IAT 210
Introduction to Game Studies: Theory and Design
Summer 2016
Section E100 – WMC3520, Thursdays 1630-1920

(B-HUM B-SOC) 3 hour Lecture

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Course Description:
An introduction to the medium of games. Reviews the history of games, tracing the evolution of game design from board and card games through the latest digital games. Examines the medium of games through various lenses: games as rules (game design), games as play (game experience), and games as culture (the cultures within games, and the role of games and game cultures within our broader culture). Students are introduced to the concepts of game narrative, the influence of technology in digital games, the emergence of game paradigms such as social media, mobile games, serious games and game 'modding', as well as models and trends within the games industry.

Course Topics:
- History of games
- Games as a medium: "Magic Circle," game rules, game design, role of choice and challenge, game genres
- Games as play: the varieties of game experience
- Games as culture
    - Cultures within games
    - Games within our broader culture
    - Games and social issues: gender, violence, addiction
- Games and narrative
- Games and technology (computation, role of AI, innovative interface models)
- Emergent game paradigms
    - Social and networked games
    - Mobile games
    - Locative games
    - "Art" games
    - Game "modding" & open source gaming
    - "Serious games," educational games, "gamification"
- Games industry – business models and trends

Learning Activities
The class will include lectures, screenings, class discussions, course readings, Canvas materials & discussion board, writing assignments and game project assignments. Some game design assignments, exercises and short quizzes will be conducted during class times.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
- Write critically about the history and evolution of games, including the situation of specific games within recognized game genres.
- Analyze the design of traditional and digital games, identifying the role of critical design variables such as challenge, choice, asset allocation, role of narrative, etc.
- Analyze and critique game experience, relating it to the fundamentals of game design.
- Produce and critique short original games.
- Identify and discuss critical cultural and social issues in games and game cultures
- Identify the roles of technology in supporting and extending the design and experience of electronic games
- Identify and discuss a variety of emergent game paradigms
- Identify trends and issues in the games industry and the economy of games

Evaluation:

Short in-class & homework projects, quizzes, worksheets:	25%
Analysis of Board Game (due week 5):	10%
Analysis of Electronic Game (due week 7):	15%
Term Paper - selected topic (due Week 12):	20%
Final Exam (in exam week):	30%

Texts, Resources & Materials
iClicker to be used in lecture. Please see permission form in online Canvas Quizzes column.

Course Text & Readings:
 IAT 210 Custom Courseware Pack, plus other readings as assigned.

Policies
Students are expected to attend all classes, to show up on time, and to participate in the in-class and online discussions and activities. Assignments must be submitted on the due date and time - late assignments may not be graded.

The online environment is an integral part of the course. Check email, Canvas, and the discussion board regularly (every one or two days).

All SFU and SIAT policies on academic honesty, plagiarism and related matters apply to this course. See <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student.html> for details on SFU Policy in this area.

All course procedures (including topics, assignments, due dates, and evaluations) and policies in this syllabus are subject to change. Any such changes will be noted in-class and/or electronically. Students are responsible for tracking and working within any such changes in procedures.

Readings

Week 2
- Ch. 3, "Meaningful Play" from *Rules of Play*. **Page 9** in your Courseware booklet.

- Ch. 7, "Defining Games" from *Rules of Play*. **Page 17** in your Courseware booklet.
- "Fourteen Forms of Fun" by Pierre-Alexandre Garneau, linked here in Canvas

Week 4
- Ch. 9, "The Magic Circle" from *Rules of Play*. Page 1 in your Courseware booklet.
- Ch. 11, "Defining Rules" from *Rules of Play*. Page 31 in your Courseware booklet.
- "Some Elements are Game Mechanics" by Jesse Schell from *The Art of Game Design*. Page 39 in your Courseware booklet. (pages 39-63 required)

Week 6
- Ch. 8, "Defining Digital Games" from *Rules of Play*. **Page 93** in your Courseware booklet.
- Ch. 13, "The Rules of Digital Games" from *Rules of Play*. **Page 101** in your Courseware booklet.

Week 7
- "Personas in the User Interface Design". Page 81 in your Courseware booklet.
- "A Brief Introduction to Project and Studio Financing Options for Indies" . Page 111 in your Courseware booklet.

Week 9
- http://www.polygon.com/2015/2/16/8046741/twitch-evolved-video-upstart-cultural-phenomenon

Week 10
- Jesse Schell's DICE talk http://www.ted.com/talks/jesse_schell_when_games_invade_real_life
- Jesse Schell's critique of his DICE talk - the Pleasure Revolution.
- https://youtu.be/-55Nz73_zm4

Week 11
- Watch Jane McGonigal's Ted talk: http://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_gaming_can_make_a_better_world
- Play September 12th: http://www.newsgaming.com/games/index12.htm

Week 12
- Bizzocchi, J. (2007). Games and Narrative: An Analytical Framework. Loading..., 1(1). Retrieved from http://journals.sfu.ca/loading/index.php/loading/article/view/

Week 13
- Henry Jenkins, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture" on page 115 in your Courseware Booklet.