DEGREE IN: AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION

1. GENERAL DETAILS OF THE SUBJECT

Name: **GAME DESIGN & LUDONARRARIVE**

Level: FOURTH Semester: FIRST

Type (Basic/Compulsory/Elective subject): Compulsory
Weekly class hours: 4 Crédits (ECTS): 6
Year of Study Programme: 2010

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2. DESCRIPTION

The course Game Design and Ludonarrative is intended to provide students with knowledge and skills of several gaming activities, focusing on game design as a new employment field. With a practical approach, it will contextualize the current importance of the gaming activities, the inclusion of narrative/storytelling in them and several speech strategies that can be found with the experience, analysis and production of these games and videogames.

It also proposes a knowledge applied to game and videogames industries, the different jobs and roles that can be found in them and it deepens into the design and script of the proper games and videogames.

3. SITUATION

Previous knowledge and skills:

It is desirable analytic skills, creativity and critical observation and the willingness to teamwork. It's also to be considered a good understanding of the audiovisual narrative, script and film-making techniques.

Recommendations:

It is important to have access to a personal computer to do the assignments.

Adaptation for students with special needs:

The subject will be taught in English. If the student doesn't have the skill required in the language and this slows down the learning of the other students, he will have to abandon the course.

4. OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES

Objectives:
Basic Objectives:
B1.- Students will be able to prove they own and understand knowledge within a field of study that is basic for the general secondary education, and they can achieve a new level, by the use of advanced textbooks, that also includes some features that imply knowledge coming from the cutting edge of the field of the study.
B2.- Students will know how to apply this knowledge to real work or calling in a professional way, and they own the skills that can be proved by the elaboration and defense of arguments and problem solving within their field of study.
B3.- Students will be capable of gathering and processing relevant data in the field of communication, so they can issue assessments which include a reflection about relevant subjects of social, scientific or ethical nature.
B4.- Students will be able to transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions to both a specialized audience to a non-specialized one.
B5.- Students will have developed those basic learning skills to achieve the superior studies with a high autonomy.

Other objectives:
1.- Theoretical-practical knowledge and application of the technologies applied to audio-visual media, knowing their possibilities and multimedia and interactive supports.
2.- Understanding the basics that ground the technologies of the new audio-visual media.
3.- Acknowledging the importance, functions and instruments of the elements that concern the technological processes and their imbrication with audio-visual media and the Internet.
4.- Getting the capabilities for the proper critical analysis of the use of technology and its application to audio-visual culture.
5.- Knowing and learning the use of the technologies in the digital era.
6.- Knowing the historical evolution and the progressive conformation of the new technologies.

Skills:
Specific Skills:
E02. Ability for the proper use of technical tools within the different stages of the audio-visual process, so students will express themselves through audio-visual images or discourses with the essential technical quality.
E06. Ability for critically perceiving the new visual and audio landscape the communicative universe that the surrounding universe offers to us, considering the iconic messages as the fruit of a specific society, product of the socio political and cultural conditions of a specific historic age.
E52. Ability for applying processes and techniques involved in the organization and management of technical resources of whichever of the existent audio and visual supports
E54. Ability for recreating the sound ambience of an audio-visual or multimedia production, considering the intention of the text and the narration through the use of the music, sound effects and soundtrack.
E57. Ability for the use of techniques and processes in the organization and creation at the different stages of the construction of the multimedia and interactive materials production.

Transversal Skills:
G01. Ability for adaptation to audio-visual technological changes, business or labor organization charts.
G04. Decision-making: ability to guess the good choice in uncertain situations, assuming responsibilities.
G06. Order and method: skill to organize and temporize the tasks, doing them in an orderly manner adopting logically priority decisions in the different processes of the audio-visual production.
G06. Order and method: skill to organize and temporize the tasks, doing them in an orderly manner adopting logically priority decisions in the different processes of the audio-visual production.
G07. Solidary awareness: solidary respect for the different individual persons and people of the planet, as well as knowledge of the main cultural streams related to the individual and collective values and the respect for human rights.
G08. Encouragement of entrepreneurial spirit.
G09. Encouragement of the equality warranties.

5. COURSE CONTENTS OR THEMATICS SECTIONS

LESSON 1. A Theoretical Introduction to the Concepts of Game, Game Design and Game Studies.
1.1.- The concept of game as a cultural construction.
1.2.- Introduction to the production process of a videogame.
1.3.- Videogame theory: Game Studies.

LESSON 2.- The triple nature of the video game as a communicational device.
2.1.- The video game from the enunciative perspective.
2.2.- The video game from the semiotic perspective.
2.3.- The video game from the narratological perspective.

LESSON 3.- Introduction to Worldbuilding and the programming fundamentals of basic interaction in fictional worlds.
3.1.- Introduction to Worldbuilding concepts.
3.2.- Storyworld and Fictional Worlds.
3.3.- Design of a fictional frame with a game engine. Programming basic interactions.

LESSON 4.- Storytelling Design and Video games script. Toolbox Narrative Design.

4.1.- Introduction to Storytelling Design.
4.2.- Elaboration of a video game script with Toolbox Narrative Design.
4.3.- Development of a storytelling video game prototype: Walking Simulator.

6. LIST OF TOPICS

LESSON 1. A Theoretical Introduction to the Concepts of Game, Game Design and Game Studies.
1.1.- The concept of game as a cultural construction.
1.2.- From the traditional game to the storytelling game.
1.3.- The Tabletop RolePlaying Game.
1.4.- Introduction to the production process of a videogame.
1.5.- Videogame theory: Game Studies.

LESSON 2.- The triple nature of the video game as a communicational device.
2.1.- The video game from the enunciative perspective.
2.2.- The video game from the semiotic perspective.
2.3.- The video game from the narratological perspective.

LESSON 3.- Introduction to Worldbuilding and the programming fundamentals of basic interaction in fictional worlds.
3.1.- Introduction to Worldbuilding concepts.
3.2.- Storyworld and Fictional Worlds.
3.3.- Worldbuilding as a basic guide for the creation of contents for expanded universes and transmedia strategies.
3.4.- Design of a fictional frame with a game engine. Programming basic interactions.

LESSON 4.- Storytelling Design and Video games script. Toolbox Narrative Design.
4.1.- Introduction to Storytelling Design.
4.2.- Elaboration of a video game script with Toolbox Narrative Design.
4.3.- Development of a storytelling video game prototype: Walking Simulator.
4.4.- Other Game Design Documents.

The practical part of the subject will be based on playing games and methodologically analyzing the experience. It will also include the expositions of the practices made by the partners using creative pitch and selling pitch simulations, generating a mood of sharing knowledge.

7. METHODOLOGY AND TEACHING TECHNIQUES

Teaching the theoretical content will be supported by the use of audio-visual technologies. Lecture classes will be complemented with expositions, viewings, analysis, programmed readings and debates, allowing us to approach the subject to the theoretical-practical model of storytelling game design, the concept of creation and direction of video games, the roles and tasks of those who deal in those processes and some techniques of project management for developing them and their selling.

There is also an important and implicit teaching load that, during the collective lessons first and working in small groups later, will enable the exercise of that design, developing some of the techniques that can be quite often found on pitch selling and co-creative workshops of these products.

The main goal of this practical content is that students will specify the concepts and skills presented during the theoretical part of the subject. To achieve that some activities are proposed to develop the contents of the subject and the goals already planned. For this, the class will be divided into several groups, summarizing briefly the process like this:

a) Explanation to the whole class of the practice.
b) Presentation of the technical materials and skills to be acquired.
c) Doing the practices.
e) Interaction by pitch.

8. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

It will be used the Standard Evaluation System of the center, considering the next elements:

OPTION A

Attendance (> 75%)	
Assignments	50 %
Activities, attitude and participation	20 %
Theoretical evaluation:	30 %

The average of the assignments and the theoretical evaluation have to get half of their grade to pass the subject.

Extra practices can be approved by the teacher to those who have passed all the practice to increase the general grade until 10%.

Spelling and grammar mistakes in works and exams can reduce their individual grades.

The teacher might replace the final theoretical evaluation with other theoretical tests or practices, or essays and presentations depending on the development of the subject. In certain cases, these contents might be included in the proper Assignments or Activities in class by increasing their value.

OPTION B

Attendance (< 75%)	
Assignments	60 %
Mandatory book review	10 %
Theoretical/practical exam	30 %

The three evaluation elements have to get at least half of their grade to pass the subject.

The assignments will be adapted to ensure the acquisition of the skills, including the “Order and Method” transversal generic skill by doing the proper communication in advance with the teacher.

The mandatory book review has to be asked to the teacher by email at least one week before the final exam so the teacher can indicate the book to be reviewed. In some cases, the teacher might replace or complement the mandatory book review for activities already made in class before the student missed the classes that reduced the attendance to the minimum required for OPTION A.

Spelling and grammar mistakes in assignments and exams can reduce their individual grades.

- SECOND EVALUATION:
Students who fail to pass the subject will keep their grades for those practices or the theoretical evaluation or exam if they are already approved.
Specific cases that have to be approved by the teacher could change the theoretical exam with another practice.

Students will have to contact the teacher at least six weeks before the theoretical exam to receive instructions to adapt the practices.

- THIRD EVALUATION:
Students will have to contact the teacher at least six weeks before the theoretical exam to receive instructions to adapt the practices.

9. REFERENCES

Specific

- COSTIKYAN, Greg (2013): *Uncertainty in Games*. Cambridge, Massachusetts (Estados Unidos de América): The MIT Press (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- CRAWFORD, Chris (2012): *Chris Crawford on Interactive Storytelling. Second Edition.* New Riders Publishing.
- HEUSSNER, Tobias (ed.) (2019): *The Advanced Narrative Toolbox*. London (Reino Unido). CRC Press.
- HUIZINGA, Johan (2000): *Homo ludens.* Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- MACKAY, Daniel (2001): *The Fantasy Role-Playing Game: A New Performing Art*. Carolina del Norte (Estados Unidos): McFarland & Company, Inc.
- ROGERS, Scott (2018): *LEVEL UP! Guía para ser un gran diseñador de videojuegos. Edición actualizada.* Editorial Parramón. Badalona (Barcelona).
- WOLF, Mark J.P. (2012): *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation*. Routledge. Nueva York (EEUU).

General

- ALBADALEJO MAYORDOMO, T. (1986). *Teoría de los mundos posibles y macroestructura narrativa*. Alicante: Secretariado de Publicaciones Universidad de Alicante.
- ARISTOTLE (2010): *The Poetics of Aristotle*, North Carolina, USA: North Carolina Press.
- ARNHEIM, R. (2004): *Art and Visual Perception, Second Edition: A Psychology of the Creative Eye.* California, USA: University of California Press.
- CASTRANOVA, Edward (2006): *Synthetic Worlds. The business and culture of online games.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- DAVIS, Morton D. (1979): *Teoría de los juegos*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
- FINE, Gary Alan (1983): *Shared Fantasy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- GARCÍA GARCÍA, Francisco (coord.) (2006): *Narrativa audiovisual: televisiva, fílmica, radiofónica, hipermedia y publicitaria*. Madrid: Laberinto.
- GROUPE PHI (1993): *Tratado del signo visual*, Madrid, Cátedra.
- HARRIGAN, Pat y WARDRIP-FRUIN, Noah (ed.) (2004): *First Person. New Media as Story, Performance and Game.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- HARRIGAN, Pat y WARDRIP-FRUIN, Noah (ed.) (2007): *Second Person. Role-Playing and Story in Games and Playable Media*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- HARRIGAN, Pat y WARDRIP-FRUIN, Noah (ed.) (2009): *Third Person. Authoring and Exploring Vast Narratives*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- LAWS, Robin D. (2018): *Beating the Story: How to Map, Understand, and Elevate Any Narrative*. Gameplaywright.
- NGUYEN, C. T. (2020). *Games: Agency As Art*. Oxford University Press.
- PHILLIPS, A. (2012): *A Creator's Guide to Transmedia Storytelling*. Nueva York: McGraw Hill.
- SÁNCHEZ-MESA, Domingo (Comp.) (2004): *Literatura y Cibercultura*. Madrid: ARCO/LIBROS.
- TAYLOR, T.L. (2006): *Play between worlds: exploring online game culture.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).
- TORREBEJANO OSORIO, A. (2024). *Intermedialidad y Transmedialidad En Los Mundos Narrativos de Los Juegos de Rol En Vivo*. Tesis doctoral. Granada. https://hdl.handle.net/10481/89846.
- VOGLER, Christopher (2002): *The Writer's Journey. Mythic Structure for Writers, Third Edition.* San Francisco, California, USA: Michael Wiese Productions.
- ZAGAL, J. P., and DETERDING, S. (2018). *Role-Playing Game Studies: Transmedia Foundations. Role-Playing Game Studies: Transmedia Foundations*. New York and London: Routledge.

Others (web addresses, etc)

- https://www.drivethrurpg.com/ Tabletop Roleplaying Games books on pdf., some of them for free.
- https://roll20.net/ Webpage to play tabletop roleplaying games online with a free access.
- http://www.indie-rpgs.com/articles/ Compilation of articles about TRPG that started the indie developers movement.
-
- https://digra.org/ An international association for academics and professionals who research digital games and associated phenomena.