SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

Sault College

COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE TITLE: History of Video Games

CODE NO. :   VGA 100   **SEMESTER:**   F11

PROGRAM: Video Game Art

AUTHOR: Matias Kamula

DATE: May,2011   **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:**   March 31, 2010

APPROVED: "B.Punch"

_____   _____
                                Chair   **DATE**

TOTAL CREDITS: 2

PREREQUISITE(S):   None

HOURS/WEEK: 2

I.   COURSE DESCRIPTION: In order to create any game or interactive presentation it is imperative to understand gaming concepts and constructs. This course will provide the student with an understanding of how technological advances have altered game play and will provide the basis for predictions and preparedness for future game formats, iterations,

Through this course the student will achieve a greater understanding of how technological limitations drove the need to get the most out of resources, A particular focus on evolution of gameplay, evolution of target audience (including to serious games) will be explored in context with the Generations of Gaming (Origins in traditional (i.e. non-digital) games and computer research, "Golden Age", Second Generation (1977-1983), Third (1985-89), Fourth (1989-96), Fifth (1994-1999), Sixth (1998-2006), Seventh (2004-?)

II.   LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:

1.   Critically analyze games with regards to game story structure, mechanics, pacing and the direction of art.

       Potential Elements of the Performance:
       -    Display ability to abstract gameplay concepts and mechanics from final art in commercialized products
       -    Communicate the interrelationship between various game elements and how this may inform design decisions

2.   Apply effective business practices and time management skills appropriate to his/her position in the game art industry.

       Potential Elements of the Performance:
       -    Complete assignments on time
       -    Develop assignments in an iterative manner
       -    Respond effectively to changing and tight deadlines

3.   Create assets that maximize platform potential on various software development platforms.

       Potential Elements of the Performance:
       -    Develop art assets appropriate for game concepts targeting various video game hardware generations.
       -    Work within technical restrictions to achieve a desired artistic outcome.
       -    Communicate an understanding of the strengths and weakness of each platform, and how this impacts the user experience.

4.   Communicate (visually, verbally and in written form) with other artists,

potential employers, art directors and clients for the purposes of game art creation.

Potential Elements of the Performance:
- Develop consistent visual identity for across game assets for a given target platform and design.
- Communicate awareness of the potential impact of artistic direction on non-artistic priorities (target audience, design, business model…)
- Effectively listen to and follow directions

III.   TOPICS:

1. The Origin of video games (tennis for two, Spacewar!), paper based: D&D, Strat-O-Matic, board games
2. First steps technology: Television gaming apparatus, The brown box, Computer Space coin-op, Syzygy

3. First steps commercialization: Atari, Pong, Odyssey

4. Atari (1971-1977) Promotional art (asteroid), representational graphics (tank, gun fight), computer industry revolution (Breakout: Steve Jobs), first content controversy (Death Race)
5. Atari: The Golden Years (1978-81) Defining a new industry (business model vs records (3rd party dev relations), tech R&D vs. content push,
6. Second generation consoles: VCS (Atari 2600), ColecoVision, Intellivision
7. Activision
8. First true Icon carries video games into mainstream
9. Home Computers breed future programming visionaries
10. The First Story creates an industry leader
11. Graphical firsts: Isometric Perspective - Space Odyssey, target audience – Ms. Pac-Man, stages – gorf, FP perspective sim – Red Baron,
12. 3D Games: Isometric perspective of Zaxxon and the "background" reaching into gameplay.
13. Rise of Sega

IV.   REQUIRED RESOURCES/TEXTS/MATERIALS:

V.   EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:
Assignments/Projects = 100% of final grade
Assignments/projects will constitute 100% of the student's final grade in this course. A missing assignment is equivalent to course objectives not achieved which results in an "F" (fail) grade for the assignment/project.

The following semester grades will be assigned to students:

Grade	Definition	Grade Point Equivalent
A+	90 – 100%	4.00
A	80 – 89%	
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
D	50 – 59%	1.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	0.00

CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.

VI.   SPECIAL NOTES:

DEDUCTIONS – LATES, EXTENSIONS AND FAILS

Lates:
An assignment/project is considered late if it is not submitted at the time and date specified by the instructor. A late assignment/project will automatically be penalized by a 10% deduction. Late assignments/projects will not be accepted one week past their initial due date. Any assignments/projects not submitted within one week of their initial due date will automatically be assigned a fail grade (F).

Extensions:
The instructor may grant extensions for assignment/projects under exceptional circumstances (e.g. death in the family or serious illness). An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the current semester.

Fail:
A fail grade (F) is assessed to an assignment/project that has not been executed to a minimum satisfactory "D" grade level or in which the directions have not been followed correctly.

Attendance:
Significant learning takes place in the classroom setting through an interactive learning approach; therefore students are expected to attend all classes and inform the instructor of an anticipated absence. Attendance is mandatory for this course to ensure the course requirements and objectives are met.

A total absence of 3 classes for the semester will be tolerated. After 3 absences penalties will take effect, an additional 10% will be deducted from the final grade for this course per class missed.

i.e. 4 classes missed = 10% deduction form final grade
5 classes missed = 20% deduction from final grade

All in class work is based on the instructor's observation and record of the student's performance in the following areas:

-        ability to follow directions set forth by the instructor

-        attitude and conduct - students should be courteous, respectful, teachable, and considerate of the instructor and other students. They should also strive for a creative atmosphere and keep the work place neat.

-        participation in class projects and discussions

-        attendance and handing in work on time

Special Needs:
If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your professor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit Room E1101 or call Extension 703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

Retention of Course Outlines:
It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other postsecondary institutions.

Communication:
The College considers **WebCT/LMS** as the primary channel of communication for each course. Regularly checking this software platform is critical as it will keep you directly connected with faculty and current course information. Success in this course may be directly related to your willingness to take advantage of the **Learning Management System** communication tool.

Plagiarism:
Students should refer to the definition of "academic dishonesty" in *Student Code of Conduct*. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

Course Outline Amendments:
The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

<include any other special notes appropriate to your course>

VII.   PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should consult the professor. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

VIII. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should obtain a direct credit transfer form from the Dean's secretary. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course in question.