FALL 2015
GAME 230 / CS 225 Policy Sheet & Course Overview

GAME 230 Fall 2015 \ Section 001 \ MW 9:00-10:15 \ AB 2003

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Instructor: Seth Andrew Hudson
Office Location: AB 2024
GAME Phone #: 703.993.5734
Office Hours: R 12:00—3:00*
*Appointment Recommended

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REQUIRED TEXTS


- Other assigned readings will be available through Blackboard in pdf format or through the Mason Library.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a comprehensive survey of the history of videogames. The class begins by exploring ancient games, early mechanical novelty machines, pinball and computers. The bulk of the class examines arcade games, modern console games and game hardware. This class will detail the people, the technology and the companies that have made videogames the multi-billion dollar industry that it is today. Hands-on study and analysis will include writing about, discussing and playing games past and present.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
A) Demonstrate a broad understanding of the significant early video games
B) Identify the advances in the technologies that shaped the games industry
C) Write effectively about the history of computer games/video games
D) Engage in meaningful discussions regarding key persons in computer game history
E) Understand the lineage of notable companies and games in the game industry

REQUIREMENTS and EVALUATION

At the beginning of each class meeting, students should be prepared to discuss the assigned readings, topic assignments, and game examples. Class meetings will consist of lectures, discussion, film screening, game play, peer review, and hands on activity.

During the first half of the semester, students will engage in subject-relevant “missions” that may (likely will) require students to leave campus. Students will begin the research process, peer reviewing classmates’ work. Lastly, the first half of the term will culminate in an in-person, hand-written, midterm exam. Please see the professor in the first weeks of class if you need any accommodations.

The last half of the semester will find us engaging more off-campus missions while increasing the intensity of our research focus. The final paper will be due at 11:59 PM on the LAST DAY of our COURSE.
The student’s final grade will consist of the following assignments:

- 20% Midterm Exam
- 10% Mission 1: Photo Essay, Arcade Adventure
- 10% Mission 2: Presentation, The Most Important Game of All Time (MIGOAT)
- 10% Mission 3: Research Interview, A Personal (not yours) Game Literacy Narrative
- 10% 1st-half Participation: Bb Assignment
- 10% 2nd-half Participation: Bb Assignment
- 30% Final Paper—Due on Bb by 11:59, day of final class meeting
  - 5% Part 1
  - 5% Part 2
  - 5% Part 3
  - 15% Part 4 (final)

- NOTE: October 23rd, Midterm Progress Reporting Due—will include Midterm Exam (20%), Mission 1 (10%), Parts 1 and 2 of Final Research Paper (10%), and Week 1-8 participation (10%).

POLICIES of NOTE

Assumptions
It is assumed that students are familiar with MLA format or are familiar with resources that contain such guidelines for writing assignments. It is also assumed that students have regular access to email and the Internet, so they will be able to receive updates and participate electronically when necessary. Any issues with email or Bb access should be taken up with university ITU.

Late Work
Late work will only be accepted without penalty in the case of a documented medical illness or another situation that is out of your control. Other late work will be reduced by a letter grade for each class period it is late. Assignments are due at the beginning of class, and cannot be worked on during class time unless the instructor gives permission.

Class Participation
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. Some of the information for the course can be found in the text, but not everything. The lecture will cover additional information and facilitate discussions that you will not want to miss, so come to class.

Online Participation
Blackboard (Bb) will be your friend in exchanging ideas and communicating with one another during the term. If you have questions on using Bb please ask. I hope you all use the technology to take our discussions past two meetings a week and to get feedback on your assignments.

Email Policy
Students must use their MasonLIVE or gmu.edu email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See http://masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

Students With Disabilities
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, http://ods.gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

Honor Code
George Mason University has an Honor Code that requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.
University Catalog
Students are to be aware of the policies listed in the University Catalog:
http://catalog.gmu.edu/. University dates concerning withdrawal are not negotiable by the professor. Other questions regarding university and program policies can be directed towards the Assistant Director of CGD (me) outside of class time.

FINAL THOUGHTS
I am very excited about our semester and think I’ve crafted a rewarding, useful, intellectually stimulating, (fun?), course. That said, I’m always open to suggestions for future semesters. Please don’t be afraid to discuss your ideas with me, respectfully, and always make me aware in clarifications are needed. Our experience this semester is YOURS—make the most of it. Taking each assignment, even those not associated with your final mark for the course, serious and completing it to the best of your ability is the only way to maximize the benefits of this course.

Never hesitate to contact me—I’m here as your resource.