Game Studio
Game Design 210
Professor Bethancourt

Meets: M: 9:30-12:15 C-456
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Course description: This course focuses first on introducing students to how small and large scale game development takes place in the games industry. Students study the different career paths within a company, the development cycle, game marketing and peripheral game markets. Then students develop a group project where in the class creates a casual game from initial concept to launch on the Web using Flash. Over the course of the semester students are introduced to the principles of developing a project and character design, programming games as well as testing game play in order to understand methods of quality assurance.

Prerequisites: GD101 Intro to Games; GD105 Intro to Programming; DD112 Intro to Web Design

Course objectives:
By the end of the course, students will have learned:
- About the different possible career paths available within the Games Industry
- About the Game Production process and development cycle
- Stronger collaborative design practice
- Game Design methodologies, concepts, and development

Credit Hours: 3 hours

Required reading:
- McCarthy, David. *The Art of Producing Games*. Florence: Course Technoogy PTR, 2005.

Expected: While this class has not been designated as 'web-enhanced,' it is expected that students wishing to take full advantage of the class have familiarity with the Internet, access to the Internet from home or elsewhere, and an active Hostos email account, which they check daily.

Due dates:
Reflecting the realities of real-world expectations, late assignments will not be accepted.

Digital Games assignments:
        This is a studio course involving a combination of lecture, project activities, and discussion of assigned readings. Staying on top of the reading assignments is essential in order to be informed and make contributions during in-class discussions and activities. These readings will reference and introduce concepts and vocabulary that may at times be unfamiliar and so require students to do independent research. This will be expected.
        15% of the grade will be based on engagement and consistent attendance. The balance of the grade will be determined by several projects undertaken over the 15 week course.

Assignment	Description	Points
Reading Responses (RR) 1-4	During the first half of the class students will be observing lectures on and reading about game production methodologies. The first four assignments will be to write response papers that relate the concepts covered in the lectures with those in the readings. These papers should be no longer than two pages in length and each assignment will address particular topic dictated by the professor.	5 each
Game Designer Presentation (GDP)	For this project students will be required to create a presentation that focuses on one important game designer and their contribution to the field. The presentation should cover the designer's background, inspiration, methodology, noted game titles and what else they are noted for within the industry. Students will be required to read at least two interviews with the designer and provide at least 4 other references for their presentation.	10
Game Proposal One-Sheet (GP)	Each student will prepare a game proposal one-sheet and short presentation. These proposals will detail the goal of a game that they have devised, its core mechanic, narrative, and what assets will be needed to build it. In addition it will be important for students to outline and describe influential precedents being referenced. The entire class will review the proposals in order to select two games, which they will form into groups in order to build over the course of the remainder of the semester.	10
User Testing Reports (UTR)	Over the second half of the semester the class will break down into two or more production teams with the task of designing, building, testing and launching a game. Each group will be broken down into members representing traditional industry development roles. Students will be responsible for developing their games in a series of three prototypes and testing their games at each of these milestones. The user testing will be documented by the group in a series of reports that will be turned in and evaluated by the professor. The structure and documentation for these tests will be covered in class.	5 each

Final Game (FG)	At the end of the nine week development cycle, each group will be expected to have a final playable game and will be asked to put together a short presentation documenting their development process for critique.	15
Game Design Document (GDD)	Accompanying their final game, each team will be responsible for producing an industry-quality 10-page Game Design Document that outlines the Narrative, Mechanics, Game Flow, Assets, and Industry Competition	15
Attendance / Participation	Participation is based primarily on attendance and participation in class. Every student begins the term with 15 participation points. Attendance is mandatory for every single scheduled class. For each class missed, 3 participation points will be deducted. Tardy students will have 1 participation points deducted. More than three absences will amount to a failure, as a student may not earn less than 0 participation points.	15
Total		**100**

Notes on the grading criteria:
Work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
- Understanding and interpretation of readings
- Research and Analysis of related issues
- Contribution to in-class discussion

Academic policies (from Catalogue):
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 (from Catalogue):
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 (from Catalogue):
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 (from Catalogue):
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 (from Catalogue):
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 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.

Course schedule:
Readings must be completed for each class. Not all assigned texts will be discussed in class or covered in the class lectures.

Class	Lecture	Due	Reading
1	• Class Introduction • History of Game Production		Rogers: Who Makes This Stuff?
2	• Preproduction • Game Design	RR1	McCarthy: The Preproduction Stage + Game Design
3	• Programming • Level Design	RR2	McCarthy: Chapters 11 & 12
4	Art & Audio	RR3	McCarthy: Chapters 13 & 14
5	Testing	RR4	McCarthy: Chapter 17
6	Game Designer Project Presentations	GDP	
7	Game Proposal Presentations	GP	
8	Core Mechanic Prototype Testing		
9	Art Development	UTR1	
10	Prototype 2 Testing		
11	Audio Development	UTR2	
12	Prototype 3 Testing		
13	Marketing / Promoting	UTR3	
14	Workshop		
15	Final Game Launch	FG / GDD	