



**MONASH** University  
Information Technology

**FIT2073**  
**Game design and narrative**

**Unit Guide**

**Semester 1, 2011**

The information contained in this unit guide is correct at time of publication. The University has the right to change any of the elements contained in this document at any time.

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# Table of Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <u>FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2011</u> ..... | 1 |
| <u>Mode of Delivery</u> .....                                     | 1 |
| <u>Contact Hours</u> .....  | 1 |
| <u>Workload</u> .....   | 1 |
| <u>Unit Relationships</u> .....                                   | 1 |
| <u>Prohibitions</u> .....   | 1 |
| <u>Prerequisites</u> .....  | 1 |
| <u>Chief Examiner</u> .....                                       | 1 |
| <u>Campus Lecturer</u> .....                                      | 2 |
| <u>Caulfield</u> .....  | 2 |
| <u>Tutors</u> .....   | 2 |
| <u>Caulfield</u> .....  | 2 |
| <u>Learning Objectives</u> .....                                  | 2 |
| <u>Graduate Attributes</u> .....                                  | 2 |
| <u>Assessment Summary</u> .....                                   | 3 |
| <u>Teaching Approach</u> .....                                    | 3 |
| <u>Feedback</u> .....   | 3 |
| <u>Our feedback to You</u> .....                                  | 3 |
| <u>Your feedback to Us</u> .....                                  | 3 |
| <u>Previous Student Evaluations of this unit</u> .....            | 3 |
| <u>Required Resources</u> .....                                   | 4 |
| <u>Additional subject costs</u> .....                             | 4 |
| <u>Unit Schedule</u> .....  | 4 |
| <u>Assessment Policy</u> .....                                    | 5 |
| <u>Assessment Tasks</u> .....                                     | 5 |
| <u>Participation</u> .....  | 5 |
| <u>Examinations</u> .....   | 6 |
| <u>Examination 1</u> .....  | 6 |
| <u>Assignment submission</u> .....                                | 6 |
| <u>Extensions and penalties</u> .....                             | 6 |
| <u>Returning assignments</u> .....                                | 7 |
| <u>Policies</u> .....   | 7 |
| <u>Student services</u> .....                                     | 7 |

# **FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2011**

This unit provides a foundation in the theoretical and practical principles of game design and game narrative structures in the games development process. Utilising the principles taught in this unit, students will be given the opportunity to consider innovative games design applications together with a narrative structure and implement the consequences of their decisions as working game prototypes.

The combination of theory and practice in this unit is geared to equip students with analytical skills to assess the future capabilities of the computer game industry both commercially and for wider research purposes. The unit provides knowledge and skills which students can apply within their game development projects in the third year studio project/s ([FIT3039](#) and [FIT3040](#)) and across all subsequent units.

## **Mode of Delivery**

Caulfield (Day)

## **Contact Hours**

2 hrs lectures/wk, 2 hrs tutorials/wk

## **Workload**

This will include:

- Lectures: 2 hours per week
- Tutorials/Lab Sessions: 2 hours per week per tutorial

Additionally, each student should spend a minimum of 8 to 12 hours for personal study every week and should allocate up to 5 hours per week in some weeks for use of a computer, including time for newsgroup and discussion

## **Unit Relationships**

### **Prohibitions**

FIT2048

### **Prerequisites**

Completion of 24 points of FIT units

### **Chief Examiner**

**Derrick Martin**

## **Campus Lecturer**

### **Caulfield**

**Derrick Martin**

Contact hours: Monday 2-4, Tuesday 1-3

## **Tutors**

### **Caulfield**

**Ruben Hopmans**

## **Learning Objectives**

At the completion of this unit students will have:

- an understanding of the key principles of game design;
- an understanding of critical factors that serve to balance game design and playability;
- an understanding of implementation techniques for narrative structures in interactive environments;
- developed attitudes that enable them to be aware of the ethical issues involved with games development;
- developed attitudes that enable them to appreciate effective forms of narrative construction employed in a game environment, such as embedded and emergent game narratives and the mapping of plotlines and interactive story structures;
- developed attitudes that enable them to explore new directions in the rapidly emerging discipline of game creation;
- developed the skills to prototype a game level and implement balancing techniques to eliminate design flaws and improve player experience;
- developed the skills to analyse, identify and implement key elements in game design and narrative structures;
- demonstrated the teamwork skills necessary to develop group working skills as a member of a project team.

## **Graduate Attributes**

Monash prepares its graduates to be:

1. responsible and effective global citizens who:

- a. engage in an internationalised world
- b. exhibit cross-cultural competence
- c. demonstrate ethical values

critical and creative scholars who:

- a. produce innovative solutions to problems
- b. apply research skills to a range of challenges

c. communicate perceptively and effectively

## Assessment Summary

Examination (2 hours): 40%; In-semester assessment: 60%

| Assessment Task                   | Value | Due Date             |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| Group presentation of Game Design | 10%   | Week 7               |
| Group Assessment: Game Level      | 30%   | Week 12              |
| Individual Assessment             | 20%   | Ongoing weekly tasks |
| Examination 1                     | 40%   | To be advised        |

## Teaching Approach

### Lecture and tutorials or problem classes

This teaching and learning approach provides facilitated learning, practical exploration and peer learning.

## Feedback

### Our feedback to You

Types of feedback you can expect to receive in this unit are:

- Informal feedback on progress in labs/tutes
- Graded assignments with comments

### Your feedback to Us

Monash is committed to excellence in education and regularly seeks feedback from students, employers and staff. One of the key formal ways students have to provide feedback is through SETU, Student Evaluation of Teacher and Unit. The University's student evaluation policy requires that every unit is evaluated each year. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys. The feedback is anonymous and provides the Faculty with evidence of aspects that students are satisfied and areas for improvement.

For more information on Monash's educational strategy, and on student evaluations, see:

<http://www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions/directions.html>

<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/quality/student-evaluation-policy.html>

## Previous Student Evaluations of this unit

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to

<https://emuapps.monash.edu.au/unitevaluations/index.jsp>

## Required Resources

### Unreal Development Kit:

Available free from: <http://udn.epicgames.com/Three/DevelopmentKitHome.html>

## Additional subject costs

Students may use the facilities available in the computing labs. Information about computer use for students is available from the ITS Student Resource Guide in the Monash University Handbook.

## Unit Schedule

| Week               | Date*    | Activities                        | Assessment  |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 0                  | 21/02/11 |                                   | No formal assessment or activities are undertaken in week 0 |
| 1                  | 28/02/11 | Game Concepts                     |   |
| 2                  | 07/03/11 | Storytelling and Narrative        |   |
| 3                  | 14/03/11 | Game Genres                       |   |
| 4                  | 21/03/11 | Gameplay                          |   |
| 5                  | 28/03/11 | Ethics of Gaming                  |   |
| 6                  | 04/04/11 | Online Games and Level Design     |   |
| 7                  | 11/04/11 | Cinema in Games and Physics       | Assessment Task 1:<br>Group Presentation of<br>Game Design  |
| 8                  | 18/04/11 | Mod Development and AI            |   |
| Mid semester break |          |                                   |   |
| 9                  | 02/05/11 | Narrative Structures and design   |   |
| 10                 | 09/05/11 | Theories of Interactive Narrative |   |
| 11                 | 16/05/11 | Exam Revision                     |   |
| 12                 | 23/05/11 | Presentations                     | Assessment Task 2:<br>Group Assessment<br>Game Level        |
|                    | 30/05/11 | SWOT VAC                          | No formal assessment is undertaken SWOT VAC                 |

\*Please note that these dates may only apply to Australian campuses of Monash University. Off-shore students need to check the dates with their unit leader.

## Assessment Policy

To pass a unit which includes an examination as part of the assessment a student must obtain:

- 40% or more in the unit's examination, and
- 40% or more in the unit's total non-examination assessment, and
- an overall unit mark of 50% or more.

If a student does not achieve 40% or more in the unit examination or the unit non-examination total assessment, and the total mark for the unit is greater than 50% then a mark of no greater than 49-N will be recorded for the unit

## Assessment Tasks

### Participation

Due to the group nature of the work in this subject and the learning objective "demonstrated the teamwork skills necessary to develop group working skills as a member of a project team" it is expected that all students will attend at least 80% of tutorial classes.

Absences beyond 20% of tutorial classes will attract a 5% penalty per absence.

#### • Assessment task 1

**Title:**

Group presentation of Game Design

**Description:**

Presenting your game design to peers in a class environment

**Weighting:**

10%

**Criteria for assessment:**

Please refer to the assignment description available on MOODLE for a detailed list

**Due date:**

Week 7

#### • Assessment task 2

**Title:**

Group Assessment: Game Level

**Description:**

Creation of a game level using an existing game engine, working with a team of peers

**Weighting:**

30%

**Criteria for assessment:**

Please refer to the assignment description available on MOODLE for a detailed list

**Due date:**

Week 12

**Remarks:**

5% of the assessment of this task will consist of completion of weekly progress milestones as negotiated by each group with their tutor.

Submission of assignments is done using assignment drop-boxes.

- **Assessment task 3**

**Title:**

Individual Assessment

**Description:**

Students will examine existing games, detailing the application of game design principles in the game and analysing the effectiveness of the principles in the games via discussion in class forums.

**Weighting:**

20%

**Criteria for assessment:**

Students will be assessed for their participation in weekly exercises and their ability to analyse existing games and deduce the application of game design principles in their gameplay mechanisms

**Due date:**

Ongoing weekly tasks

**Remarks:**

Submission of assignments is done using Moodle online forums to discuss analysis findings

## Examinations

- **Examination 1**

**Weighting:**

40%

**Length:**

2 hours

**Type (open/closed book):**

Closed book

**Electronic devices allowed in the exam:**

None

## Assignment submission

Assignment coversheets are available via "Student Forms" on the Faculty website:

<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/>

You MUST submit a completed coversheet with all assignments, ensuring that the plagiarism declaration section is signed.

## Extensions and penalties

Submission must be made by the due date otherwise penalties will be enforced.

You must negotiate any extensions formally with your campus unit leader via the in-semester special consideration process:

<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/equity/special-consideration.html>.



## Returning assignments

Students can expect assignments to be returned within two weeks of the submission date or after receipt, whichever is later

## Policies

Monash has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University's academic standards, and to provide advice on how they might uphold them. You can find Monash's Education Policies at:

<http://policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/index.html>

Key educational policies include:

- Plagiarism  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-policy.html>)
- Assessment  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-p>)
- Special Consideration  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/special-consideration-policy.h>)
- Grading Scale  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/grading-scale-policy.html>)
- Discipline: Student Policy  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/student-discipline-policy.html>)
- Academic Calendar and Semesters (<http://www.monash.edu.au/students/key-dates/>);
- Orientation and Transition (<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/orientation/>);  
and
- Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy  
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/complaints-grievance-policy>)

## Student services

The University provides many different kinds of support services for you. Contact your tutor if you need advice and see the range of services available at [www.monash.edu.au/students](http://www.monash.edu.au/students). The Monash University Library provides a range of services and resources that enable you to save time and be more effective in your learning and research. Go to <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au> or the library tab in my.monash portal for more information. Students who have a disability or medical condition are welcome to contact the Disability Liaison Unit to discuss academic support services. Disability Liaison Officers (DLOs) visit all Victorian campuses on a regular basis

- Website: <http://adm.monash.edu/sss/equity-diversity/disability-liaison/index.html>;
- Telephone: 03 9905 5704 to book an appointment with a DLO;
- Email: [dlu@monash.edu](mailto:dlu@monash.edu)
- Drop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1 Gallery Building (Building 55), Monash University, Clayton Campus.

## Other Information

Students may use the facilities available in the computing labs. Information about computer use for students is available from the ITS Student Resource Guide in the Monash University Handbook.

## Attendance Requirement

FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2011

Due to the group nature of the work in this subject and the learning objective "demonstrated the teamwork skills necessary to develop group working skills as a member of a project team" it is expected that all students will attend at least 80% of tutorial classes.

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