

SM5347D: TOPICS IN MEDIA WORLDING: VIDEO GAMES AS ART

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Topics in Media Worlding: Video Games as Art

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

5347D

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This graduate-level studio course examines video games as a contemporary artistic medium and a platform for critical inquiry. Students will investigate how video games operate within the broader field of contemporary art and culture. Emphasizing conceptual development over purely technical execution, the course focuses on the symbolic, aesthetic, and experiential dimensions of games as experimental forms of cultural production. Students will engage in iterative processes of playing, analyzing, and creating games, developing both critical and creative approaches to the medium.

The course combines seminar-style discussions, hands-on workshops, and studio-based project work. Prior experience with computer programming is expected, as students will be required to implement interactive projects as part of their practice.

Enrolment for SM5347 depends on School's permission, which will only be granted if the topic is essentially different from that covered in this course offered in or before Semester B 2025/26, SM6311 and SM6327.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Understand and cultivate new trends in media worlding		x	x	
2	Independently create media concepts for fine arts and design practices		x	x	
3	Explore digital Cinema and Sound as a time based medium			x	
4	Work with up-to-date digital techniques to expand the digital media worlding genre		x	x	
5	Evolve traditional methods of imaging to discover new possibilities of visual display in contemporary digital imaging, sound, cinema and associated media			x	x
6	Combine artistic creativity and technical knowledge to create works that demonstrate a personal style/ signature			x	x

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 real-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.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will engage in formal lectures where the instructor will present concepts, theories and case studies in selected issues pertaining to media worlding.	1, 3, 5	
2	Class discussions	Students will engage in structured discussion with peers and students to identify areas to improve on in their projects	1, 3, 5	
3	Research	Students will develop an in-depth understanding of relevant materials to write papers or create artistic projects as set by the instructor.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Creative Project	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	60	-	Yes
2	Assignment Presentation and Critique	4, 5, 6	20	-	Yes
3	Writing on selected topic	1, 2, 3	20	-	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) - Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter

- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative
- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management
- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize

Good

(B+, B, B-) - Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter

- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition
- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management

Fair

(C+, C, C-) - Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter

- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management

Marginal

(D) - Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter

- Poor organization, structure and composition
- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management

Failure

(F) - Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter

- No organization, structure or/and composition
- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management

Assessment Task

Creative Project / Technical Project / Portfolio (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects.

The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) - Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature

- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production
- Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project
- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment

Good

(B+, B, B-) - Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium

- Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions

Fair

- (C+, C, C-) - Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
 - Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Marginal

- (D) - Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
 - Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Failure

- (F) - No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium
- Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
 - Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available
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Assessment Task

Topic essay (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to research and transform primary and secondary sources to articulate a theoretical basis of their work in Media worlding. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively developing a critical opinion and theory to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent

- (A+, A, A-) - Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative
 - Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management
 - Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize

Good

- (B+, B, B-) - Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter
- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition
 - Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management

Fair

- (C+, C, C-) - Adequate content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter
- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
 - Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management

Marginal

- (D) - Weak content, loose grasp of the general ideas with some knowledge of the subject matter
- Poor organization, structure and composition
 - Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, poor time-management

Failure

- (F) - Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter
- No organization, structure or/and composition
 - Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management
-

Assessment Task

Presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

This assessment will grade on content and fluency of presentation. Students should show their co-operation to conduct a well-organized presentation with their own argument and evidence from readings and notes. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's self initiatives to conduct additional research and to personalize theories for her/his personal daily experience.

Excellent

- (A+, A, A-) - Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter
- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative concepts.
 - Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management
 - Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new issues, or suggesting the ability to theorize

Good

- (B+, B) - Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter
- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition
 - Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management

Marginal

- (B-, C+, C) - Satisfactory content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter
- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
 - Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management

Failure

- (F) - Unsatisfactory content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter
- No organization, structure or/and composition
 - Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management

Assessment Task

Creative Project / Technical Project / Portfolio (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent

- (A+, A, A-) - Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature
- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the applied techniques, strong conceptual development based on intensive research and knowledge of related projects in the field and innovative concepts.

Good

- (B+, B) - Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium.
- Creative approach and good demonstration of the techniques applied.
 - Convincing concept and its development into the final project.

Marginal

- (B-, C+, C) - Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Limited ability to create project/ work that represents the intended concept, superficial research in the field.

Failure

- (F) - No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium
- Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative

Assessment Task

Topic essay (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to research and transform primary and secondary sources to articulate a theoretical basis of their work in Media worlding. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's proactively developing a critical opinion and theory to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) - Rich, informative content, excellent grasp of the material with in-depth and extensive knowledge of the subject matter

- Rigorous organization, coherent structure, and systematic exposition with a strong sense of narrative
- Superior presentation skills: distinct pronunciation, fluent expression and appropriate diction, exact time-management
- Critical analysis with insightful comments opening up new perspectives or suggesting the ability to theorize

Good

(B+, B) - Adequate content with firm grasp of the material that informs the audience on a subject matter

- Reasonable organization, balanced structure and composition
- Good verbal communication: comprehensible pronunciation, fluent expression and diction, fair time-management

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) - Satisfactory content with comprehensive grasp of the material demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject matter

- Fair organization, weak structure and composition
- Fair presentation skills: acceptable pronunciation, expression and diction, fair time-management

Failure

(F) - Inadequate content, fail to identify the general ideas with knowledge of the subject matter

- No organization, structure or/and composition
- Poor presentation skills: marginal pronunciation, expression and diction, minimal time-management

Part III Other Information

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Caillois, Roger. Man, play and games. Urbana : University of Illinois Press, 2001
2	Galloway, Alexander R. Gaming: essays on algorithmic culture. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2006
3	Nguyen, C. Thi. Games: Agency as Art. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020
4	Sicart, Miguel, Play Matters. Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, 2014

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil