Mason University  
College of Visual and Performing Arts  
Computer Game Design  
V1.1

**Room:** Art and Design Building, Rm 2002

**Term:** Fall 2016

**Section:** 002

**Class Hours:** Tuesday 6:20-7:10 PM

**Prerequisites:** GAME 231 and 232, with a 'C' or better.

**Instructor:** Paul Eric Piccione

**Contact:** [ppiccion@gmu.edu](mailto:ppiccion@gmu.edu)

**Credits:** 1

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 3 pm-5 pm or by appt.

**Office:** Art and Design Building, Rm 2021

## Course description:

Student creates and refines an online portfolio to use throughout the course of study in presenting projects and to aid in internship application and professional development.

## Objectives

Student will understand what makes an effective portfolio.

Student will understand the language of portfolio critiques and participate effectively in peer critiques.

Student will understand how to manage a web portfolio, including acquiring a web host.

Student will understand how to effectively present content.

Student will understand how to package, render, and assemble multi-media content for use on the web.

Student will understand how to effectively leverage their portfolio in an interview.

Student will have an efficient portfolio at the end of the course.

## Assessment and Grading:

### Assignments

Students will be given several assignments throughout this course. Students will also be working on new content for their portfolios. New content will be turned in and graded. Specifics for each will be given on Blackboard. **It is the students' responsibility to refer to Blackboard to see the exact date and time assignments are due.**

### Quizzes

At the instructor's discretion, there may be in-class "pop" quizzes covering assigned readings.

### Final Portfolios

Students will turn in their final portfolio during week 15. Specifics will be given on Blackboard.

### Classroom Participation

Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions, answer questions when prompted, and in general, add to the collective dialogue.

### Grade Weighting and Scale

All grading is done on a point scale used to assess assignments, participation in classroom activities, and the final project. At the end of the course, the student's grade is a percentage of total points earned over total points possible. Students will see the point value for each assignment posted on Blackboard.

<u>Coursework</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
Assignments (each)	Varies (see Blackboard assignment)
Final Portfolio	200
Classroom Participation	50
Quizzes (each)	50

## Grade Scale

To receive a grade of "A" a student must earn a minimum of 90% of the coursework point total.  
To receive a grade of "B" a student must earn a minimum of 80% of the coursework point total.  
To receive a grade of "C" a student must earn a minimum of 70% of the coursework point total.  
To receive a grade of "D" a student must earn a minimum of 60% of the coursework point total.  
Failure to receive a "D" grade will result in a grade of "F".

Failure to turn in a Final Project will result in a grade of 'F' for the course, regardless of the student's point total, as this project replaces the final exam.

**\*\*\*Note that after points are totaled, the instructor may adjust a student's final grade to better reflect their accomplishments.\*\*\***

## 'C' Grade Minimum

Starting fall 2012, students must have earned a 'C' grade or higher in prerequisite courses in the Game Design Major and Minor. For example, to take GAME 398, a 'C' or higher must have been earned in GAME 231.

## Grading Criteria

Assignment and projects are graded based on the criteria given below:

- completeness
- ambition/effort
- specification adherence
- technical execution
- aesthetic qualities

Specific criteria are given on Blackboard for each assignment.

## Late Work and Make-up Policy

The first late assignment is given half credit. ***No late work will be accepted beyond the first.*** Please pay careful attention to the DUE DATE & TIME for each assignment. **DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!!!** If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from finishing an assignment, the student must contact the instructor BEFORE the assignment is due.

## Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences reduce a student's final grade using the chart below. Two tardies equal one absence. Email the instructor if you know you will be missing class.

## Deductions for Absences

1 to 2	No deduction
3	-1 letter grade
4	-2 letter grades
5+	Grade of 'F'

Each class is a building block for the next. Absent students miss important material and typically do not do well in this course. The video tutorials do not replace the lectures but supplement them. In the event that you have to miss class, you are responsible for making up the work and completing the assignments on time.

## Resources

**A traditional textbook is not used in this course.** Instructions and lessons will be covered in class, in some cases with online video examples linked on Blackboard that will review the in-class lessons. In such cases, these are meant to augment class lectures, not replace them and ARE NOT a viable alternative to attending class.

### Game Lab

In the Art and Design building, room **2002** is a monitored computer lab available outside of class hours for students to work on their projects. Hours are posted on the door and on the program website: <http://game.gmu.edu/students.php>

## Required Class Material:

**It is the student's responsibility to obtain consistent, stable access software used in the class (listed below).** Students who can use the lab to complete all assignments are not required to have a computer to do the coursework.

### Software Needed:

The software below is needed in this course. It is installed on all class and game lab computers. Students do not need to acquire this software IF they are able to use the lab to complete assignments

- Zip or Rar archive program
- FRAPS (free version available)
- Handbrake (free version available)
- Photoshop. There's a 30-day free trial here: <http://www.adobe.com/downloads.html?PID=2294914>. There is also a student monthly discount at <http://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>.
- Online backup, aka Dropbox, or google drive.  
It is strongly suggested that students use an online backup service to prevent their project files from being lost. Every semester multiple students report lost work due to damaged or misplaced thumbdrives, corrupted files, or dead hard drives. Dropbox, Google Drive, and Sugarsync are example services that students should explore. Most services offer free storage that is sufficient in size for this course.

### Hardware Needed:

- Students will need a USB thumbdrive or USB hard drive formatted as FAT32 (a cross-compatible format for Mac/PC). This is used to save class work. Suggested minimum free storage space is 4GB.

## Web Hosting Fees

Creating an online portfolio is the core of this course. Students are responsible for acquiring an online service to host their portfolio. Although some options are free, many are not. Students taking this course should expect to spend \$50 to \$100 in web hosting fees. Additionally, portfolio templates usually cost \$35 to \$50. It's a worthwhile investment.

## **GMU Honor Code:**

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity 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.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

## **Disability Accommodations**

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, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

## **Privacy**

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.

## Course Schedule

### Week

<b>I</b> 8/30	<b>Introduction; Why Portfolios Matter</b>
<b>II</b> 9/6	<b>The Good, the Bad and the Awesome!</b>
<b>III</b> 9/13	<b>--Portfolio project meetings--</b>
<b>IV</b> 9/20	<b>--Portfolio project meetings--</b>
<b>V</b> 9/27	<b>Highlighting Your Strengths</b>
<b>VI</b> 10/4	<b>Portfolio Layouts and Navigation</b>
<b>XII</b> 10/11	<b><i>No Class</i></b>
<b>XIII</b> 10/18	<b>Portfolio Critique Presentations</b>
<b>IX</b> 10/25	<b>Finding a Webhost</b>
<b>X</b> 11/1	<b>Rendering Beauty Shots</b>
<b>XI</b> 11/8	<b>Video Editing Software for Demo Reels</b>
<b>XII</b> 11/15	<b>--New portfolio content review--</b> <b>Checkpoint Due: Student Portfolio First Pass</b>
<b>XIII</b> 11/22	<b>TBD (Thanksgiving Week)</b>
<b>XV</b> 11/29	<b>TBD</b>
<b>XV</b> 12/6	<b>Final Portfolios Presentations</b> <b>Final portfolios due</b> <b>New Portfolio content assignment due</b>