**Professor Rees Shad**

Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College – Media Design Program

SPRING 2018 - GD102 Beyond Games

Meets: Wednesday 9:30am-12:15 C-456

Email: rshad@hostos.cuny.edu

Office: C-414A – Across from Humanities Office

Office Hours W. & TH. 1:00 – 2:30 and/or by appointment

Phone: 518/796-0863

**Course description:**

This course explores the revolutionary effect that games have had on our culture at large and how artists, sociologists, politicians, musicians and others have used games and gaming tools to create new forms of expression. The class will be divided into four sections focusing on: games as art, games as story, games as social interaction, and games as tools for learning. Students will read and analyze a variety of articles relating to these topics. Students will develop educational games, research related topics and develop papers about their research. In addition, students will have the opportunity to create game art as well as explore the narrative power of games.

THIS COURSE IS NO LONGER A WRITING INTENSIVE, there is, however, a good deal of written work in the class. Students will be given guidance in stylistic approaches to formal writing and research, and their work critiqued accordingly.

**Course objectives:**

By the end of the course, students will have learned:

* About games as a sociological and cultural phenomenon.
* A critical language to discuss media's effect on culture.
* To explore games as tools for other means of expression besides simple entertainment.
* Better collaborative skills
* Better understanding of what is needed to develop a game proposal
* Stronger communication skills

**Credit Hours:** 3 hours

**Assigned Media:**

**Sociology and Games-**

* Parable of the Polygons <<http://ncase.me/polygons/>>
* This War of Mine: <http://store.steampowered.com/app/282070/This\_War\_of\_Mine/>

$20 on steam

**Games As Art-**

• Reese, Nathan. NYTimes. An Exhibition That Proves Video Games Can Be Art. 2016. 10, February 2016 <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/10/t-magazine/art/jason-rohrer-video-games-exhibit-davis-museum.html?\_r=0>

* Ochalla, Brian. “Gamasutra” Are Games Art? (Here We Go Again). 2006. 14 April 2009 <http://www.gamasutra.com/features/20070316/ochalla_01.shtml>
* Anna Anthropy. Newgrounds’ Dys•4•ia < <https://w.itch.io/dys4ia>>

**Games As Story-**

* Choose Your Own Fate in the Holocaust by Abbey Kellett. <http://textadventures.co.uk/games/view/wa7npq0b5u\_qmf4tnhlnea/choose-your-own-fate-in-the-holocaust>
* Jenkins, Henry. “Web.MIT.Edu” Game Design as Narrative Architecture. 2000. MIT. 14 April 2009 <http://homes.lmc.gatech.edu/~bogost/courses/ spring07/lcc3710/readings/jenkins\_game-design.pdf>
* Johnson, Robin. Detectiveland <<http://ifdb.tads.org/viewgame?id=noqmuesoxx4vb6qy>>
* ‘Monument Valley’ by Ustwo Games LTD. Mobile Game (see your app source)

**Games As Learning Systems-**

* 26 Learning Games to Change the World. 14 April 2009. “Mission to Learn” <http://www.missiontolearn.com/blog/2008/04/learning-games-for-change/>
* BEAR71<<http://bear71.nfb.ca>>

**Games For Change-**

* Stokes, Benjamin. “Games for Change” For a Better World: Digital Games and the Social Change Sector. 14 April 2009 <http://gamesforchange.org/g4cwhitepaper.pdf>
* Jessica W’s review of Merritt Kopas’ LIM <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qb3iKkkwCw>>

**Necessary Supplies (What you will need to purchase):**

* (1) **Note book** or device for taking notes in class, while reading articles, and while playing games. These notes will be very important to reference throughout the class, and failure to comply will affect participation score.
* **Writing implements** of choice – there is no sharpener in the room, so prepare accordingly with mechanical pencils or pens.
* (1) **Nice journal** for use as Game Design Journal – Moleskin or similar style (not a simple composition book). This should be designed to be carried with you at all times so a big book does not make sense, but a nice one **that you will be proud of** should be the goal.
* (1) No books will be necessary, the instructor will provide article links and PDFs, but several **game licenses** will need to be purchased in order to play various assigned games. This should not end up costing more than the expense of a common low priced textbook, and should be considered as important here. If the expense is a problem consider partnering up with other students.

**Expectations:** 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
* An active Hostos email account, which they check daily.

**Due dates:**

Late assignments will receive only partial credit without a note from a physician or counselor.

**Grades:**

95-100 A

90-94 A-

87-89 B+

84-86 B

80-83 B-

75-79 C+

70-75 C

60-69 D

0-60 F

**Grading:**

Game Design Journal 10

Media Summation Presentations 20

Media Response Essays 10

Media Response Questions 18

Branching Narrative Project 12

Outside the Comfort Zone Game 20

Attendance/Participation/Preparedness 10

**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
* Iterative development of work
* Contribution to in-class discussion

**Revision of assignments:**

Revision is an important part of the writing process and must involve more than merely correcting writing errors. When you revise, you will deepen the connections you make between the course material, personal experiences, research materials, and the task at hand.

EACH CONSIDERED REVISION (addressing all remarks and issues pointed out by the instructor) WILL BE AWARDED EXTRA CREDIT POINTS! IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE that for points to be awarded, the original document with instructor’s notations must be handed in with the revision.

**Participation:**

A student’s participation grade is based primarily on their attendance and participation in class. Every student begins the term with 10 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.

This is a lecture & discussion course involving a combination of lecture, discussion of assigned readings, and writing exercise activities. 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.

It will also be expected that students take notes during class lectures and discussions AS WELL AS from the various readings. These reading notes should be part of every reading assignment and inform the formulation of several questions that each student will be expected to have ready at the start of discussion in each class. Students will be randomly selected each class meeting and failure to have a prepared set of questions concerning the reading will result in points taken from the overall participation score for the day.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE** that students can dig themselves out of this hole with earnest attention to rewrites.

**Attendance:**

**The College’s attendance policy (from Catalogue)** states that all 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.

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.**

**Attendance and timeliness are very important in this class.** Student exercises and presentations will start off each class, and taking part in these will be important to both a student’s ability to contribute to class discussions as well as to their performance on future writing assignments. Because of this, a student’s participation grade is heavily based on their attendance and timeliness. Every student begins the term with 10 participation points. Attendance is mandatory for every single scheduled class. For each class missed, 3 participation points will be deducted. Tardy students (less than 15 minutes late) will have 1 participation points deducted. Students arriving to class after 15 minutes will be given credit for work done in class and handed in, but will still be marked absent and docked the three associated points.

**More than three absences amounts to a failure, as a student may not earn less than 0 participation points.**

**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.

**The class assignments:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Game Design Journal Reviews (5)** | Take-home | Weeks 2,4,6,9, & 13 | 10 |
| **Media Summation Presentations (2)** | Take-home / in class | TBD | 20 |
| **Media Response Essays (10)** | Take-home | Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, & 12 | 10 |
| **Media Response Questions for each media presentation (18)** | Take-home | Week 2-13 | 18 |
| **Branching Narrative Map & Outline**  **(Stage One)** | Take-home / In class | Week 6 | 2 |
| **Branching Narrative Iteration One**  **(Stage Two)** | Take-home / In class | Week 7 | 4 |
| **Branching Narrative Final Iteration (Stage Three)** | Take-home | Week 8 | 6 |
| **Outside the Comfort Zone Game Proposal (Stage One)** | Take-home | Week 9 | 2 |
| **Outside the Comfort Zone Game Concept Map & Elements (Stage Two)** | Take-home | Week 10 | 4 |
| **Outside the Comfort Zone Game Paper Prototype (Stage Three)** | Take-home | Week 11 | 4 |
| **Outside the Comfort Zone Game Beta (Stage Four)** | Take-home | Week 13 | 4 |
| **Outside the Comfort Zone Game**  **(Stage Five)** |  | Week 15 | 6 |
| **Total** |  |  | **90** |

What follows are brief descriptions of the class’ assignments students will be expected to deliver over the course of the term. **All written assignments are expected to be delivered at the start of class, printed and in MLA format (layout & citations).[[1]](#footnote-1)** Detailed instructions will be provided in-class. Without a physician’s or counselor’s note, late assignments will not receive full credit.

**Media Response Essays**

All students will be required to write a short response essay of one to two pages responding to assigned media as outlined in the schedule. This will mostly be articles or chapters selected by the instructor for students to read. However, some of the assignments will be videos or games. The primary purpose of these response papers is to assist students in gathering their thoughts for in-class discussion.

Lest you have not encountered one, a response paper is a document wherein the student analyzes how a particular reading applies to in-class discussions, and their individual observations, projects and explorations. **It is not to be a brief review or overview**, but an opportunity to express personal thoughts and points of view on topics mentioned in the reading that relate to the class at large. It is also an excellent opportunity to raise points for later discussion in a concise and eloquent format.

**Media Response Discussion Questions**

In addition to the above-mentioned reading response essays students will be expected to come to EACH class with no less than four in-depth and pertinent questions printed up. The Instructor will use these printed questions to guide class discussion. If there is more than one media assigned for a given week, there should be fiour questions for EACH piece of media.

**Media Summation Presentations**

A collaborative project, one or two student team presentation will happen at the start of every class, and will involve a five to ten minute Powerpoint or Prezi presentation summing up one of that week’s media assignments. On two occasions, larger teams will present on media related to teaching a particular software package the class will use for a forthcoming assignment. ALL presentations must be PERFECT IN EVERY WAY- no typos, no grammatical mistakes, graphically compelling, and most important of all no misinformation.

**This is not to be a critique**, but a presentation of the most important information put forth in and concerning the assigned media as it pertains to the subject at hand (what we have been and are going to be discussing in class). It is expected that the team members will arrive prior to class and have their presentation ready to present at the start of class. Students should treat this as a professional opportunity such as a job interview. Research into the author/designer (where appropriate), reviews of the media that may have been written, and any research regarding the overarching subject will be expected. At the end of the presentation other students in the class will be called upon to ask the team one of their prepared discussion questions and the team will be expected to give answers to the best of their ability.

Teams have been randomly selected and are listed at the end of this document.

**Branching Narrative Project**

For this project students will write a creative narrative in the branching style of a choose your own adventure story. The story should concern some aspect of immigration or displacement. The story should be an original one with defined characters who have obvious motivations and goals. Branching narratives can be very time consuming to write, and so we approach the project in three stages…

* The first stage will involve creating a narrative outline and map.
  + The student author will be expected to describe at least four possible alternative arcs depending on decisions and actions made by the stories characters.
  + These alternative arcs should not be dead ends, but instead have subsequent alternative arcs which effect other branches in the overall narrative.
* The second stage of the project will involve adapting these story variations into a branching narrative medium known as Twine ([www.twinery.com](http://www.twinery.com)), and playtesting the experience with readers/players
  + It will be expected that the writing involved in this narrative be well done, and that the student will be working with the writing center during its creation.
* The third and final stage will be incorporated into the student’s EPortfolio or personal website for review by the instructor.

**Out of the Comfort Zone (OCZ) Game**:

Students will form into teams of 2-3 each and develop an initial prototype of an electronic game. This project allows students to explore creative game design aimed at nontraditional subjects and content. Over the course of the semester students will have been exposed to a good deal of unusual game content and play, and this assignment offers students the opportunity to create games of their own that deal with issues concerning society, education, health, or neurocognitive development.

The game will be built using SCRATCH, which reflects a traditional environment and interface, but the content must be thoughtfully applied in order to teach, inform, or motivate its audience.

Topics should be well researched in terms of current practice, current analysis, and the related subject matter.

This is a major project for the class with a value of 20% of the overall grade, so students will be expected to scaffold the project with a series of deliverables.

* STAGE ONE: will involve one paragraph executive summary which will summarize the goals and purpose of the game. This will be followed by an overview of research concerning the subject as well as possible games already in existence that address the subject, and a description of how this game will be different and more effective.
* STAGE TWO: will involve a concept map and sketches of elements and overall interface design prepped for a BRIEF presentation to the class.
* STAGE THREE: Will involve the presentation of a playtestable beta of the game
* STAGE FOUR: Will involve a formal presentation of the final iteration of the game, its development, and potential future iterations. While no formal game design document will be required for this project, the presentation should follow the GDD Format.

**Course schedule:**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week &**  **Class** | **Project Due** | **Room** | **TOPIC** | **Media Necessary** |
| Class 1  1/31 |  | C-418H | Discussion:  Class Introduction  Game Design Journal  Summation Groups  What is a Game? | No reading |
| Class 2  2/7 | **Media Response Essay #1 to “Got Game”**  **Question sheet**  **Printout of G4C sign up**  **Game Design Journal** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups One  Got Game  GroupTwo  Parable of Polygons  What can a Game be? | **Sign Up For Games For Change (GFC) Newsletter** <http://festival.gamesforchange.org>  **Beck, John, and Wade, Mitchell. Got Game: How the Gamer Generation Is Reshaping Business Forever (Introduction)**  <http://cyberlibris.typepad.com/blog/files/preview.pdf>  **Parable of the Polygons** <http://ncase.me/polygons/> |
| Class 3  2/14 | **Media Response Essay #2 to Portnow’s video & how it represents your experience of This War of Mine**  **Question sheet**  **E. Portfolio Link emailed to instructor** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups Three  Magic Circle  GroupTwo  This War of Mine  What is Play? | “**James Portnow’s The Magic circle – How Games Transport Us to New Worlds**”  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZ-EY9gTsgU>  **This War of Mine:** http://store.steampowered.com/app/282070/This\_War\_of\_Mine/ |
| Class 4  2/21 | **Media Response Essay #3 Portnow’s Quest Design Videos**  **Question sheet**  **Game Design Journal** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups five  Quest Design I & II  Group six  Dys•4•ia  What can Play be?  Games as models of social behavior. | “**James Portnow’s Quest Design - I: Why Many MMOs Rely on Repetitive Grind Quests”**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otAkP5VjIv8>  “**James Portnow’s Quest Design - II: Why Many MMOs Rely on Repetitive Grind Quests”**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_1043006217&feature=iv&list=UUCODtTcd5M1JavPCOr_Uydg&src_vid=otAkP5VjIv8&v=ur6GQp5mCYs>  **Dys•4•ia** <https://w.itch.io/dys4ia> |
| **Week &**  **Class** | **Project Due** | **room** | **TOPIC** | **Media Necessary** |
| Class 5  2/28 | **Media Response Essay #4 to Ochalla Article**  **Question sheet** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups Seven  Are Games Art?  Group Eight  C.Y.O.F. Holocaust  Design v. Art  Games vs. Art  Game Culture as Art | **Are Games Art? *Here we go again....*** <http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/1695/are_games_art_here_we_go_.php>  **Choose Your Own Fate in the Holocaust** <http://textadventures.co.uk/games/view/wa7npq0b5u_qmf4tnhlnea/choose-your-own-fate-in-the-holocaust> |
| Class 6  3/7 | **Media Response Essay #5 to Detectiveland**  **Question sheet**  **Game Design Journal**  **Branching Narrative Outline** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups Nine  Jenkins Article  Group Ten  Detectiveland  The stories Games tell  Introduction to the Branching Narrative Project | **Jenkins’ Game Design as Narrative Architecture**  <http://homes.lmc.gatech.edu/~bogost/courses/spring07/lcc3710/readings/jenkins_game-design.pdf>  **Detectiveland** <http://ifdb.tads.org/viewgame?id=noqmuesoxx4vb6qy>>\ |
| Class 7  3/14 | **Media Response Essay #6 to Exhibition Article**  **Branching Narrative First Iteration**  **Question sheet** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups Eleven  Are Games Art?  Group Twelve  Twine Demo  Non-Linear Narrative  Branching Narrative Project Workshop | **An Exhibition That Proves Video Games Can Be Art** <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/10/t-magazine/art/jason-rohrer-video-games-exhibit-davis-museum.html?_r=0>  **Adam Hammond’s A Total Beginners Guide to Twine**  <http://www.adamhammond.com/twineguide/> |
| Class 8  3/21 | **Branching Narrative Final Iteration**  **Running bug free on EPortfolio** | C-418H | Media Summation  Groups Twelve  The Uncle Who Works For Ninetendo  Branching Narrative Demos | **The Uncle Who Works for Ninetendo**  <http://www.arcadespot.com/game/the-uncle-who-works-for-nintendo/> |
| Class 9  3/28 | **Media Response Essay #7 to Mission To Learn Article**  **Question sheet**  **Game Design Journal**  **O.C.Z. Proposal** | C-418H | Presentation:  Media Summation  Group Thirteen  Bear71  Group Fourteen  Scratch Demo  Branching Narrative Demos (continued) | **BEAR71**  <http://bear71.nfb.ca>  **Getting Started with Scratch** <https://resources.scratch.mit.edu/www/guides/en/Getting-Started-Guide-Scratch2.pdf>  **Scratch Game Design system** <https://scratch.mit.edu> |
| **Week &**  **Class** | **Project Due** | **room** | **TOPIC** | **Media Necessary** |
| Class 10  4/4 | **Media Response Essay #8 to Bear 71**  **Question sheet**  **O.C.Z. Concept Map & Elements** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Groups Fifteen &  Sixteen  Each team to review  2 of the 26 games  (talk to each other  so as not to overlap)  When Do Games Teach?  Play As Pedagogy | **26 Learning Games to Change the World**  <http://www.missiontolearn.com/blog/2008/04/learning-games-for-change/> |
| 4/11  NO CLASS |  |  | HOSTOS ON FRIDAY SCHEDULE |  |
| 4/16 |  |  | LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM A CLASS |  |
| Class 11  4/18 | **Media Response Essay #9 to Stokes Article**  **Question sheet**  **O.C.Z. Paper Prototype** | C-418H | Discussion:  Media Summation  Group Seventeen  For a Better World  Group Eighteen  LIM  Kinesthetic Learning | **For a Better World: Digital Games and the Social Change Sector**  <http://gamesforchange.org/g4cwhitepaper.pdf>  **Jessica W’s review of Merritt Kopas’ LIM** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qb3iKkkwCw>  **LIM the Game**  <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~rpatton/currentlab/lim/> |
| Class 12  4/25 | **Media Response Essay #9 to Monument Valley**  **Question sheet** | C-418H | Media Summation  Group Nineteen  Monument Valley  Games as Social Change | **‘Monument Valley’** Mobile Game (see your app source) |
| Class 13  5/2 | **Media Response Essay #10 to Papo Y Yo**  **O.C.Z. Beta** | C-418H | Media Summation  Group Twenty  Papo Y Yo | **Papo Y Yo**  http://store.steampowered.com/app/227080/Papo\_\_Yo/ |
| Class 14  5/9 | **Game Design Journal** | C-418H | Studio Day | No Media |
| Class 15  5 /16 | **O.C.Z.**  **Presentations** | C-418H | Presentation of OCZ Games | No Media |

**The Following Teams have been randomly generated and assigned….**

**The professor will most probably adapt this list once final roster of students is clear.**

**Pres Team #1**

Sanzida Islam & Brian Baez & Jared Hatcher

**Pres Team #2** Franklin Donte & Brandon Torres

**PresTeam #3**

Donell Maylor & Jared Hatcher & Angel Mendez

**Pres Team #4** Angel Mendez & Dexter Manswell

**Pres Team #5** Ryan Fred & Gabriel Silva

**Pres Team #6** Calherbe Valcen & Brian Morales

**Pres Team #7**

Marc Rivera & Akai Beza & Sanzida Islam

**Pres Team #8** Jean Ortiz & Eric Gonzalez

**Pres Team #9**

Brenfis Brenis & Chris Williams & Calherbe Valcin

**Pres Team #10** Matthew Torres & Fernando Collado

**Pres Team #11**

Maurice Edwards & Brian Perozo & Marc Rivera

**Pres Team #12**

Rene Rodriguez & Alexandra Pagan & Matthew Torres

& Brandon Torres

**Pres Team #13** Shany Perez & Brian Morales

**Pres Team #14** Franklin Donte & Gabriel Silva

**Pres Team #15** Maurice Edwards & Brian Perozo

**Pres Team #16**

Ryan Fred & Dexter Manswell & Chris Williams

& Brenfis Brenis

**Pres Team #17**

Jean Ortiz & Donnell Maylor & Shany Perez

**Pres Team #18** Alexandra Pagan & Brian Baez

**Pres Team #19** Rene Rodriguez & Fernando Collado

**Pres Team #20** Akai Beza & Eric Gonzalez

1. For a complete overview of the MLA format students can refer to <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)