GAME 101

005. Introduction to Game Design
TUE 7:20-10:00 pm Lecture Hall 3

Instructor: Professor Prawat
E-Mail: tprawat@gmu.edu
Office: Art and Design Building, TBA.
Office Hours: Mon: 1-3 pm, Thurs: 1-3 pm

MASSON MISSION STATEMENT

Mission - Who we are and why we do what we do:

A public, comprehensive research university established by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the National Capital Region, we are an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to creating a more just, free, and prosperous world.

MASSON GAME DESIGN MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Computer Game Design Program at George Mason University is to prepare students for employment and further study in the computer game design and development field, doing so with a curriculum designed to reflect the gaming industry’s demand for an academically rigorous technical program coupled with an understanding of the artistic and creative elements of the evolving field of study.

CATALOG 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. A strong focus on the elements of game design and process will support class projects. Students will get a basic overview of game studies and integrate those concepts into their work.

**Fulfills Mason Core requirement in arts.**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Be familiar with the evolution of electronic gaming and factors that drove its development.

- Be able to evaluate the video game industry and market
- Understand the basic mechanics and design structure of traditional and digital games.
- Understand elements related to game strategy, theory and gameplay
- Understand the basic game development process.
- Be able to identify the roles within a game development team.
- Analyze and develop game concepts and proposals
- Develop a traditional game in a team environment.
- Develop a simple video game in a team environment.

**MASSON LIVE EMAIL ACCOUNTS FOR ALL COURSE COMMUNICATION**

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. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.

**REQUIRED COURSE TEXT**
DeWinter, Jennifer. Shigeru Miyamoto: Super Mario Bros., Donkey Kong, the Legend of Zelda

SOFTWARE MOST UTILIZED IN THIS COURSE

I. Art asset creating software such as Adobe Photoshop and/or Illustrator. IV. Sound design/creation software such as Audacity or ProTools.

II. Game Engines: Unity 3D Game engine / www.unity3D.com / Flowlab, Python,

II. Students will be required to have existing knowledge of the following software to the extent that they can efficiently develop games and game assets.

III. Coding languages: Python, C#

V. Writing and presentation software such as that found in MS Office (Word, Powerpoint, Excel, etc.) or on Google Drive.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS

Please be on time. It’s important that you are engaged intellectually, this means using your own creative talents to grow in your understanding to create games that are both immersive, and fun to play.

GENERAL COURSE SCHEDULE OUTLINE:

Additionally please see Blackboard Course Content and Discussion Board for project details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Topics and Discussion Board posts</th>
<th>Tues. Aug. 27</th>
<th>Due Date / Notes:</th>
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</thead>
</table>

INTRODUCTION TO GAME DESIGN 101
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Welcome to Class!</th>
<th>Welcome to Class!</th>
<th>Bring Prototype materials to class for Tuesday.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rules of the Game</td>
<td>Topic: Introduction to Ancient Game Board Project</td>
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<td>For Weekend: Nuclear Fruit Watch and Respond</td>
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<td>Tues. Sep. 3</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Nuclear Fruit DB</td>
<td>For Class: Prototype Materials for class</td>
<td>Post to Discussion Board Images and Description of Iteration 1: Ancient Game Board Prototypes Due. Next Tuesday</td>
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<td>Topic: Play-Test #1</td>
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<td>Finish Nuclear Fruit in class.</td>
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<td>For Weekend: Iteration 1: Ancient Game Board Prototypes</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Tues. Sep. 10</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ancient Game Board Iteration</td>
<td>Topic: Opening up gameplay mechanics and dynamics</td>
<td>Read and respond to Miyamoto Chapters 1 &amp; 2 // Gameplay video</td>
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<td>Four new game board concepts designs due Thursday.</td>
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<td>Topic: Interactive Storytelling lecture</td>
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<td>Post to Discussion Board Images and Description of Iteration 1: Ancient Game Board Prototypes 4 new game concept designs</td>
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<td>Tues. Sep. 17</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Miyamoto Chapter 1 and 2</td>
<td>Topic: Creating custom game art and game board pieces based on your story.</td>
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<td>By Next Thursday: Interactive Storytelling</td>
<td>Due Sep. 26</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tues. Sep. 24</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Interactive Storytelling</td>
<td>Design Studio time: in class workshop sessions</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tues. Oct. 1</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Design Studio time: in class workshop ses-</td>
<td>Ancient Game Board Project Self Assessment: Due Sunday Oct. 6 2pm.</td>
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<td>Tues. Oct. 8</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>AGB Final Project Video</td>
<td>Game Board Due: Entire class play through</td>
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<td>Tues. Oct. 15</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>FALL BREAK TUESDAY CLASSES DO NOT MEET TO-</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>DAY</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3D World Building and what it means to ga-</td>
<td>Introduction to STEM learning game</td>
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<td>mes now and the future</td>
<td>Topic: Looking ahead - World Building</td>
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<td>Team work: Brain-storming of Final Project</td>
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<td>Tues. Oct. 29</td>
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|    |   | Team work: Brainstorming of Final Project  
|    |   | Proposed Topic: “Live” tutorial with the Unity Game Engine  
| 12 | Tues. Nov. 5 |   
|    |   | Proposed Topic: “Live” tutorial with the Unity Game Engine  
| 13 | Tues. Nov. 12 |   
|    |   | Topic: TBA  
| 14 | Tues. Nov. 19 | Serious Game Project Self Assessment: Due Dec. 8 Sunday 2pm.  
|    |   | Topic: TBA  
| 15 | Tues. Nov. 26 | Thanksgiving Recess  
| 16 | Tues. Dec 3 | FINAL Class Project Presentations. Attendance required.  

GRADING & ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

A level work is considered refined work that employs a deep understanding and application of the ideas presented through course material. The high quality is displayed by the commitment and effort put into projects. The student has soared high
in putting in time outside of class to produce a skilled work. The A grade project produces a level of work that puts it on par with a high degree of professionalism and polish. Careful attention to details, smooth technical accomplishment, and most importantly depth of imagination lead to a stand out work. It’s what considered a “masterpiece” for this course.

100-99   A+
98-96     A
91-95     A-

**B level work** is afforded a level of refinement refined work that employs a sound understanding and application of the ideas presented through course material. The quality is displayed by the commitment and effort put into projects, but lacking that final go ahead 10%. The student has aimed high in putting time outside of class to produce a fairly accomplished work. The B grade project produces a level of work that puts it on par with a certain degree of professionalism and polish. Careful attention to some details, somewhat seamless technical accomplishment, and depth of imagination lead to a nearly completed masterpiece for this course.

90       B+
85-89    B
81-85    B-

**C level work** is affected most often by student attending class in my experience, because there are noticeable gaps in refinement of the project/assignment parameters. There is a somewhat uncertain understanding and application of the ideas in work that is presented through course material evident in the work. The quality is displayed by the commitment and effort put into projects, but lacking that extra 20%. The student has not been putting time outside of class or making proper use of class time to produce an accomplished work. The C grade project produces a level of work with a noticeable lack of professionalism and polish. While there may be careful attention applied to some details, there are seams in technical accomplishment, and depth of imagination lead to an incomplete project for this course.

80       C+
75-79    C
D level work is most affected by student attending class in my experience, because there are large gaps in refinement of the project/assignment parameters.

Failing Virtual to no attendance in class during the first three weeks of the semester, or missing consecutive classes during the rest of the semester where obvious drop off occurs. See attendance policy for more details.

Course and assignment grade, with their approximate weighted percentages. Note: I may weight some projects slightly more.

❖ The two major semester projects - Ancient Game Board Project and Final Serious Digital Game Project, and in class participation (e.g., work) = 80%
❖ Discussion board = 5%
❖ Attendance = 15%
❖ Extra credit = 5 points

IMPORTANT SEMESTER DATES
https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2019/

CLASS POLICIES

Cell phones should be turned off or placed on “silent” mode. Please do not use your cell phone in class (e.g., texting).

ATTENDANCE
Attendance is mandatory and will be taken every class meeting and is worth a total of between 8-12 points per class. Missed classes will have an impact on your grade.

You will check in through Blackboard. The basic expectation for this class is that all students will attend every class (once they are enrolled). You are, however, permitted one absence for the first part of the semester and after mid-terms.

Beyond the two ‘free’ absence, only absences documented by a certified notice of athletic travel, medical illness, religious observance, or death or serious illness of a close family member qualify as ‘excused’ absences.

Five or more unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students have the right to miss class for religious observances. Students wishing for time off for this reason should let the instructor know within the first two weeks of class. Sometimes absences from class are unavoidable because of illness. Emergencies, other than illness, could cause absence from class. In these cases, students are expected to meet with the instructor as soon as possible after the crisis has passed and arrange to make up any missed work. However, a written document that proves your absence was unavoidable must be submitted, and the instructor reserves the right to determine whether or not to excuse such an absence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

• The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the
equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

• As in many classes, a number of projects in this class are designed to be completed within your study group. With collaborative work, names of all the participants should appear on the work. Collaborative projects may be divided up so that individual group members complete portions of the whole, provided that group members take sufficient steps to ensure that the pieces conceptually fit together in the end product. Other projects are designed to be undertaken independently. In the latter case, you may discuss your ideas with others and conference with peers on drafts of the work; however, it is not appropriate to give your paper to someone else to revise. You are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

• GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity 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.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS**

• Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information
about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

• Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

• If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

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

• If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with them at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please tell me.

DIVERSITY
George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

**TITLE IX**

As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confiden-
tially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434), Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380), Student Health Services, or Mason’s Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES “Ask a Librarian”
http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;
http://caps.gmu.edu

LIST OF STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES ON CAMPUS:
http://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus/

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

GMU HOLIDAY CALENDAR

http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/