

George Mason University  
College of Visual and Performing Arts  
School of Computer Game Design

## GAME 101: INTRODUCTION TO GAME DESIGN

TERM Spring 2015  
SECTION 004

CLASS TIME T/Th 1:30pm-2:45pm  
ROOM Enterprise Hall 275

INSTRUCTOR Iliana Vazuka  
OFFICE Art & Design Building

EMAIL [ivazuka@gmu.edu](mailto:ivazuka@gmu.edu)  
OFFICE HOURS By Appointment (T/Th)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory overview of the video game development process with an emphasis on game design. Through detailed study of historical as well as current games, students will learn the language and structure needed to develop their own game ideas. Students will learn the many aspects of a game development team and learn how each of these roles contributes to a game's overall design. Projects, in and out of class, will focus on creating and designing game concepts both digital and non-digital.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who complete this course will:

- ◆ Be familiar with the evolution of electronic gaming and factors that drove its development.
- ◆ Understand the basic mechanics and design structure of traditional and digital games.
- ◆ Understand the basic game development process.
- ◆ Be able to identify the roles within a game development team.
- ◆ Develop a traditional game in a team environment.
- ◆ Develop a simple video game in a team environment.

### REQUIREMENTS + EVALUATION

Every class will begin with a lecture, and oftentimes a team exercise will follow. Blackboard assignments and quizzes will complement the lectures.

For mid-term, students will submit and present a playable, non-digital game of their own design. Details on the midterm requirements will be posted to Blackboard.

During the final exam period, students will submit and present their final projects. Students must create and submit one of the following as their final project:

- ◆ Game Design Document
- ◆ Game-industry related historical/analytical paper
- ◆ A "Vertical Slice" digital game prototype done in an instructor-approved game engine (Details on what is involved for each of these options will be posted on Blackboard.)

### REQUIRED TEXTS + MATERIALS

*Game Development Essentials - w/ DVD* by NOVAK ◆ Edition: 3rd 12 ◆ ISBN: 9781111307653  
Paper, pens, pencils: For note-taking and team exercises during class.

## GRADING

Grading will be based on student performance in the following areas of assessment:

- ◆ Participation in classroom and attendance (5%)
- ◆ Quizzes (15%)
- ◆ Homework assignments (20%)
- ◆ Midterm presentation and project (30%)
- ◆ Final presentation and project (30%)

Grades will be based on the following scale, as written in programming logic:

```
if course-work >= 90% : grade = "A"  
else if course-work >= 80% : grade = "B"  
else if course-work >= 70% : grade = "C"  
else if course work >= 60% : grade = "D"  
else : grade = "F"
```

Extra credit may be given upon request, at the instructor's discretion. The chances of you getting extra credit depends on your participation, attendance and proven effort throughout the semester.

## ASSIGNMENTS + QUIZZES

Students are expected to check Blackboard on a weekly basis to preview and submit their assignments. In addition, all quizzes will be conducted through Blackboard. The purpose is to check your understanding of the content. The quizzes will be open-note, but will also be timed to add some challenge.

## WRITTEN MATERIAL

As this is a college course, I expect you all to write at a collegiate level. All written material must be typed, double-spaced, and free of typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. It must be fully cited with a bibliography and in-text citations, and utilize the MLA style consistently—use <http://www.easybib.com> to help create your works cited page. Be sure to cite video, games, news, websites or any form of media also used in your assignments.

## PARTICIPATION + ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions, answer questions when prompted, and in general, add to the collective dialogue. Participation in class discussions and activities is necessary for the course.

Each class is a building block for the next. Some of the information for the course can be found in the text, but not everything. The lecture will cover additional necessary information and discussions that you will not want to miss, so come to class. Attendance does weigh into your final grade (see Grading above). In the event that you have to miss class, you still are responsible for the material covered that day, including project or homework assignments and changes in schedules.

## LATE WORK + MAKE-UP POLICY

Meeting deadlines is one of the most important aspects of game design. Please pay careful attention to the due date and time for each assignment. Assignments must be in before the due date and time to receive credit for the assignment.

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from finishing an assignment before the due date and time, the student must contact the instructor before the assignment is due. Late work will only accepted at the instructor's discretion. If it is accepted at all, grading may be adjusted based on the tardiness.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=22&navoid=4792>

Honor Code: To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**

## MASON EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information. All digital communication with the professor must be made using your "masonlive" email account.

## OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474 to find out your next steps. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS: <http://ods.gmu.edu>

## OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES

WRITING CENTER: Robinson Hall A114 ♦ 703-993-1200 ♦ <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES "Ask a Librarian:" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

## CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES

### COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

Student Union Building I 3129 ♦ 703-993-2380 ♦ <http://caps.gmu.edu>

### WELLNESS, ALCOHOL AND VIOLENCE EDUCATION AND SERVICES (WAVES)

Student Union Building I 3200 ♦ 703-993-9999 ♦ 703-380-1434 (24-hr helpline) ♦ <http://waves.gmu.edu>

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs: <http://catalog.gmu.edu>

Other policies are available at: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>

All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.