FIT2073
Game design and narrative

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2013

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FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2013

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 requirements

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

Derrick Martin

Consultation hours: Monday 10am - 12pm, Tuesday 10am - 12pm

Tutors

Caulfield

Mr. Ruben Hopmans

Academic Overview

Learning 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.

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	
3	Designing Narrative through Myths, Legends and Archetypes	Weekly Game Design Tasks (10%) begin
4	Game Design Structures	
5	Game Narrative Structures	Game Map Presentation (5%)
6	Interactivity and Immersion	Game Map Submission (15%)
7	Online Games and Level Design	
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 (25%)
	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 learning system.

Assessment Summary

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

Assessment Task	Value	Due Date
Interactive Game Map	20%	Progressively in Week 5 and Week 6
Game Level Design	30%	Progressively in Week 10 and Week 12
Weekly Game Design Tasks	10% total (1% per weekly task)	Progressively from Week 3 to 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.

Assessment Requirements

Assessment Policy

Faculty Policy - Unit Assessment Hurdles
(http://www.infotech.monash.edu.au/resources/staff/edgov/policies/assessment-examinations/unit-assessment-hu

Academic Integrity - Please see the Demystifying Citing and Referencing tutorial at
http://lib.monash.edu/tutorials/citing/

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 two parts:
  (a) a presentation of your work in progress and references, and (b) your submitted game
  map.

  Game Map Presentation (5%)

  Your presentation should be a PowerPoint file with between 10-20 slides and timed to
  around five minutes which explains 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 (15%)

  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:
  20%
  Criteria for assessment:
  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 5 and 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 two parts: (a) a tutorial presentation of your work in progress and references, and (b) 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 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 (25%)

  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 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 10 and Week 12

- **Assessment task 3**

Title:
  Weekly Game Design Tasks
Description:
  Each week (beginning from Week 3) you will be given a task in your tutorial that you must complete and bring to the following tutorial class for peer review and assessment by your tutor.
Weighting:
  10% total (1% per weekly task)
Criteria for assessment:

Assessment Requirements

> Work will be assessed on creativity, stated expression of game design theory, completeness and adherence to task instructions.
> **Due date:**
> Progressively from Week 3 to Week 12

Examinations

- **Examination 1**

  Weighting:
  > 40%
  Length:
  > 2 hours
  Type (open/closed book):
  > Closed book
  Electronic devices allowed in the exam:
  > None

Learning resources

Monash Library Unit Reading List
http://readinglists.lib.monash.edu/index.html

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

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.

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 learning system for this unit, which you can access via links in the my.monash portal.

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.

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:
www.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 in Coursework Programs;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/assessment-in-coursework-po
- Special Consideration;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/special-consideration-policy.ht
- 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/dates/
- Orientation and Transition; http://intranet.monash.edu.au/infotech/resources/students/orientation/
- Academic and Administrative Complaints and Grievances Policy;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/complaints-grievance-policy.h
- Code of Practice for Teaching and Learning;
  http://www.policy.monash.edu.au/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/suppdocs/code-of-practice-tead

Graduate Attributes Policy

http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/management/monash-graduate-attributes-policy.ht

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 http://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/.

Monash University Library

The Monash University Library provides a range of services, resources and programs that enable you to save time and be more effective in your learning and research. Go to 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/.

Disability Liaison Unit

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://www.monash.edu/equity-diversity/disability/index.htmlTelephone: 03 9905 5704 to book an appointment with a DLO; or contact the Student Advisor, Student Commuity Services at 03 55146018 at SunwayEmail: dlu@monash.eduDrop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1, Building 55, Clayton Campus, or Student Community Services Department, Level 2, Building 2, Monash University, Sunway Campus

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 the Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units (SETU) survey. 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, see:

www.monash.edu.au/about/monash-directions and on student evaluations, see:
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

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.