City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by School of Creative Media
with effect from Semester A 2015 /16

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	World-Building in Digital Narrative Media
Course Code:	SM6333
Course Duration:	1 semester
Credit Units:	3 credits
Level:	P6
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

This class addresses the new design practice and culture in narrative media production through the concept of world-building.

By the completion of the class, the student will be able to:
– design environments, spaces, worlds in relation with narrative elements;
– explore how diverse forms of artistic practices (theatre, literature, cinema, video games) are affected by the world-building creative paradigm;
– use differentially several forms of media involved in world-building (screen based media, interactive and non-interactive media, theatrical scene, architecture, cityscape);
– have an understanding of some basics in the philosophy of new media studies that are required to have a good grasp of the contemporary evolution of diverse creative practices in relation with digital tools aimed at creative practices;
– understand how the concept of world-building affects the development of the contemporary cultural industries;
– understand the possibilities as well as the ideologies embedded in world-building practices;
– assess the use of different media in the design of worlds;
– explore what creativity means when narrative design is considered from the perspective of world-building;
– assess how world-building reconfigure the notion of authorship and spectatorship.

This is not a course focused on the narrative approaches in interactive media, but on the practice of world-building in digital media (transmedial approach, transgaming, etc.) and how it gives way to new (multi)narrative design strategies. A special emphasis will be put on video games because this media heralds the most explicit forms of open-ended world-building (as a set of situated techno-cultural procedures). This class aims more generally to give a theoretical and practical understanding and an historical perspective of the practice of world-building at the crossing of artistic practices and production methods gaining ground in cultural industries.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	To identify critically world-building as an artistic and as an industrial practice. To classify, describe, list critically the facts pertaining to the recent history of world building practices in art and cultural industries		✓		✓
2.	To memorize, identify, recognize the concepts at the crossing of world-building and critical new media studies			✓	
3.	To have an understanding of the tension between systemic and narrative elements in current forms of digital and non-digital media			✓	✓
4.^	To be able to apply creatively the material from the class to work in collaboration with creative people having world building practice in art and industry (e.g. narrative designers in film making). To hypothesize, reflect, generate new understandings of world-making		✓	✓	✓

5.	Be able to articulate creatively concepts and empirical information in a diversity of contexts pertaining to world-building		✓		✓
6.^	Be able to collaborate with fellow students to produce an innovative world embedding multiple narrative possibilities			✓	✓
	100%		

A1: *Attitude*
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: *Ability*
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

^ Negotiated Learning Outcome (NLO) explicitly articulating the elements of Discovery oriented learning.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)
(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Lectures	on theories of world building and provide an overview on recent academic researches on the practices of world-building	✓	✓	✓				3 hrs/wk
In class presentation and discussion	Use the material from the lectures and readings to prepare the final project				✓	✓	✓	30mn/wk
Mentoring	Preparing for the final term assignment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3 hrs
Individual search	gathering theoretical and empirical material (on line documentation)	✓			✓	✓	✓	1 hrs/wk
Weekly readings	To get accounted with critical new media studies and world-building practices	✓	✓	✓		✓		2 hrs/wk
Designing a prototype of a world embedded in several digital and non-digital platforms	Exploring diverse narrative possibilities offered by this ensemble.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	3 hrs/wk for 3 weeks

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Midterm Individual essay	✓	✓	✓				25%	
Readings summaries	✓	✓	✓				10%	
Final project proposal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	15%	
In class presentation 1			✓	✓	✓	✓	5%	
Final project	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	35%	
In class presentation 2			✓	✓	✓	✓	10%	
Examination: ____% (duration: , if applicable)								
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Midterm Individual essay	Ability to understand and use the concepts from the lectures and use them in a creative manner to develop a larger reflexion about World Building	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
2. Readings summaries	Ability to understand and use the concepts from the weekly readings	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
3. Final project proposal	Use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive a transnarrative World proposal	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
4. In class presentation 1	Ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
5. Final project	Use the material of the class in a creative manner to conceive a transnarrative World	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
6. In class presentation 2	Ability to explain in detail and with accuracy their project	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

Note: All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.   Keyword Syllabus
(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

World-Building; transmedial storytelling; interactive storytelling; narrative design; science fiction; fictional worlds

2.   Reading List

2.1   Compulsory Readings
(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	The New Art of Virtual Moviemaking (Autodesk white paper).
2.	Calvino, Italo. Invisible Cities. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.
3.	Ian Condry, "Characters and Worlds as Creative Platforms," The Soul of Anime: Collaborative Creativity and Japan's Media Success Story (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).
4.	Nick DeMartino, "Why Transmedia Is Catching On Now," Future of Film Blog, July 5-7, 2011. Part Two. Part Three.
5.	Otsuka Eiji, « World and Variation: The Reproduction and Consumption of Narrative, » Mechademia 5, 2010, pp. 99-116.
6.	Henry Jenkins, "The Pleasure of Pirates and What It Tells Us about World Building in Branded Entertainment", Confessions of an Aca-Fan, June 13, 2007
7.	Johnson, Brian David, and Intel Press. Screen Future: The Future of Entertainment, Computing, and the Devices We Love. Intel Press, 2010.
8.	Derek Johnson, "Sharing Worlds: Difference, Deference, and the Creative Context of Franchising," Media Franchises: Creative Licensing and Collaboration in the Creative Industries (New York: New York University Press, 2013), pp. 107-152.
9.	Phillips, Andrea. A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling: How to Captivate and Engage Audiences Across Multiple Platforms. 1 edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012.
10.	Noah Wardrip-Fruin, Michael Mateas, "Envisioning the Future of Computational Media" (Media Systems).
11.	Mark J. P. Wolf, "World Structures and Systems of Relationships," Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation (London: Routledge, 2013), pp.153-197.

2.2   Additional Readings
(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Mark J.P. Wolf , Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation, London: Routledge, 2013
2.	Barikin, Amelia. Parallel Presents: The Art of Pierre Huyghe. The MIT Press, 2012.
3.	Jenkins, Henry. "Game Design as Narrative Architecture." In First Person: New Media as Story, Performance, and Game, Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Pat Harrigan. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2006.
4.	Whitelaw, Mitchell. Metacreation: Art and Artificial Life. The MIT Press, 2006.