COMX508

Exploring Game Cultures

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Instructor Contact Details

Lecturer-in-charge: Peiyu Zhao (TBD)
Email: wlwyxy_29@zju.edu.cn
Office location: Huajiachi Campus, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China
Consultation Time: Book appointment by sending email to: wlwyxy_29@zju.edu.cn

Teaching Times, Modes and Locations

Course Duration: 23 Dec 2024 to 10 Jan 2025
Modes: Online/Face-to-face
Location: Anywhere via online, or Huajiachi Campus, Zhejiang University via face-to-face

Academic Level

Undergraduate

Credit Points:

The course is worth 6 units of credit point.

Credit Hours

The number of credit hours of this course equals to the credits of a standard semester- long course.

Contact Hours

The course contains a total of 53 contact hours, which consists of orientation, lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, self-study, and final exam. Students will receive an official transcript which is issued by Zhejiang University when completing this course.

Enrolment Requirements

Eligibility requires enrollment in an overseas university as an undergraduate or postgraduate student, proficiency in English, and pre-approval from the student's home institution.

Course Description:

Games stand as unique cultural entities, encapsulating individual histories, specific aesthetics, design cultures, player communities, and academic theory. Computer Games takes an IT professional and computational view of the technology and industry of computer games. The focus is primarily upon the technological dimension - simulation, graphics, human computer interaction, AI, etc. - with lesser emphasis on the culture and dimensions. This unit delves into the mechanics behind games, their cultural placement, and the methodologies involved in both the critical assessment and design of games as media objects. By integrating perspectives from game studies, game design, and media studies, students engage in game analysis and embark on the journey of creating an original game concept from its inception.

Prerequisite:

N/A

Learning Resources

● Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Jonas Heide Smith, and Susana Pajares Tosca, Understanding Video Games- The Essential Introduction 3rd edition, Routledge, 2015

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

● Recognize the cultural significance of computer games.

● Comprehend the persuasive and educational capabilities of computer games.

● Grasp how market forces, political economies, and ideologies influence computer games.

● Analyze the ethical, political, and everyday applications of mobile media and computer games critically.

Course Delivery:

• Online Lecture mode includes lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, online field trip(s), in-class activities, revision, and final exam.

• Face-to-face Lecture mode includes lectures, seminars, quiz, discussion, research, case study, small tests, assignments, on-site field trip(s), in-class and after-class activities, revision, and final exam.

- The following course will be taught in English. There will also be guest speakers and optional field trips available for students who would like to enhance their learning experience. All courses and other sessions will run during weekdays.

Topics and Course Schedule:

Wk	Topic	Activities
1	Introduction	Lecture; Seminar
1	Studying Video Games	Lecture; Reading
1	The Game Industry: The size	Lecture
1	The Game Industry: The Structure of the Big Game Industry	Lecture
1	General Models for Understanding Games	Lecture; Tutorial
1	The Issue of Genre	Lecture; Tutorial
2	History of Video Games	Lecture
2	Video Game Aesthetics	Lecture
2	In-class Test	Closed book
2	Video Games in Culture	Lecture;
2	Rules/Geography and Representation	Lecture;
2	Number of Players/Games Without Boundaries	Lecture;
3	Narrative: Storytelling/Reception	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Narrative: A Brief History of Literary Theory and Video Games	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Narrative: Transmedia Games	Lecture; Tutorial
3	Serious Games and Gamification—When Entertainment Is Not Enough	Lecture;
3	Video Games and Risks	Lecture
3	Final exam	Closed book

Assessments:

Class participation	15%	
In-class Test	15%	
Individual and Group works	20%	
Final exam	50%	

Grade Descriptors:

HD	High Distinction	85-100
D	Distinction	75-84
Cr	Credit	65-74
P	Pass	50-64
F	Fail	0-49

High Distinction 85-100

• Treatment of material evidences an advanced synthesis of ideas Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding, and analysis.
• Work is well-written and stylistically sophisticated, including appropriate referencing, clarity, and some creativity where appropriate.
• All criteria addressed to a high level.

Distinction 75-84

• Treatment of material evidences an advanced understanding of ideas Demonstration of initiative, complex understanding and analysis Work is well-written and stylistically strong.
• All criteria addressed strongly.

Credit 65-74

• Treatment of material displays a good understanding of ideas
• Work is well-written and stylistically sound, with a minimum of syntactical errors.
• All criteria addressed clearly.

Pass 50-64

• Treatment of material indicates a satisfactory understanding of ideas Work is adequately written, with some syntactical errors.
• Most criteria addressed adequately.

Fail 0-49

• Treatment of ideas indicates an inadequate understanding of ideas Written style inappropriate to task, major problems with expression.
• Most criteria not clearly or adequately addressed.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the university's academic honesty principles which are an integral part of the university's core values and principles. If a student fails to

observe the acceptable standards of academic honesty, they could attract penalties and even disqualification from the course in more serious circumstances. Students are responsible for knowing and observing accepted principles of research, writing and any other task which they are required to complete.

Academic dishonesty or cheating includes acts of plagiarism, misrepresentation, fabrication, failure to reference materials used properly and forgery. These may include, but are not limited to: claiming the work of others as your own, deliberately applying false and inaccurate information, copying the work of others in part or whole, allowing others in the course to copy your work in part or whole, failing to appropriately acknowledge the work of other scholars/authors through acceptable referencing standards, purchasing papers or writing papers for other students and submitting the same paper twice for the same subject.

This Academic Integrity policy applies to all students of the Zhejiang University in all programs of study, including non-graduating students. It is to reinforce the University's commitment to maintain integrity and honesty in all academic activities of the University community.

Policy
The foundation of good academic work is honesty. Maintaining academic integrity upholds the standards of the University. The responsibility for maintaining integrity in all the activities of the academic community lies with the students as well as the faculty and the University. Everyone in this community must work together to ensure that the values of truth, trust and justice are upheld.
Academic dishonesty affects the University's reputation and devalues the degrees offered. The University will impose serious penalties on students who are found to have violated this policy. The following penalties may be imposed:

- ✓ Expulsion
- ✓ Suspension
- ✓ Zero mark /fail grade
- ✓ Marking down
- ✓ Re-doing/re-submitting of assignments or reports, and
- ✓ Verbal or written warning.

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