*** In order to continue in this class beyond the first week, all enrolled students must complete the* Course Intro & Agreement Form *before the start of class in the second week of the semester. ***

Eugenio María de Hostos Community College - Humanities Dept.

Game Design 110

Visual Design for Games

Spring 2020 Syllabus

HostosGAME DESIGN PROGRAM   Hostos Community College   CUNY THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

GD110 Visual Design for Games

Basic Course Info
Game Design 110: Visual Design for Games

3.0 credit hours

Class Section
GD110-612A (61969)

Spring 2020

Fridays 4 - 6:45pm in room C-456

Instructors
Prof. Juno Morrow (she/her or they/them)
Email: jmorrow@hostos.cuny.edu
Emergency Email: juno.morrow@gmail.com (emergencies only!)
Phone: (718) 518 6682
Office Drop-in Hours: Mondays 1-3pm, Wednesdays 5-6pm, C-415

Prof. Marcelo Díaz Viana Neto (he/him)
Email: TBD
Phone: TBA
Office Hours: TBD

Course Description
This course serves as an introduction to visual design concepts and artistic tools utilized by designers in the game industry. Students will employ visual design strategies and methods within the context of games with an emphasis on aesthetics and usability. Design topics include characters, textures, environments and user interfaces.

Prerequisites
DD101 Digital Toolbox

Course Objectives
- Learn how composition, shapes, colors and textures are used in visual design
- Understand the fundamentals of visual hierarchy and composition
- Familiarize oneself with common tools and design processes used in video game development and use them for assignments
- Learn the vocabulary of 2D and 3D asset production and use it in class

Required Textbooks
Leborg, Christian. *Visual Grammar*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.

Schell, Jessie. *The Art of Game Design, Third Edition*. CRC Press, 2019.

Required Materials	• Bound sketchpad with cleanly removable sheets
	○ Size A5 or larger
	○ Dot grid paper or graph paper highly recommended
	• Mechanical pencil 0.5mm
	• Mouse (for students using personal laptops)

Commitment to Diversity and Safer Spaces (source)

We understand the classroom as a space for practicing freedom; where one may challenge psychic, social, and cultural borders and create meaningful artistic expressions. To do so we must acknowledge and embrace the different identities and backgrounds we inhabit. This means that we will use preferred pronouns, respect self-identifications, and be mindful of special needs. Disagreement is encouraged and supported, however our differences affect our conceptualization and experience of reality, and it is extremely important to remember that certain gender, race, sex, and class identities are more privileged while others are undermined and marginalized. Consequently, this makes some people feel more protected or vulnerable during debates and discussions. A collaborative effort between the students and instructor is needed to create a supportive learning environment. While everyone should feel free to experiment creatively and conceptually, if a class member points out that something you have said or shared with the group is offensive, avoid being defensive; instead approach the discussion as a valuable opportunity for us to grow and learn from one another. Alternatively if you feel that something said in discussion or included in a piece of work is harmful, you are encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Assignments

This is a studio course involving a combination of lectures and project activities. Staying on top of the weekly assignments is essential in order to keep up with quickly moving course content. In assignments, students are expected to integrate the weekly lesson content, as well as researching and applying additional tools and techniques found outside of class.

Assignment Submission/ Class Ryver

Assignments are required to be turned in as a post on the class team topic at least an hour before the start of class. We will be reviewing that week's posted assignments during this pre-class period. If a student has not posted the assignment by the expiration date/time, it will be marked with a grade of 0 points. Students that have a display name not matching their roster name will not be able to receive credit.

We will plan on ensuring access to Ryver and the class team on the first day of class. Please e-mail me or see me during office hours for any technical problems you may be having.

Extra Credit

Throughout the semester, there may be opportunities for extra credit to be earned. In order to receive the extra credit, students must complete the assignment in full and post it to the team by the deadline. Extra credit opportunities will be listed in the Extra Credit team on Ryver.

There may also be additional extra credit opportunities offered during class time and hidden in lecture materials with specific instructions for receiving credit. For the first extra credit opportunity (1 point), type "Extra Credit!" in the comment section at the end of the Course Intro & Agreement Form. You must do this when submitting the form before the second week of class in order to receive credit. Please do not share this top secret information with your peers.

Participation

Every student begins the term with 15 participation points. Regular attendance is required in order to maintain a proper grasp of the material, participate in discussions and class activities, as well as maintain a good participation grade.

Attendance will be taken every single class. Students enrolled in this course will be allowed a fixed number of flexible absences for any reason throughout the semester (including both those that would traditionally be considered excused and unexcused). No points will be deducted from the grade for all absences up to the number chosen or allotted by default for the student.

Students will indicate how many flexible absences they want allotted before the second class of the semester. **There will be no excused absences beyond the number allotted.** It is recommended that students choose the smallest number of absences that they can strive to achieve. Setting high, but realistic standards for oneself encourages better performance. The option chosen will be permanent for the remainder of the semester and cannot be changed. Students who do not indicate how many absences via the Course Intro and Agreement form by the second week will be assigned the default number of absences (3).

For the first class session missed in excess of the allotted amount, 15 participation points will automatically be deducted. **Additional absences will trigger an automatic failure of the course.** Lateness is highly discouraged; 3 tardies will be treated as one absence. Students arriving more than half an hour late will be considered absent and marked accordingly.

Absences on account of emergencies will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, these are exceedingly rare and should not be something that comes up more than once every few years.

Grade Breakdown

Assignment	Description	Grade Pct

Weekly Unit Assignments	Students are given weekly assignments throughout the semester applying the course content of that week.	60%
Final Portfolio Project	Students will combine their work throughout the semester into one interactive portfolio piece, demonstrating the various art and design aspects that went into their game concept. This will be accessible online via an online project page on itch.io.	20%
Final Presentation	Students must present their portfolios to the class. Students will provide and receive constructive feedback on their projects.	5%
Participation	This portion is based on in-class participation. Every student begins the term with 15 participation points. On-time attendance is expected for each of the 15 class sessions.	15%
Total		**100%**

Hostos-wide Academic Policies

Hostos Community College believes that developing student's abilities to think through issues and problems by themselves is central to the educational process. Since the Hostos College degree signifies that the student knows the material s/he has studied, and the practice of academic dishonesty results in grades or scores that do not reflect how much or how well the student has learned, understood, or mastered the material, the College will investigate any form of academic dishonesty brought to its attention. If the charge of academic dishonesty is proved, the College will impose sanctions. The three most common forms of academic dishonesty are cheating, plagiarism, and bribery.

Cheating

In the collegiate setting, cheating is defined as the purposeful misrepresentation of another's work as one's own. Faculty and students alike are responsible for upholding the integrity of this institution by not participating either directly or indirectly in act of cheating and by discouraging others from doing so.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which occurs when persons, even if unintentionally, fail to acknowledge appropriately the sources for the ideas, language, concepts, inventions, etc.

referred to in their own work. Thus, any attempt to claim another's intellectual or artistic work as one's own constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Bribery

In the collegiate setting, bribery involves the offering, promising, or giving of items of value, such as money or gifts, to a person in a position of authority, such as a teacher, administrator, or staff member, so as to influence his/her judgment or conduct in favor of the student. The offering of sexual favors in exchange for a grade, test score, or other academic favor, shall be considered attempted bribery. The matter of sexual favors, either requested or offered, in exchange for a grade, test score or other academic favor, shall also be handled as per the Sexual Harassment procedures of the College.

College Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings in the courses for which they are registered. Classes begin at the times indicated in the official schedule of classes. Arrival in class after the scheduled starting time constitutes lateness.

The maximum number of absences is limited to 15% of the number of scheduled class hours per semester and a student absent more than the indicated 15% is deemed excessively absent. Attendance is monitored from the first official day of classes. In the case of excessive absences or lateness, the instructor has the right to lower the grade, assign a failing grade, or assign additional written work or readings.

Absences due to late registration, change of program, or extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis by the instructor. Each department and program may specify in writing a different attendance policy. Instructors are required to keep an official record of student attendance and inform each class of the College's or department's attendance policy.

NOTE:

- Any work missed during any period of absence must be made up by the student.
- To meet financial aid criteria, a student must attend class at least once in the first three weeks and once in either the fourth or fifth week of class.

ADA Statement

As required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure equal opportunity for students with verified disabilities.

If you have a disability that requires accommodations, contact:

Accessibility Resource Center
Savoy (D) Building
120 Walton Ave, Room D101P

Bronx, NY 10451

Phone: (718) 518-4454 (Voice/TTY)

If you are already registered with ARC and have a letter from them verifying that you are a qualified student with a disability, please present the letter to the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor will work with you and ARC to plan and implement appropriate accommodations.

Please Note:

Students who do not register with the ARC office and have their disability verified are not eligible to receive any special accommodations.

Additional Policies

- CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity
- Política de Integridad Académica de CUNY [Spanish]
- Policy on retention of academic records
- CUNY Uniform Grade Symbols: Glossary and Guidelines
- CUNY Testing Policy for students with disabilities
- CUNY Policy on Drug and Alcohol
- CUNY Testing Policies and Procedures
- State Education Department rules on awarding credit for same courses in different degree programs.
- Religious Accommodation of Students - Memo from General Council.
- CUNY student complaint procedure
- Board of Trustees resolution on articulation and transfer

Tentative Schedule

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change

Please check the class page for the most recent assignment descriptions

Week	Date	Unit	Topic	Tools Used	Assignment Due	Reading Due
1	1/31 (M/J)	Visual Design Principles	Course expectations and introduction, Art Direction for Games			
2	2/7 (J)		Basic Concepts of Visual Design	Analog	VDP1: Core Concept Description, mood boards	Visual Grammar p.1-46 Schell, Ch23-The Look and Feel of a World Is Defined by Its Aesthetics, p427-436 (Ch20 in 1st Ed, Ch22 in 2nd Ed)
3	2/14 (J)		Composition and Organization of Visual Information	Adobe Illustrator	VDP2: Title Design/Logo for game concept	Visual Grammar
4	2/21 (J)		Color, Texture	Adobe Photoshop	VDP3: Itch Page Design	Video Game Typography
5	2/28 (J)	2D Art	Character Design	Analog	VDP4: Color scheme variants	Schell, Ch20-Worlds Contain Characters, p371-393 (Ch18 in 1st Ed)
6	3/6 (J)		Pixel Art	Piskel	2D1: Character sketch, description and attributes	
7	3/13 (J)		Sprite Animation	Piskel	2D2: Pixel Portraits	
8	3/20 (M)	3D Art	3D Intro, 3D Sculpting	Blender	2D3: Sprite Sheets (idle and walk)	
9	3/27 (M/J)		OPTIONAL: 3D Modeling Live Session	Blender	3D1: Model ANYTHING (2-3hrs)	

10	4/3 (M/J)		UV Unwrapping and Textures	Adobe Photoshop, Blender	(MAKE UP/EXTRA CREDIT) 3D2: Model a prop for your game	
11	~~4/10~~ ~~4/17~~ 4/24 (J)		3D Animation, Rigging and Motion Capture	Adobe Fuse, Mixamo	3D3: Texture/Material (soda can or uv-unwrapped custom model)	
12	~~4/24~~ 5/1 (J)	UX/UI	Physical Interfaces	Unity	3D4: Rigged Character FBX with appropriate animations	**Play**: Pica Pic (at least 5 games) **Read**: Why Does Interaction Design Matter? Let's Look At The Evolving Subway Experience by Robert Fabricant
13	5/1 (J)		Digital Interfaces	Unity	~~UI1: Interface Paper Prototypes and write-up~~	**Read**: Learn Better UX/UI From Video Games
14	5/8 (J/M)		**Final Critique**		Final project	
15	5/15		**Make-up Day**			

Links & Resources

Misc.

The Art of 'Monument Valley 2' (free)

Art Direction Bootcamp: "Graphic Design Thinking" (free)

Akira Art Direction Analysis Part 1

Akira Art Direction Analysis Part 2

Designing Journey

Developing the Art of Fortnite

Stylization/Expression

Put a Face on It: The Aesthetics of Cute (free)

Environmental/Level Design and Lighting

++[Invisible Intuition: Blockmesh and Lighting Tips to Guide Players and Set the Mood](#) (free)

[World Building with Architecture](#)

Color

[Color in Video Games](#)

Colour Theory for Game Artists ([part 1](#)) ([part 2](#))

[Adobe Color](#)

Pixel Art

++[8 Bit & '8 Bitish' Graphics-Outside the Box](#) (free)

++[The Art of 'FAITH': Horror at 192x160 Pixels](#)

[Brackey's Pixel Art Photoshop Tutorial](#)

[Piskel App](#)

Character Design

[Why Fashion in (Most) Games Sucks, and Why You Should Care](#) (free)

[Repopulating the Earth: Character Production on 'Horizon Zero Dawn'](#) (free)

++[Creating Compelling Characters: Insights from a Panel of Character Concept Artists](#) (free)

[Creating Strong Video Game Characters](#) (free)

[The Inexplicable Sexiness of Ivy Valentine](#)

Visual Design Fundamentals

++[Critiquing Game Visuals: Common Problems and How to Solve Them](#)

++[Art Direction Bootcamp: Digital Beauty: Visual Emotions in Game Development](#)

+++[Creating Captivating and Simple Visuals: The Power of Intentional Design](#)

[Noun Project](#)

[dafont](#)

Textures & Materials

https://cc0textures.com/

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Z8lYDYRvj-OkJkMrxPP6HwqOnzi-44fYWDxuvAGBa2I/edit#gid=0

Readings:

Schell, Ch20-Worlds Contain Characters, p371-393 (Ch18 in 1st Ed)

Schell, Ch18-Indirect Control Method #4: Visual Design, p347-351 (Ch16 in 1st Ed)

Schell, Ch21-Worlds Contain Spaces, p395-409 (organizing elements in games) (Ch19 in 1st Ed)

Schell, Ch23-The Look and Feel of a World Is Defined by Its Aesthetics, p427-436 (Ch20 in 1st Ed, Ch22 in 2nd Ed)

Schell, Ch15-Players Play Games through an Interface, p267-295 (Ch13 in 1st Ed)