FIT2073
Game design and narrative

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2014

Last updated: 27 Feb 2014

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FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2014

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)

Workload Requirements

Minimum total expected workload equals 12 hours per week comprising:

(a.) Contact hours for on-campus students:

- Two hours of lectures
- One 2-hour tutorial

(b.) Additional requirements (all students):

- A minimum of 2-3 hours of personal study per one hour of contact time in order to satisfy the reading, assignment and exam expectations.

Unit Relationships

Prohibitions

FIT2048

Prerequisites

Completion of 24 points of FIT units

Chief Examiner

Dr Tom Chandler

Campus Lecturer

Caulfield

Tom Chandler

Consultation hours: Wednesday 10am - 2pm

Derrick Martin

Consultation hours: Wednesday 10am - 2pm

Tutors

Caulfield

Mr. Ruben Hopmans

Ruben Hopmans

Consultation hours: To be advised

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 previous technical aspects of this subject (as evaluated through group submission of a level created in the Unreal Engine) have been realigned to focus on the key theoretical and design considerations behind game creation, narrative design and the evaluation and critical review of these core learning outcomes.

If you wish to view how previous students rated this unit, please go to
https://emuapps.monash.edu.au/unitevaluations/index.jsp

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 Worlds: Backstories, Settings and Genre	
3	Game Narrative: Myths, Legends and Archetypes	Weekly Game Design Tasks (15%) begin
4	Game Concept Art and Sound Design	
5	Game Design and Narrative Structures	
6	Interactivity and Immersion	Assignment 1 Submission (20%)
7	Online Games and Level Design	
8	Gameplay and Ludology	
9	The Ethics of Gaming	
10	Cinema, Games and Physics	
11	Game AI and Mod Development	
12	Exam Revision	Assignment 2 Submission (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.

Teaching Approach

Lecture and tutorials or problem classes

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

Assessment Summary

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

Assessment Task	Value	Due Date
Game Narrative Design Concept	20%	Week 6
Game Level Design Document	25%	Week 12
Weekly Game Study Assessments	15% total (value of weekly task will be specified in task description)	Progressively from Week 3 to Week 12
Examination 1	40%	To be advised

Unit Schedule

Assessment Requirements

Assessment Policy

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

Academic Integrity - Please see resources and tutorials at
http://www.monash.edu/library/skills/resources/tutorials/academic-integrity/

Assessment Tasks

Participation

- **Assessment task 1**

    Title:
    Game Narrative Design Concept
    Description:
    This assignment gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of
    game narrative through the design and creation of an original game story concept. The
    written game narrative summary will need to address the game's setting and genre, and
    the motivations, goals and backgrounds of key archetypal characters.

    Visual documentation will include rough sketches of the characters (with provided
    templates) and an annotated game world map that lists key locations in the game
    narrative.
    Weighting:
    20%
    Criteria for assessment:
    Game Narrative Concept Originality

    Communication of Setting/Genre/Key Characters

    Communication of Game Map and Visual Documentation

    Research and References
    Due date:
    Week 6

- **Assessment task 2**

    Title:
    Game Level Design Document
    Description:
    Building upon the exploration of game narrative design in Assignment 1, this assignment
    requires students to demonstrate their understanding of game challenges and mechanics
    through the creation of an original game level concept within the constraints of a supplied
    theme. The assignment components include a background document, level map and
    detailed game level guide (module).
    Weighting:
    25%

> **Criteria for assessment:**
> > *Communication of Game Level Background and Game Level Map*
> >
> > *Communication of Challenge Type, Structure and Balancing in Game Level Guide*
> >
> > *Originality of Game Level Concept against supplied theme*
> >
> > *Research and References*
> **Due date:**
> > Week 12

- **Assessment task 3**

  Title:
  > Weekly Game Study Assessments
  Description:
  > Each week, beginning on Week 2, your tutor will give you a game study assessment, or task, to be completed and returned by the following week. 7 tasks will be worth 1%, 1 task will be worth 2% and 2 tasks will be worth 3%. A total of 10 tasks will need to be submitted from Week 3 to Week 12 (task value will be outlined each week).
  Weighting:
  > 15% total (value of weekly task will be specified in task description)
  Criteria for assessment:
  > Work will be assessed on creativity, stated expression of game design theory, and adherence to assessment guidelines.
  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 (if applicable to the unit)
http://readinglists.lib.monash.edu/index.html

Faculty of Information Technology Style Guide

Feedback to you

Examination/other end-of-semester assessment feedback may take the form of feedback classes, provision of sample answers or other group feedback after official results have been published. Please check with your lecturer on the feedback provided and take advantage of this prior to requesting individual consultations with staff. If your unit has an examination, you may request to view your examination script booklet, see
http://intranet.monash.edu.au/infotech/resources/students/procedures/request-to-view-exam-scripts.html

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.monash.edu.au/exams/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/student-academic-integrity-managing-pla
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). Please note that it is your responsibility to retain copies of your assessments.

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 and tutorial 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:

- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Student Academic Integrity: Managing Plagiarism and Collusion Procedures ; http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/conduct/student-academic-integrity-policy.h
- 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

Faculty resources and policies

Important student resources including Faculty policies are located at http://intranet.monash.edu.au/infotech/resources/students/

Graduate Attributes Policy

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

Student Charter

www.opq.monash.edu.au/ep/student-charter/monash-university-student-charter.html

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 Malaysia 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 Malaysia, 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.html
- Telephone: 03 9905 5704 to book an appointment with a DLO; or contact the Student Advisor, Student Commuity Services at 03 55146018 at Malaysia
- Email: dlu@monash.edu
- Drop In: Equity and Diversity Centre, Level 1, Building 55, Clayton Campus, or Student Community Services Department, Level 2, Building 2, Monash University, Malaysia Campus

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.