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.

Last updated: 27 Feb 2011
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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
Assessment Summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group presentation of Game Design</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Assessment: Game Level</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assessment</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing weekly tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination 1</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>To be advised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.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
**Required Resources**

**Unreal Development Kit:**


**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**

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

*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.

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)
- Special Consideration (http://www.policy.monash.edu/policy-bank/academic/education/assessment/special-consideration-policy.html)
- 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

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 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
- 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
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