



MONASH University
Information Technology

FIT2073
Game design and narrative

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2012

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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FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2012

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 newsgroups and discussion groups.

Unit Relationships

Prohibitions

FIT2048

Prerequisites

Completion of 24 points of FIT units

Chief Examiner

Mr Derrick Martin

Campus Lecturer

Caulfield

Mr. Derrick Martin, Consultation hours: Monday 2pm - 4pm, Tuesday 1pm - 3pm

Dr. Thomas Chandler

Tutors

Caulfield

Mr. Ruben Hopmans

Dr. Tom Chandler

Academic Overview

Outcomes

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
Interactive Game Map	30%	Progressively in Week 2, Week 5, Week 6
Game Level Design	30%	Progressively in Week 7, Week 10, Week 12
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

Based on student evaluation and feedback the technical aspects of this subject (as evaluated through group submission of a level created in the Unreal Engine) have been removed in order to facilitate a improved focus on the key elements of this subject, being the theoretical and design considerations behind game creation, narrative design and structure and evaluation/critical review and improvements of these core learning outcomes by students.

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

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

Recommended Resources

There are no recommended texts for this unit, though links to online publications and PDFs and books relating to weekly material will be provided in the lecture notes.

Unit Schedule

Week	Activities	Assessment
0		No formal assessment or activities are undertaken in week 0
1	Introduction to Game Design and Narrative	
2	Game World Settings and Genre	Game Map Concept (5%)
3	Designing Narrative through Myths, Legends and Archetypes	
4	Game Design Structures	
5	Game Narrative Structures	Game Map Presentation (5%)
6	Interactivity and Immersion	Game Map Submission (20%)
7	Online Games and Level Design	Game Level Concept (5%)
8	Gameplay	
9	Ethics of Gaming	
10	Cinema in Games and Physics	Game Level Presentation (5%)
11	Mod Development and AI	
12	Exam Revision	Game Level Treatment Document (20%)
	SWOT VAC	No formal assessment is undertaken SWOT VAC
	Examination period	LINK to Assessment Policy: http://policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-policy.html

*Unit Schedule details will be maintained and communicated to you via your MUSO (Blackboard or Moodle) learning system.

Assessment Requirements

Assessment Policy

Faculty Policy - Unit Assessment Hurdles

(<http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/staff/edgov/policies/assessment-examinations/unit-assessment-hu>)

Assessment Tasks

Participation

- **Assessment task 1**

Title:

Interactive Game Map

Description:

This assignment requires you to visualise the universe of your game through the creation and annotation of an original, interactive game world map (please note, this is *not a level map*). You may use any software you like to create a map with basic interactive features (rollovers, highlights, scrolling). The assessment for this project is divided into three parts: (a) a one page proposal of your concept (b) a presentation of your work in progress and references and (c) your submitted game map.

Game Map Concept (5%)

Your game concept should be limited to one page and outline your concept, approach, research and references. ***Due in Week 2 tutorial***

Game Map Presentation (5%)

Your presentation should be a PowerPoint file with between 10-20 slides and timed to around five minutes which explain your production, design, approach and process. Your submission may not be entirely complete at this stage, but it should be complete enough so that you can communicate it. ***Due in Week 5 tutorial***

Game Map Submission (20%)

Your game map submission should be easy to load and, once opened, self-explanatory. It should include images and text in an interactive format. ***Due end of Week 6***

Weighting:

30%

Criteria for assessment:

Game Map Concept: *Communication of Concept, Research and References*

Game Map Presentation: *Evidence of Preparation, Organisation of Slides, Communication of Process and Progress and Design Decisions*

Game Map Submission: *Map Detailing and Interactivity, Communication of Game Genre/Game World/Game Dynamics, Map Annotations*

Due date:

Progressively in Week 2, Week 5, Week 6

• **Assessment task 2**

Title:

Game Level Design

Description:

This assignment requires you to create a Game Level Treatment Document that details the characters, narrative, challenges and environment of a game level, using research from specified themes based on one of three supplied historical cultures.

Once you have chosen one of these cultures as the setting/environment/genre for your game, you will create a **Game Level Treatment Document**, outlining the characters, expected story, example gameplay, environment and challenges that a typical player (or group of players) will encounter in the game level. You are encouraged to use original maps, photos and images to illustrate your design.

As in Assignment 1 the assessment for this project is divided into three parts: (a) a one page proposal of your concept (b) a tutorial presentation of your work in progress and references and (c) your final game treatment document. Though your game level may share similarities with well-known game designs your submission is a **new conception** and an original creation.

Game Level Concept (5%)

Your game level concept should be limited to one page and outline your concept, approach, research and references. **Due in Week 7 Tutorial**

Game Level Presentation (5%)

Your presentation should be a PowerPoint file with between 10-20 slides and timed to around five minutes which explains your conceptualisation, design, approach and reasoning behind your choices. Your submission may not be entirely complete at this stage, but it should be complete enough so that you can communicate it. **Due in Week 10 Tutorial**

Game Level Treatment Document (20%)

Your game document should be in either PDF, doc or docx format and be between 10-20 pages **Due end of Week 12**

Weighting:

30%

Criteria for assessment:

Game Level Concept: *Communication of Concept, Research and References*

Game Level Presentation: *Evidence of Preparation, Organisation of Slides, Communication of Process, Progress and Design Decisions*

Game Level Treatment Document: *Design of: Environment; Narrative; Level Challenges. Overall Originality and Creativity*

Due date:

Progressively in Week 7, Week 10, Week 12

Examinations

• Examination 1

Weighting:

40%

Length:

2 hours

Type (open/closed book):

Closed book

Electronic devices allowed in the exam:

None

Assignment submission

It is a University requirement

(<http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/plagiarism-procedures.html>) for students to submit an assignment coversheet for each assessment item. Faculty Assignment coversheets can be found at <http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/student/forms/>. Please check with your Lecturer on the submission method for your assignment coversheet (e.g. attach a file to the online assignment submission, hand-in a hard copy, or use an online quiz).

Online submission

If Electronic Submission has been approved for your unit, please submit your work via the VLE site for this unit, which you can access via links in the my.monash portal.

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.

Other Information

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>)
- Codes of Practice for Teaching and Learning
(<http://www.policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/suppdocs/code-of-practice-tea>)

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. For Sunway see <http://www.monash.edu.my/Student-services>, and for South Africa see <http://www.monash.ac.za/current/>

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. At Sunway, visit the Library and Learning Commons at <http://www.lib.monash.edu.my/>. At South Africa visit <http://www.lib.monash.ac.za/>.

Academic support services may be available for students who have a disability or medical condition. Registration with the Disability Liaison Unit is required. Further information is available as follows:

- Website: <http://monash.edu/equity-diversity/disability/index.html>;
- Email: dlu@monash.edu
- Drop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1 Gallery Building (Building 55), Monash University, Clayton Campus, or Student Community Services Department, Level 2, Building 2, Monash University, Sunway Campus
- Telephone: 03 9905 5704, or contact the Student Advisor, Student Community Services at 03 55146018 at Sunway

Other

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.