Game Design 210:
Game Studio

Eugenio María de Hostos Community College - Humanities Dept.

** 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. **

Fall 2018 Syllabus

Game Studio

Basic Course Info

Course	GD210 - 509A
Class Number	34198
Course Title	Game Studio
Meets	Fall 2018 / Tu 2-4:45PM / C-456
Credit Hours	3
Instructor	Professor Juno Morrow (they/them or she/her)
Class Site	hostosmdp.ryver.com (Private Team: F18 - GD210 Game Studio)
Email	jmorrow@hostos.cuny.edu or juno.morrow@gmail.com (emergencies only!)
Office/Hours	C-415 - Mon 5-7pm, Thu 11:30am - 12:30pm **(by appointment)**
Phone	718.518.6682

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 to create a game from initial concept to final production. Over the course of the semester students are introduced to the principles of developing a project using iterative design methodologies.

Prerequisites

GD105 Game Programming I; GD201 Introduction to Digital Games

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

Recommended Reading

- Fullerton, T., Hoffman, S. and Swain, C. (2008). *Game Design Workshop*. San Francisco, CA [u.a.]: CMP Books [u.a.].
- Rogers, S. (2014). *Level Up!*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Salen, K. and Zimmerman, E. (2010). *Rules of Play*. Cambridge, Mass. [u.a.]: The MIT Press.

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 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 game related assignments undertaken over the 15 week course.

Submission & Class Ryver

Assignments are required to be turned in as a post on the class team blog on at least an hour before the start of class. I 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 Forum](#) 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 (3 points), 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 45 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.

For each class session missed in excess of the allotted amount, **15** participation points will automatically be deducted. 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.

Severe, life-changing emergencies leading to excess absences 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	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	80 (total)

	by the professor.	
Game Design Profile Presentation (GDP)	For this project students will be required to create a presentation that profiles one important indie game or designer from a design perspective and its contribution to the field. The presentation should cover the game's development, design process, designer/developer background, inspiration, methodology, noted game titles from the developer and what else they are noted for within the industry. Students will be required to read at least two interviews with the designer or development team and provide at least 4 other references for their presentation.	30
Capstone Project: Game Pitch & One-Sheet (GP)	Each student will prepare a game proposal one-sheet and short pitch presentation. These proposals will detail the goal of a game that they have devised, its core mechanics, 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 or more games, which they will form into groups in order to build over the course of the remainder of the semester.	30
Capstone Project: Weekly Devlogs (3,WDL)	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 devlog reports that will be publicly posted and evaluated by the professor. The structure and documentation for these tests will be covered in class.	30 (total)
Capstone Project: Final Game (FG)	At the end of the nine week development cycle, each group will be expected to have a final playable game (45 points) and will be asked to put together a short presentation documenting their development process for critique (15 points).	60
Capstone Project: Game Design Document (GDD) / Documentation (Webpage)	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. Each game will also need a public/live webpage. A promotional video is highly recommended and may be included as extra credit.	50
Attendance / Participation	This portion is based primarily on attendance and participation in class. Every student begins the term with 45 participation points. Attendance is mandatory for every single scheduled class. See	45

	Participation for more info.	
Total	**Taken out of 300 points (>325 points possible)**	**300**

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

Grade Conversion Chart
Please note that achievement levels are intended for entertainment purposes only and do not necessarily correspond to one's future in the industry or a typical career path.

Total Points	Achievement Level	GPA	Grade
>300	**Creative Director**	**4.0**	A
278-300	Senior Designer	4.0	A
269-277	Game Designer	3.7	A-
260-268	Junior Game Designer	3.3	B+
248-259	Level Designer	3.0	B
239-247	QA Tester	2.7	B-
230-238	Freelance Tester	2.3	C+
209-229	Paid Intern	2.0	C
180-208	Unpaid Intern	1.0	D
<180	Hobbyist	0.0	F

Tentative Course Schedule

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

<u>Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change</u>
Please check the class blog/Ryver for the most recent assignments and updates

Week	Date	Lecture	Due	Reading
1	2018.08.28	Class Intro; Class Blog; Stages of Game Development		Rogers: Who Makes This Stuff?
2	2018.09.04	Game dev. roles; Iron Designer Challenge	Course Agreement Form; RR1	Game Design Workshop Chapter 15
3	2018.09.25	**NO CLASSES 9/11 and 9/18** **Game Design Profile Presentations**	GDP	
4	2018.10.02	Game Feel; QA/Polish; introduce Capstone Project	RR2	McCarthy: Chapters 13-14
5	2018.10.09	Activity	RR3	
6	2018.10.16	**Game Pitch Presentations**; Core Mechanic Prototype Workshopping	GP	
7	2018.10.23	Studio Assignments; Values at Play	RR4	McCarthy: Chapter 17
8	2018.10.30	Art Development; TBD		
9	2018.11.06	Audio Development; Prototype 1 Testing		
10	2018.11.13	Prototype 2 Testing	WDL1-3	
11	2018.11.20	Marketing / Promotion; Prototype 3 Testing	WDL1-3	
12	2018.11.27	The Future of Games; Workshop **GDD DUE!!!**	GDD	
13	2018.12.04	Work day - Presentation outline and alpha build due (for digital games)	Presentation Outline; Alpha Build	
	2018.12.07	**Public demo session for**		

	5-7pm	**DUM-D Arcade**		
14	2018.12.11	Work Day - beta build due (for digital games)	Beta Build	
15	2018.12.18	**Final Game and ALL DOCUMENTATION due. Final presentations and play session**	FG, Doc	

Tips for Working Successfully in a Group

From the Building Virtual Worlds class at Carnegie Mellon's ETC Program

Meet people properly. It all starts with the introduction. Then, exchange contact information, and make sure you know how to pronounce everyone's names. Exchange phone #s, and find out what hours are acceptable to call during.

Find things you have in common. You can almost always find something in common with another person, and starting from that baseline, it's much easier to then address issues where you have differences. This is why cities like professional sports teams, which are socially galvanizing forces that cut across boundaries of race and wealth. If nothing else, you probably have in common things like the weather.

Make meeting conditions good. Have a large surface to write on, make sure the room is quiet and warm enough, and that there aren't lots of distractions. Make sure no one is hungry, cold, or tired. Meet over a meal if you can; food softens a meeting. That's why they "do lunch" in Hollywood.

Let everyone talk. Even if you think what they're saying is stupid. Cutting someone off is rude, and not worth whatever small time gain you might make. Don't finish someone's sentences for him or her; they can do it for themselves. And remember: talking louder or faster doesn't make your idea any better. Check your egos at the door. When you discuss ideas, immediately label them and write them down. The labels should be descriptive of the idea, not the originator: "the troll bridge story," not "Jane's story."

Praise each other. Find something nice to say, even if it's a stretch. Even the worst of ideas has a silver lining inside it, if you just look hard enough. Focus on the good, praise it, and then raise any objections or concerns you have about the rest of it.

Put it in writing. Always write down who is responsible for what, by when. Be concrete. Arrange meetings by email, and establish accountability. Never assume that someone's roommate will deliver a phone message. Also, remember that "politics is when you have more than 2 people" – with that in mind, always CC (carbon copy) any piece of email within the group, or to me, to all members of the group. This rule should never be violated; don't try to guess what your group mates might or might not want to hear about.

Be open and honest. Talk with your group members if there's a problem, and talk with me if you think you need help. The whole point of this course is that it's tough to work across cultures. If we all go into it knowing that's an issue, we should be comfortable discussing problems when they arise ---- after all, that's what this course is really about. Be forgiving when people make mistakes, but don't be afraid to raise the issues when they come up.

Avoid conflict at all costs. When stress occurs and tempers flare, take a short break. Clear your heads, apologize, and take another stab at it. Apologize for upsetting your peers, even if you think someone else was primarily at fault; the goal is to work together, not start a legal battle over whose transgressions were worse. It takes two to have an argument, so be the peacemaker.

Phrase alternatives as questions. Instead of "I think we should do A, not B," try "What if we did A, instead of B?" That allows people to offer comments, rather than defend one choice.

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 (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'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](#)