IC208 A
Computer Game Design and Japanese Culture

Instructors: Drs. Joseph Wunderlich and Mahua Bhattacharya
Location: E273
Time: MF 11-12:20
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Phones: *Offices* 1295 & 1239; *Cells* 717-368-9715 & 717-798-2213
Emails: wunderjt@etown.edu & bhattacharm@etown.edu
Internet: Wunderlich Website & YouTube channel
Office Hours: Wunderlich M 10:30-11:00, F 10:30-11:00,12:20-2:00; & Bhattacharya M 1:00-1:50

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Game design is not about the mechanics of the production of technology. Modern gaming culture has integrated concepts of home and nation, war and memory, social norms and their threats, as well as bioethics in the very conceptualization of its structure. Therefore, it is essential we study these concepts holistically. Japan and other Asian cultures have become synonymous with the production of games in all their forms, whether they are role-playing games (RPG), videogames, or PC-based strategy games. In fact, the image of Japan has morphed from the producer of 'hard' technology that it used to have–dominating the automobile, computer, and photographic industries–to one of a 'cool' producer of videogames, anime, manga, and other pop culture goods.

This course will involve students in the education of this integration with hands-on production of designing, creating, and analyzing games of various genres that have both Western and Japanese sensibilities. It is hoped that this integrative process will allow them to understand the subtle nuances of Asian cultures as well as how it differs in its orientation from Western ones.

PREREQUISITES

This course presupposes no special knowledge from the student.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1) Schell, Jesse, *The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses* (Paperback), Third Edition A K Peters/CRC Press 2019. ISBN 978-1138632059
2) Ferrone, Harrison, *Learning C# by Developing Games with Unity: Get to grips with coding in C# and build simple 3D games in Unity 2022 from the ground up,* Packt Publishing; 7th ed. Edition, 2022. ISBN: 978-1837636877
3) Hutchinson, Rachael, *Japanese Culture through Videogames* (2019) Routledge ISBN: 9780367111380

SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS

1. D S. Cohen and Sergio A. Bustamante II, *"Producing Games: From Business and Budgets to Creativity and Design ",* 1st Edition, 2009. ISBN: 978-0240810706 (buy it on-line if you want it)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
   (for the Non-western AU, Creative Expression AU, and the Interdisciplinary Colloquium)

Non-western Core:
- Explain the importance of a specific aspect of Japan's cultural heritage.
- Describe the historical context of Japan.
- Give an illustration of the complexity of the past and its relationship to the contemporary world.
- Give an example of the way that knowledge can be subject to a variety of interpretations.
- Analyze primary and/or secondary sources.

Creative Expression Core:
- Examine concepts employed in the creation and analysis of like artworks.
- Develop and articulate informed aesthetic judgments.
- Create or perform artistic work representative of the discipline.
- Express the intrinsic value of an artistic medium.
- Define the ways in which creative art forms show and affirm human feelings, desires, experiences, and/or values

Interdisciplinary Colloquium:
- Reason, analyze, and engage in critical thinking regarding key texts, works of art, and/or modes of social/scientific research.
- Apply and integrate different strands of learning (literary, artistic, historical, philosophical, social, and/or scientific) and comprehend interconnections in the process of gaining knowledge and experience.

GRADING

The following grade scale will be used in this course:

94-100% A	80-82% B-	67-69% D+
90-93% A-	77-79% C+	63-66% D
87-89% B+	73-76% C	60-62% D-
83-86% B	70-72% C-	0-59% F

Course grades will be based on the following:

1**. Participation, Attendance, and In-class Activities**	10%
2. **Small assignments throughout semester**	20%
3. **Mid-semester Game Analysis Paper**	30%
4. **Final Design/Research Project/Paper, & Presentation**	40%

1) **Participation, Attendance, and In-class Activities:** Legitimate excuses for missing class are illness, and family matters. You should notify us by phone or e-mail <u>before</u> the class you miss. **You are responsible for all the work that is missed due to absence. Also, if you do inform us, you will be given partial credit for that day.**

2) **Small assignments throughout semester:** will be posted in Canvas

3) **Mid-semester Game Analysis Paper:** Analyze a Japanese game and critique its components both from a cultural and design perspectives. Articles that you will use will be provided in advance.

4) **Final Design/Research Project/Paper, & Presentation**: Either **<u>design</u>** a game **<u>or</u>** write a 6-8 page **<u>paper</u>** on a topic of your choice using the materials that we cover in the class. A final paper must be double-spaced with 1 page of 4-6 peer-reviewed references. You also must present your design or paper during the May 02 Final Exam period (11:00am-1;00pm). **Your presentation must take a minimum of 5 minutes and a maximum of 10 minutes.**

A good presentation:

1. <u>**Minimizes**</u> <u>unnecessary details</u>. Don't overwhelm audience. For example, no more than 20 words per slide, use only nouns and verbs, and don't just read a giant block of text -- just paraphrase.
2. Is as **visual** as possible. A picture is worth a thousand words; and equations or graphs can be worth many more.
3. Often has an **image** on every page (e.g., clip-art, photo, animation, etc.) which is an abstraction of the subject matter on the slide (i.e., invokes an idea).
4. Has the audience's **expectations** understood (e.g., provide meaning and/or motivation).
5. Has a clear **objective** (e.g., to entertain, to sell, to motivate, or to report findings).
6. Has a *good* "**opener**" (e.g., an agenda, a quotation, a question, or a declaration)
7. Is **organized** clearly and logically (e.g., by problem then solution; or by priorities – least-to-most or most-to-least).
8. Has *good* **transitions** between main points (i.e., short, attention-getting)
9. Has a *good* "**closing**" (i.e., summarizes main ideas, restates purpose/agenda of presentation)
10. Is **flexible** (i.e., can be modified on the fly if questions are allowed during presentation)

CLASSROOM DECORUM

It is expected that you will refrain from talking amongst yourselves, checking your electronic devices, or playing games on your computer. Please be courteous to your fellow classmates by listening to their opinions respectfully.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

In case of a school closure due to weather or some unforeseen emergency, class will be rescheduled at a mutually convenient time, or a recorded version of the lecture may be given

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Elizabethtown College Pledge of Integrity: *"Elizabethtown College is a community engaged in a living and learning experience, the foundation of which is mutual trust and respect. Therefore, we will strive to behave toward one another with respect for the rights of others, and we promise to represent as our work only that which is indeed our own, refraining from all forms of lying, plagiarizing, and cheating."* See the 2016-17 Elizabethtown College Catalog, "Standards of Academic Integrity http://catalog.etown.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=507#Academic_Judicial_System or Academic Integrity at Elizabethtown College, 11th ed. https://www.etown.edu/offices/dean-of-students/files/academic-integrity-handbook.pdf

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE

"In this course, students shall give credit to AI tools whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations. When using AI tools on assignments, add an appendix showing (a) the entire exchange, highlighting the most relevant sections; (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used (e.g. ChatGPT private subscription version or DALL-E free version), (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, turns of phrase, elements of text, long stretches of text, lines of argument, pieces of evidence, maps of the conceptual territory, illustrations of key concepts, etc.); (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to handle mounting stress, to clarify prose, to translate text, to experiment for fun, etc.). Students shall not use AI tools during in-class examinations, or assignments unless explicitly permitted and instructed. Overall, AI tools should be used wisely and reflectively with an aim to deepen understanding of subject matter."   *Source: https://ctl.utexas.edu/chatgpt-and-generative-ai-tools-sample-syllabus-policy-statements*

DISABILITIES

Elizabethtown College is committed to providing access for all students to courses, programs, services, and activities. If you have a documented disability such as a learning disability, chronic illness, or a new circumstance such as a concussion and would like to request accommodations, contact Lynne Davies, Director of Disability Services by phone (717-361-1227) or e-mail (daviesl@etown.edu). The Office of Disability Services can provide resources to you and facilitate communication with faculty about reasonable accommodations. After meeting with the Office of Disability Services, students must set up an appointment to meet with me, the instructor, to discuss the accommodations as they pertain to my class. Common accommodations may include extra time on exams, an alternate exam location, the ability to record class lectures, and access to content with a screen reader.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

The College is eager to facilitate individual religious beliefs and practices whenever possible while retaining course student learning outcomes. It is your responsibility to meet with the class instructor in advance to request arrangements related to your religious observances that may conflict with this class, and to make appropriate plans to make up any missed work. The following is a link from the Chaplain's Office website where a list of Religious Holidays needing accommodations (if requested) is posted: https://www.etown.edu/offices/chaplain/index.aspx

Title IX

Elizabethtown College and its faculty are committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, and stalking, please know that help and support are available. Etown strongly encourages all members of the community to take action, seek support, and report incidents of sexual harassment to the Title IX Office. You may contact the Title IX Coordinator at reedg@etown.edu or learn more by visiting https://www.etown.edu/offices/diversity/titleix/index.aspx.

MENTAL HEALTH & COUNSELING RESOURCES

Counseling Services provides a broad range of counseling and mental health support services that facilitate students' personal, social, and academic development. The licensed mental health professionals provide short-term individual counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention, and consultation to currently enrolled students for no additional charge. Counseling services are provided in a confidential and diversity-affirming environment to help students address a variety of mental health, situational, and developmental concerns. The office is located in the Baugher Student Center, Suite 216. Appointments can be made in person or by calling 717-361-1405. Urgent walk-in services are also available. To access the after-hours crisis services, please call the 24/7 Campus Security number of 717-361-1111. For more information, please visit www.etown.edu/offices/counseling.

COURSE MODIFICATIONS FOR NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Elizabethtown College is committed to providing equitable access to all courses, programs, and services for non-native (international and domestic) English speakers. Students may request tutoring, learning resources, course modifications, and learning opportunities. Students interested in seeking a course modification should contact Ms. Maria Petty (pettym@etown.edu), International Student Programs Advisor, at (717) 361-1594.

VIDEO GAME DESIGN FLOW
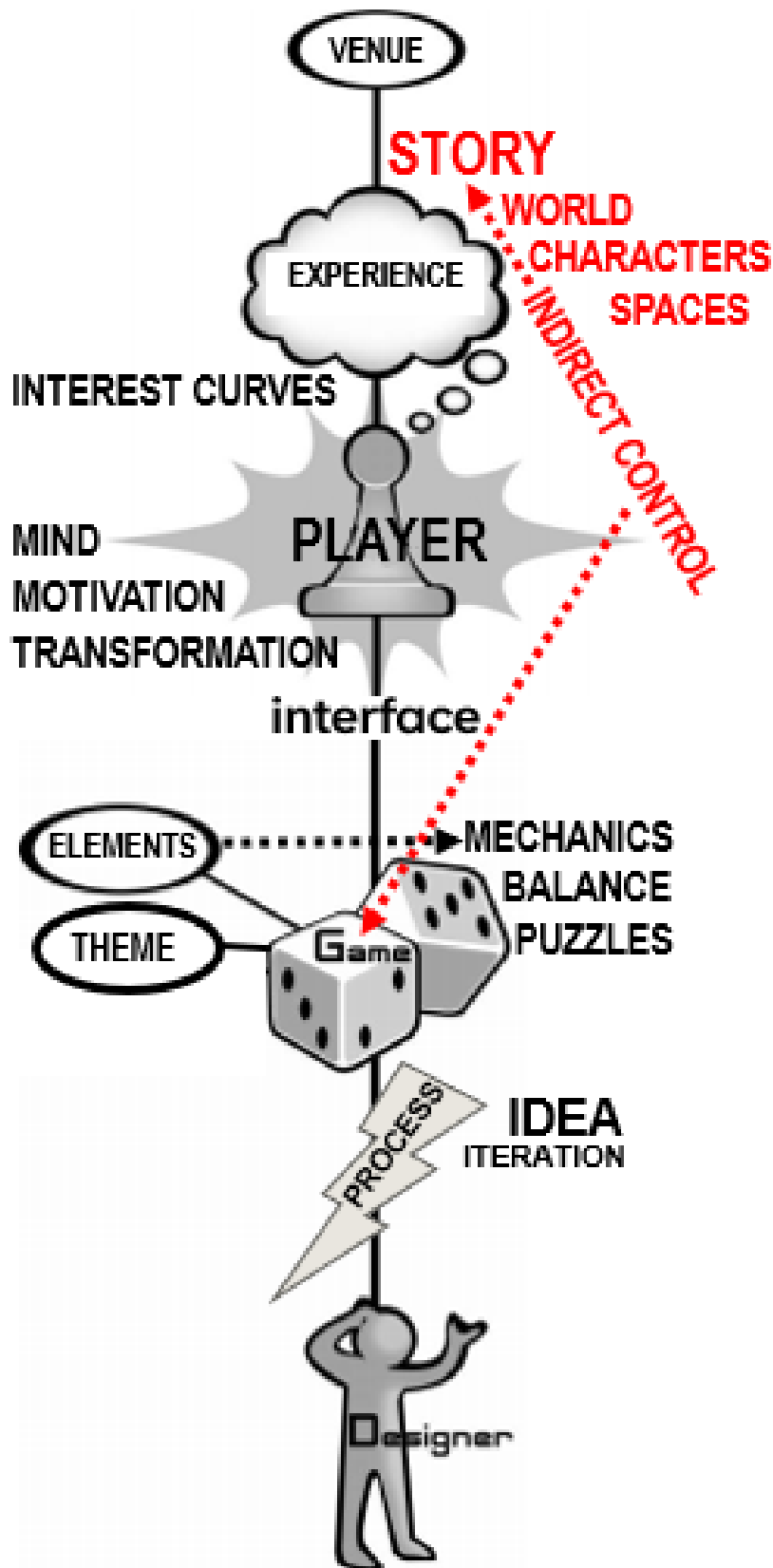
Reading and Activity Schedule Spring 2025

	Day	Date	Topic, Reading, and Viewing
1	Monday	13 Jan	Review Syllabus
2	Friday	17 Jan	Introduction to Video Game **History** and **Cultures**
-	Monday	20 Jan	Martin Luther King Day, No Class
3	Friday	24 Jan	Video Game Designer, **Experience, Venue, Elements, and Theme** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 1,2,3,4,5,6
4	Monday	27 Jan	Cultural Framing of Video Games: Japanese video game culture
5	Friday	31 Jan	Video Game Design **Ideas and Iterations** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 7 and 8
6	Monday	03 Feb	Japanese videogame narratives: War and War Memory: *1943: Battle of Midway*
7	Friday	07 Feb	Video Game Design **Psychology and Motivations** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 9,10, and 11
8	Monday	10 Feb	Japanese videogame narratives: Colonialism and Colonial Legacy of J. Empire: *SoulCalibur*
9	Friday	14 Feb	Video Game Design **Transformations** • Read *Schell* textbook chapter **33**
10	Monday	17 Feb	Japanese videogame narratives: Nuclear Power: *Final Fantasy VII; Metal Gear Solid*
11	Friday	21 Feb	Video Game Design **Mechanics** • Read *Schell* textbook chapter 12
12	Monday	24 Feb	Japanese videogame narratives: Bioethics and Bioengineering *Tekken*
13	Friday	28 Feb	Video Game Design **Balance and Puzzles** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 13 and 14
-	Monday	03 Mar	Spring Break, **No Class**
-	Friday	07 Mar	Spring Break, **No Class**
14	Monday	10 Mar	Japanese videogame narratives: Social Crises
15	Friday	14 Mar	Video Game Case Study *"Crowdsourced Architecture and Environmental Design"*
16	Monday	17 Mar	Japanese videogame narratives: Defining Japanese Self *Okami, Karate Champ*
17	Friday	21 Mar	Video Game Development with **Unity** Engine: **Creating a Project**, and **Editing Scenes and Game Objects** • Read *Ferrone* textbook chapters 1 and 2
18	Monday	24 Mar	Japanese videogame narratives: Notions of Japanese culture: *Katamari Damacy*
19	Friday	28 Mar	Video Game Design **Interfaces,** and **Interest Curves** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 15 and 16
20	Monday	31 Mar	Japanese videogame narratives: Japanese Historical narratives
21	Friday	04 Apr	Video Game Design **Stories, Indirect Control, Worlds, Characters, and Spaces** • Read *Schell* textbook chapters 17,18,19,20, and 21
22	Monday	07 Apr	Feminism and Gaming Culture
23	Friday	11 Apr	Video Game Development with **Unity** Engine: **Grayboxing, Terrain & Probuilder** • Read *Ferrone* textbook chapter 3
24	Monday	14 Apr	Localization in Japanese Games
-	Friday	18 Apr	Holiday Break, No Class
25	Monday	21 Apr	Video Game Development with **Unity** Engine: **Importing and Integrating Assets,** and **C# Programming & Visual Scripting** • Read *Ferrone* textbook chapters 4 and 5
26	**Wednesday**	23 Apr	Video Game Development with **Unity** Engine: **Implementing Movement** • Read *Ferrone* textbook chapter 6
27	Friday	25 Apr	To be announced
28	Monday	28 Apr	To be announced
29	Friday	02 May	Presentations during 11:00am-2:00pm FINAL EXAM TIME SLOT

We reserve the right to modify as needed