

FIT2073
Game design and narrative

Unit Guide

Semester 1, 2015

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Last updated: 27 Feb 2015

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FIT2073 Game design and narrative - Semester 1, 2015

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.

See also Unit timetable information

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 11am - 3pm

Tutors

Caulfield

Mr. Jason Haasz

Rick Laird

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 Backstories and 'Worldbuilding'	Assignment 1 Concept (5%)
3	Game Narrative: Myths, Legends and Archetypes	Game Design Study 1 (2%)
4	Game Settings, Genre and Concept Art	Assignment 1 Presentation/Submission (10%)
5	Game Character Design	Game Design Study 2 (2%)
6	Interactivity and Immersion	
7	Online Games and Level Design	Assignment 2 Presentation/Submission (10%)
8	Gameplay and Ludology	Game Design Study 3 (2%)
9	The Ethics of Gaming	Game Design Study 4 (2%)
10	Cinema, Games and Physics	Game Design Study 5 (2%)
11	Game AI and Mod Development	Assignment 3 Presentation (5%)
12	Exam Revision	Assignment 3 Submission (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 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 World Map	15% (5% Concept, 10% Presentation and Submission)	Week 2 (Concept) Week 4 (Presentation and Submission)
Game Character Set	10% (Presentation and Submission)	Week 7 (Presentation and Submission)
Game Level Concept	25% (5% Presentation, 20% Submission)	Week 11 (Presentation) Week

Unit Schedule

12 (Submission)

Game Design Study
Tasks

10%

Progressively from Week 3 to
Week 10

Examination 1

40%

To be advised

Assessment Requirements

Assessment Policy

Faculty Policy - Unit Assessment Hurdles

(<http://intranet.monash.edu.au/infotech/resources/staff/edgov/policies/assessment-examinations/assessment-hurdles>)

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 World Map

Description:

This assignment requires students to visualise the universe of your game through the design and annotation of an original digital game world map. You may use any software you like to illustrate, annotate and add basic interactive features to your map (for example, using Powerpoint or a hyperlinked webpage). The assessment for this project is comprised of a one page proposal of your concept (5%) and the presentation and submission of your game map (10%)

Weighting:

15% (5% Concept, 10% Presentation and Submission)

Criteria for assessment:

Game Map Concept: Communication of Concept, Research and References

Game Map Presentation & Submission: Communication of Map Design Decisions

Communication of Game World Genre, Explanatory Annotations & Basic Interactivity

Due date:

Week 2 (Concept) Week 4 (Presentation and Submission)

• Assessment task 2

Title:

Game Character Set

Description:

In this assignment, students will explore the creation of an original game character set of 4-5 interrelated characters. Students are encouraged to either sketch, photoshop or use freely available character creation software to draft the physical appearance of their characters. Please note however that assessment is largely focused upon the written description of each of the characters, their cohesion as a set, and considerations for how they interact in the imagined game world. One of the challenges will be to identify and avoid established cliches in game character design.

Weighting:

10% (Presentation and Submission)

Criteria for assessment:

Communication of Key Characters

Originality of Character Briefs

Research and References

Due date:

Week 7 (Presentation and Submission)

• **Assessment task 3**

Title:

Game Level Concept

Description:

While the creation of a game world map is a broad and high concept exercise, the design of a game level is much more specific and particular. In this assignment, students demonstrate their understanding of game challenges and mechanics through the creation of an original game level concept based upon one of several supplied themes. The assignment components include a background document, level map and detailed game level design document.

Weighting:

25% (5% Presentation, 20% Submission)

Criteria for assessment:

Communication of Level Design Work in Progress

Communication of Game Level Map and Background

Challenge and Environment Design and Decisions

Communication of Challenge Type, Structure and Balancing

Due date:

Week 11 (Presentation) Week 12 (Submission)

• **Assessment task 4**

Title:

Game Design Study Tasks

Description:

There are 5 minor game study assessments worth 2% each (totalling 10% of assessment) to be completed during semester.

Weighting:

10%

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 10

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>

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.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 electronic submission). 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

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 Community 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.