SM2260: INTERACTIVE NARRATIVE

Effective Term
Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title
Interactive Narrative

Subject Code
SM - School of Creative Media
Course Number
2260

Academic Unit
School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School
School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration
One Semester

Credit Units
3

Level
B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction
English

Medium of Assessment
English

Prerequisites
Nil

Precursors
Nil

Equivalent Courses
Nil

Exclusive Courses
Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract
“Interactive storytelling” is a significant property in the development of new media and digital entertainment. This course will examine the essentials of storytelling technique gears towards interactive context. We will go through important topics

from fundamentals of interactivity and storytelling, development issues, design elements, to technologies for implementing interactive storytelling. It aims to provide a deeper scope on students' proficiency on interactive design, in order to equip them to be innovative content provider and designer in digital entertainment sectors such as game design industry as well as other interactive art.

This course is not a conventional writing class, but a practicum to motivate dynamic thinking and creativity plus active involvement in practical experimentation on media narration possibilities. Different interactive inventions (games, digital architecture, installation, screen media, live events) and their storytelling techniques will be studied. Students should prepare to "express," "play" and "create" with a critical mind.

The mode of study will include:

- Participatory lecturing
- Dynamic workshop
- Presentation of work
- Review and critique

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Capture a more profound way in implementing interactive storytelling		x		
2	Acquire a broad understanding in digital content development		x		
3	Amplify self-awareness in realizing his/her own creative potential through new ways of media narrative			x	
4	Create new forms of storytelling approach			x	
5	General personal insight as a result of critical interpretation of the subject matter				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	Workshop	Workshops digital storytelling technique; Project production and experimentation.	1	

2	Lecture	Lecture & workshops on related topics; Demonstration of interactive products in digital entertainment and art field	2	
3	Workshop	Workshops in self-discovery, Individual presentation; small group review and discussion; Participation in collaborative assignments	3, 4, 5	
4	Presentation & report	Coursework presentation & discussion	4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Individual presentation in an original idea applying non-traditional storytelling techniques	1, 2	20	-	No
2	Interactive Character Design Project (art-driven / story-driven) – focus on game environment or other digital entertainment platforms	2, 3, 4, 5	25	Text-based elements of ALL assignments - No GenAI, ALL class exercise or test - No GenAI. Visual, audio & media component of assignments - Allow GenAI	Yes
3	Produce interactive narrative products to reflect one’s authentic thoughts (Conceptual design & content development);	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	35	Text-based elements of ALL assignments - No GenAI, ALL class exercise or test - No GenAI. Visual, audio & media component of assignments - Allow GenAI	Yes
4	Workshops participation; group discussion	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Individual Presentation

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’ lied 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

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Assessment Task

2. Interactive Project

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

3. Workshop Participation / Group Discussion

Criterion

This assessment task reviews students' participation and performance in discussions, debates and peer critique during the tutorial sessions. The evidence of 'negotiation', the sign of discovery, lies in students' pre-class preparation and interpersonal sensitivity to his/her peer members.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, strong ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on other points
- In-depth pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Interpret others' views with an open mind and ready to negotiate
- Readiness to share personal insight via analysis and synthesis with informed views
- Constructively critical, thus facilitating the discovery of new issues

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate class discussion and comment on other points
- Adequate pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Interpret opinions effectively

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Attentive in in-class participation, listening with comprehension, but only infrequently contributing
- Adequate pre-class preparation but little familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Fair ability in interpreting opinions

Marginal (D)

- Unmotivated to participate in class discussion or comment on other people's views

- Little pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Poor ability in interpreting opinions

Failure (F)

- Unwilling to participate in class discussion and comment on other points, even when requested by the teacher
- No pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Minimal ability in interpreting opinions

Additional Information for AR

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

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

* Core concept of interactive storytelling - Story and Interactivity, Styles of Thinking, Concept Development, Abstraction & Verb Thinking;
* Strategies for Interactive Storytelling - Environmental Strategies, Data-Driven Strategies, Language-Based Strategies;
* Core Technologies for Interactive Storytelling - Personality Models, Drama Managers, Verbs and Events, Flow of information in dramatic expression, Anticipation, Sequencing, Development Environments for interactive storytelling;
* Applications - Distant Relatives, Prognostications;
* Aesthetics of interactive storytelling;
* Role of storyteller in interactive environment.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	Koenitz, Hartmut (Ed), Interactive Digital Narrative: History, Theory and Practice, Routledge, 2015.
2	Crawford, C. Chris Crawford on Interactive Storytelling, New Riders, 2005.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Meadows, M.S., Pause & Effect, The Art Of Interactive Narrative, New Riders, 2003.
2	Crawford, C. The Art of Interactive Design, New Riders, 2003.