San José State University
Department of Art & Art History,
Department of Computer Science
Art/CS 108, Introduction to Game Studies, Section 2, Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	**James Morgan**
Office Location:	Online
Email:	james.morgan@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	MW 1245-1445
Class Days/Time:	Friday 1230-1515
Classroom:	Online
Prerequisites:	Instructor Permission

Units: 3

Course Format Course Format

This course will be entirely online and students are expected to have reliable Internet connections for use of the Canvas Learning Management System (Canvas or LMS), Zoom, Discord and for use of online resources.

Course Description

Introduction to the systems, design, history, and cultural analysis of games with emphasis on development, technological literacy, markets and impact on society.

In this course we shall read about, write about, play and design traditional paper based and video games.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
LO1 Demonstrate an appreciation for the cultural value of the technologies and strategies used in games through writing and projects;
LO2 Investigate and research user experiences of their own games and those of others;
LO3 Apply researched information to improve player experience;
LO4 Speak and write clearly about their own and others' work;
LO5 Demonstrate and apply technological and information literacy;
LO6 Translate different kinds of subject matter into gaming environments;

LO7 Create original and creative content through the medium of games.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development: From Concept to Playable Game with Unity and C#, 2nd Edition, Jeremy Gibson Bond, eText ISBN 9780134659886, print text ISBN 9780134659862

Please also be aware that the library has tremendous resources relating to games and game studies. We have a lib guide at http://libguides.sjsu.edu/GameStudies

Other technology requirements
Major software products are listed here so that you may make the decision now whether you are willing to sign up for these accounts. Generally, these software packages have been vetted and are considered safe, however many of them involve online connections and content that is not controlled by the faculty member or school. This is considered fair notice, before the drop date and that there is no penalty for withdrawing from the course at this point.

ADOBE CC - this is provided free to students; you must sign up for an adobe account using your sjsu email and log in via the enterprise option. You can then download the Adobe Cloud Manager and continue to download any of the suite of programs. https://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/adobe/students/index.html

Discord - this communication tool requires you to create an account. You can then join our semi-private server. You will have control over what handle we see and will be able to easily communicate with your group and the class.

Github - you will need to create an account but are then able to host projects and collaborate with others as well as host public web pages. This is where our portfolios will live.

Trello – you will need to make an account to be able to share project management with your team.

Unity – you will need to make an account to be able to download and run Unity. This is required for the digital prototype in Unity.

Piskel.com - you may need to make an account or download this 2D art tool. This tool makes animations MUCH easier.

Blog software wordpress.com or medium.com, in order to post your blog publicly, you will need an account. You may use other software, but the requirement is that all of your posts are public, that you can link directly to each post, and that previous posts are easily findable from an existing post.

jackbox.tv – online game play, if you want to host games, you will need to have purchased the game.

Various online game sites, likely flash too (this is the last semester for this). You are always encouraged to question the security of your data and be conservative in creating accounts, but we shall be doing this several times during the semester.

Also, all students will be required to get a standard deck of playing cards. (4 suits, 52 cards total but may have 2 jokers.) https://www.amazon.com/Bicycle-Standard-Playing-Cards-Colors/dp/B000050GET/

Library Liaison

Gareth Scott: https://libguides.sjsu.edu/gamestudies
Email: gareth.scott@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

"Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

General Advice –

Fail early and fail often. If you take chances in your proposal and draft there is always room to fix it in your final. A mediocre idea that is work-shopped through your peers on time creates a better project then an amazing idea that is attempted the night before.

Department Advising

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: http://www.sjsu.edu/art/ or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, 408-924-4320, art@sjsu.edu
Please note: Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

"All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See University Policy F13-1 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf for more details.

Additional Note:

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course. Students will collectively have the opportunity to shape the ways in which the course unfolds.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Game labs- 20%
Game labs are structured play or design sessions often followed by brief reflective writing, and in-class discussion. These sessions are done as a group and are very difficult to make up. LO2, LO3.

Blog - 20%
Students will be asked to maintain a weblog to publicly post writings and responses to readings. Students will write no less than 200 words (approximately one 'typed' page and include images). Points will be given for both postings and peer review. LO1, LO4, LO5.

Participation - 10%
Active participation within groups and in discussion is expected. Performance can be tracked in CANVAS beginning the second week of class. LO4

Game 1: paper prototype – 10%
Design, play test and turn in a paper based game using the readings and your group as a development guide. Games will be evaluated according to the game rubric. LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7.

Game 2: videogame prototype - 10%
Design, play test and turn in a digital game using the readings and your group as a development guide. We shall use Unity for this prototype so that we can see the advantages of a toolkit. Games will be evaluated according to the game rubric. LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO6, LO7.

Exam -10%
The Exam will cover essential vocabulary and concepts. The class will work on a study guide throughout the semester. LO1.

Final - Paper, Presentation, or Game– 20%
The final project of this course will be negotiated between the individual and the instructor. It may be a formal paper, presentation (video or in person), third game or written exam. This form will be determined by the midterm. LO7.

Grading Policy

Projects

Each project will be evaluated per the following formula:
Technical Skill (33%) + Aesthetics (33%) + Conceptual Depth (33) = 100% (multiply by points for project)

	2	1	0
technical	Project exhibits considerable skill, innovation or extraordinary improvement in skill level and handling of the techniques compared to drafts and previous projects.	Project exhibits some skill or moderate improvement in skill level and handling of the techniques as measured from the drafts and previous projects.	Project is sloppy, rushed or doesn't use techniques learned in class.
aesthetic	Project exhibits considerable or extraordinary understanding of color, format, visual quality, composition and other elements appropriate for project. Formal elements support conceptual theme of project.	Project exhibits a working understanding of color, format, print quality, composition and other formal elements appropriate for project. Formal elements partially supports conceptual theme of project.	Little or no consideration for the visual qualities of the work.
concept	Project exhibits a depth of knowledge and theme. Extraordinary relevancy and knowledge of subject. Visual elements support an idea.	Ideas represented in project are not clear or not realized.	Project is shallow and shows no consideration for a central idea.

Determination of Grades

- Grades will be determined based on the sum of the areas listed above according to the chart below.
- Extra credit options may be offered or requested.
- Late work may be graded down if submitted within a reasonable time, or not accepted if submitted too late.

Late assignments will only be accepted under unusual, extenuating, or emergency circumstances.

Numeric grade equivalents:

93% and above	A
92% - 90%	A minus
89% - 88%	B plus
87% - 83%	B
82% - 80%	B minus
79% - 78%	C plus

77% - 73%	C
72% - 70%	C minus
69% - 68%	D plus
67% - 63%	D
62% - 60%	D minus
below 60%	F

Classroom Protocol

Student Responsibilities

- Students are responsible for all information presented in lectures and demonstrations, and through assigned readings and web related research.
- Students will present and critique their projects, drafts and proposals in class and on-line.
- Students are responsible for actively engaging in the course material by completing all course assignments and readings.
- In the course of the semester we will undoubtedly talk about things, which are not in the mainstream and may be controversial. If at any time you find the subject or content of this course objectionable you are encouraged bring that into the discussion. If however you find a presentation offensive you are permitted to quietly, without disrupting the class, excuse yourself. It is then your responsibility to contact the instructor for make-up work.
- Additionally students are responsible for their own well-being. If you need help, it is your responsibility to ask for it.

Late Assignments

Assignments are to be turned in on time and complete. An assignment will not be considered complete until all elements are uploaded and fully working. Assignments that are turned in on time may be redone for full credit until the last week of class. It is most important to present your work publicly. Note that project presentation days are mandatory, if a project is not presented on a critique day it may be considered late. Late assignments may receive a one time 10% penalty.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/."

Course Schedule

Art/CS 108 Introduction to Game Studies, Spring 2021, Section 2

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice. All due dates are approximate, check CANVAS to for exact dates. All changes will be publicly announced in the class forum and noted in CANVAS.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 29	Adopt a classic arcade game: https://archive.org/details/internetarcade Lecture 1: What is a Game?
1		DUE: Blogpost 1: Description of Play: Arcade Game Due **(IGDPD) CH 1:** Thinking like a designer.
2	Feb 5	Due: **(IGDPD) CH** 7: Acting like a designer Lecture 2: Session Reports and Boardgame Geek
2		EXERCISE: game lab 1 (card game/board game/ physical game) Due **(IGDPD) CH 8** Design Goals
3	Feb 12	Blogpost 2 Due: Boardgame/Cardgame Lab **(IGDPD) CH 9** Paper Prototyping Lecture 3: Prototyping and Design
3		EXERCISE: Tabletop Game Design (paper prototype)
4	Feb 19	**(IGDPD) CH 10** Game Testing Lecture 4: Prototyping Part II
4		EXERCISE: Paper Prototype Playtest Blog 3 (Paper Prototype) **(IGDPD) CH 2:** Game Analysis Frameworks
5	Feb 26	**DUE: Reading: MDA Framework:** http://www.zubek.net/robert//publications/MDA.pdf Lecture 5: Mechanics, Dynamics, Aesthetics
5		EXERCISE: game lab 2 – video game play Blog 4 (Video Games Played)
6	Mar 5	**(IGDPD) CH 11** math and balance & **(IGDPD) CH 12** guiding the player Lecture 6: Game Engines
6		EXERCISE: Unity Intro **(IGDPD) CH 14** agile & **(IGDPD) CH 15** industry
7	Mar 12	Lecture 7: History of Videogames

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Due: Design Doc
7		**(IGDPD) CH 13** puzzle design EXERCISE: Unity Game I
8	Mar 19	Lecture 8: Level Design Patterns
8		(**IGDPD) CH 3** the layered tetrad EXERCISE: Unity Game II
9	Mar 26	Lecture 9: RPG, MMO, Simulation and VR
		Spring Break
10	April 9	**Videogame First Playable** Blog 5 (first playable)
10		**Jenkins: games as narrative architecture** Lecture 10: Narrative Architecture
11	April 16	DUE: Video Game Prototype Blog 6 (video game prototype)
11		Lecture 11 (1&2): Skinner Box, Juicy Games, Serious Casual & Learning
12	April 23	Proposal for Final Project Due **(IGDPD) CH 5** the dynamic layer
12		Lecture 12: Literacy, Criticism & Science
13	April 30	**(IGDPD) CH 6** the cultural layer
13		Lecture 13: Fine Art and Games
14	May 7	game lab 3 – Jackbox Games blog 7 (technology based non-video games) **Exam Week**
14		Draft of Final Presentation and Feedback
15	May 14	Game Criticism and popular media Blog 8 (final project) Makeup Deadline
15		Final Presentations (Presentations & Papers)
Final Exam S2	**Monday, May 24, 1215-1430**	(Final Presentations / Final Play) Blog 9 (course reflection)