Unit Outline: KXH111 Fundamentals of Interactive Entertainment

Semester 5, 2007
Newnham Campus, Launceston

Prerequisites
This unit is open to all students
Corequisites
None
Unit Weight
12.5% of one academic year
Unit Coordinator
Prof. Young Ju Choi
Lecturing Staff
Barbara Mones
Creative Director, Animation Research Labs, University of Washington, USA
Soon-ja Yeom
Lecturer, School of Computing, UTAS

Other teaching staff: to be announced.

Scheduled Teaching Sessions
Lectures: 9.30am-12.30pm and 2.00pm-4.00pm, 10-14, 17-21 December 2007
Seminars: N/A

The Unit Timetable can be accessed from the Study Resources section of the School website. (http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/studyresources.jsp).

Unit Website

The unit website is accessed from . You will need to use your university email pop account username and password to log on to the MyLO system. Once authenticated by the system your personalised MyLO Learning Online area will be displayed. It contains links to the websites that you have permission to access - including the website for this unit.

This unit is Web Supplemented. This means that the use of the Web is optional for this unit. The unit website contains unit information and resources.

If you are not able to access the unit website, please contact the University IT help desk:

Entrance Level, Morris Miller Library, Sandy Bay Campus;
Entrance Level, Launceston Campus Library, Newnham Campus.
Telephone: 6226 1818 and 1300 304 903.
The 1300 number is a local call from within Tas, with the exception of mobiles.
Email: servicedesk@utas.edu.au
Website: http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk/student/index.html

University Website
Information and Resources for ‘Current Students’ are available on the university website at: http://www.utas.edu.au/students/

Provider
School of Computing and Information Systems - Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Technology. http://www.cis.utas.edu.au

OVERVIEW

Introduction
The goal of this unit is to provide students with an understanding and overview of interactive entertainment and new media from the perspective of the developer, storyteller, designer, artist and audience. This unit will provide students with the theories, tools and techniques to create and analyze stories that can be told as digital interactive games, animated films, immersive experiences or various forms of mixed reality design to help them in the analysis of properties and the creation of new ones. The unit will delve into the sociological and psychological dimensions of design for digital entertainment and new media along with a historical perspective and social significance. The unit will also look at business and marketing considerations along with an overview of the game and entertainment industry. It will also include practical aspects by bringing in speakers from various industries and reviewing case studies in each area.

This unit is a companion unit to the Virtual Reality and Advanced Media Technology. Both units are precursors to a new cross-disciplinary program in Human Interface Technology and Experience Engineering that is being started at the (proposed) HIT Lab Australia. The new major is a instructional companion to the organization of the Tasmania Research
Centre of Human Interface Technology Laboratory in Australia. This Laboratory is linked to the HIT Lab at the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington, USA and the HIT Lab NZ, located at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, NZ and will promote the development of advanced human interfaces and media technologies.

This unit is offered by the HIT Lab Australia. The unit will be taught by staff members from the HIT Lab Australia as well as selected international experts from the Human Interface Technology Laboratories in New Zealand and the USA. Notable international authorities and staff from various UTAS schools, especially from the School of Computing, will also be invited for lectures.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Unit Content

Depending on students enrolled and lecturers involved, the unit content could be modified.

DRAFT COURSE SCHEDULE

Part One

Course overview
Story Fundamentals and the development of intellectual properties (IP) including world development, plot, back-story, and character development?
What is the relationship between game, story and narrative play?
How is meaning constructed through game play?
Linear and Interactive Stories
Composing Designing and Developing Engaging, Efficient Stories
How has New Media Changed and Enhanced our Opportunities to Tell stories?
Workshop on the Fundamentals of Story Design.

Visual Story and Interactive Design
Roles and responsibilities in the game industry
Pre-Production Pipeline for Games
Pre-Production Pipeline for Animated Films
The Production Pipeline for Games
The Production Pipeline for Animated Films
Workshop on Graphic Storytelling, Storyboarding and Character Development and Design.

What is a game? What is play?
How Would We Design A Successful Game or Film?
Case Studies of Two Successful and Two Unsuccessful Games
Case Studies of Two Successful and Two Unsuccessful Animated Films
The Current State of the Art in Games and Animation including Hybrid Media.

Developing Your Own Creative Vision
How to Organize your Idea and Pitch your Project?
The role of Audio in both Games and Animated Film Production
Role and creation of design personas
Workshop: Improvisation Session

Assign Theme Topics and Break Into Groups
How to Organize your Idea and Pitch the Most Successful Story for New Digital Media.
Story Assignment Review.
Workshop
Story Pitches.

Part Two

History of video game industry and game genres
The State of the Art in Video Games
The player experience – cognitive aspects of games
Demographics and psychographics of players
Social aspects of games and virtual worlds
MMOs

The State of the Art in Animated Films
The Fundamentals and Origin of Digital Video Film
Types and Styles of Animated Films

Student Pitches and Review
Practical Aspects of Working in Digital Games and Film
Business/marketing Considerations in Games and Film—the Realities of the Industry

The Future of the Industry and of Digital Entertainment Including:
User Created Content for Games and Film.
Transmedia Worlds
Interactivity of Animated Films
Web Based Games and the Rise of Casual Games
Gender and Animation, Gender and Games
Console Wars
Advergaming
Serious Game Movement

Final Student Group Pitches

Panel Discussion
Interactive Discussion about the future of the Entertainment Industry, and a Discussion about the Future of Our Study of Human Experience Engineering and How it Relates to the Course Content.

For more information see the section titled 'Content' on the unit website.

Generic Skills

The university has defined a set of generic graduate attributes expected in its graduates. http://www.utas.edu.au/policy/subject.html#graduates Your course is designed to enable you to develop generic skills that are valued in, and expected of, graduates. These are skills that you will need to develop over time. Hence you are encouraged to look for opportunities, as you study each unit, to reflect on and improve these skills.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Approach to Learning

The University is committed to high standards of professional conduct in all activities, and holds its commitment and responsibilities to its students as being of paramount importance. Likewise, it holds expectations about the responsibilities students have as they pursue their studies within the special environment the University offers.

The University’s Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning states:

Students are expected to participate actively and positively in the teaching/learning environment. They must attend classes when and as required, strive to maintain steady progress within the subject or unit framework, comply with workload expectations, and submit required work on time.

You are expected to spend about 130 hrs studying in this unit - this includes attendance at scheduled teaching sessions. (For a 13 week semester this is, on average, 10 hr/wk.) This is the amount of study time that the ‘typical’ student will need to reach the level of competence and understanding required to fulfil the unit objectives. You are expected to:

- attend all scheduled teaching sessions, unless otherwise notified by the unit coordinator
- prepare for, and actively participate in all scheduled teaching sessions
- complete the assigned learning tasks
- review what has been learnt
- complete assessment items and submit them on time
- access and be familiar with the information and resources available on the unit website
- seek help from teaching staff if you have any questions or difficulties in studying this unit

You are encouraged to read the university's Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning. Part A describes the 'Responsibility of the University to Students' and part B describes the 'Responsibilities of Students to the University'. http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/policies/codes.html

It is expected that students will familiarise themselves with access and use of the MyLO system operated by the University for the electronic delivery of course materials, and for various forms of communication.

It is expected that students will consult email sent to their University email address at least twice a week for notices relating to the administration of the unit, and for notification of the results of assignments.

It is expected that students will read the background material specified in the course curriculum, will actively attend and participate in tutorials, and be prepared to discuss relevant issues arising with tutors, lecturers and fellow students.

**Students are required to attend at least 80% of all lectures, tutorials and lab-based workshops. The failure to meet this attendance requirement will result in a "fail" NN grade.**

You are encouraged to read the university's Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning. Part A describes the 'Responsibility of the University to Students' and part B describes the

**Schedule**

See the 'Schedule' section on the unit website.

**Teaching and Support Staff**

**Teaching Staff**

**Unit Coordinator:**

Prof. Young Ju Choi  
E-Mail: Y.J.Choi@utas.edu.au  
Phone: (03) 6324 3346  
Room: V105, Newnham Campus, Launceston

**Lecturing Staff**

Barbara Mones  
Creative Director, Animation Research Labs, University of Washington, USA

Soon-ja Yeom  
Lecturer, School of Computing, UTAS

Other teaching staff: to be announced.

**School Help Desk**

Contact the School Help Desk if you have any queries or problems with accessing, using, or printing from the computers in the School of Computing and Information Systems labs.

In Hobart the Help Desk is located on level 3 in the Centenary building, and is open from 10:00am-12:00pm, and 2:00pm-4:00pm Monday- Friday. The phone number is 62262929.

In Launceston the Help Desk is located near the entrance to the computing labs and is open from 10:00am-12:00pm, and 2:00pm-4:00pm Monday-Friday. The phone number is 6324 3447.

Both help desks will accept queries over the phone outside the standard opening hours.

The computer labs at the Cradle Coast Campus are maintained by ITR - please contact the University Help Desk for assistance with these computers.

**University Services and Support**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you are advised to raise these with your lecturer in the first instance.

The University has staff available to assist you, such as the:

- Learning Development Advisor  
- Student Counselor  
- Careers Advisor  
- Disability Officer

For more information and contact details see the Services and Support section on the University 'Current Students' web page: [http://www.utas.edu.au/students/](http://www.utas.edu.au/students/)

**Resources**

**Unit Website**

The unit website contains unit information and resources.

**Prescribed Text**

None

**Readings**

**Suggested Readings**

- Blair, Preston. *Cartoon Animation*  
- Faigan, Gary. *Facial Expression*  
- Katz, Steven D. *Shot By Shot*  
- Mamet, David. *On Directing Film*  
- Marsh Reginald. *Anatomy For Artists*  
- Vineyard, Jeremy. *Setting Up Your Shots*
Zimmerman, Eric. *Rules of Play*
Zimmerman, Eric. *The Game Design Reader*
Koster, Ralph. *Theory of Fun for Game Design*
Gee James. *What Video Games Have to Teach us about Learning and Literacy*
Taylor, T., *Between Play Worlds*
Castronova, Edward. *Synthetic Worlds*
Kelley, Tom. *The Art of Innovation*
Jull, Jesper. *Half-real*
Richard, Bartle. *Designing Virtual Worlds*

**Useful Websites**

Terra Nova
The Escapist Magazine
Nick Yee/Daedalus gateway
Water Cooler Games
Buzz Cut
Gamasutra
Game Girl Advance
International Game Developers Association (IGDA)
Penny Arcade
Joystiq
Kotaku
Slashdot Games
MMORPG.com

**Software**

The software that you will need to access the unit website and to study this unit, including general purpose software such as word processors, is provided on the computers in the School's computing labs. If you intend to use software on other computers please check that the versions are compatible.

A CD containing course materials (presentations and course outlines) will be distributed.

**Computing Facilities**

The School has PC labs (running Windows XP), Mac labs (running Mac OS X 10.5), and special purpose Networking labs at the Newnham and Sandy Bay campuses. All students are provided with logins for Windows, Macintosh and Unix environments. If you have not used these facilities before please contact the School Help Desk to collect your account details. If you would like to access these facilities after hours please contact the School Help Desk.

In Hobart, there are 3 PC labs, 2 Mac Labs, and 1 Networks lab in the Centenary building, and 3 PC labs in the CIS building. In Launceston, there are 2 PC labs, 1 Mac Lab, 1 Networks lab, and one multipurpose lab in Building V.

**Use of Facilities**

Use of computing facilities provided by the School is subject to the School's Ethics Guidelines, details of which are posted at [http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/ethics.jsp](http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/ethics.jsp). Copies of the guidelines are also available in all School labs. The School's facilities may only be used for study-related purposes, and may not be used for personal gain. Anti-social behaviour in labs such as game playing, viewing pornography, loud discussion, audio without the use of head-phones, etc is strictly prohibited in all labs at all times. Eating, drinking, and smoking is not permitted in the labs. Before being granted access to the School's facilities, you will be required to sign a declaration that you have read and understand these guidelines, and that you will abide by them. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate the guidelines.

**Occupational Health and Safety**

The university is committed to providing a safe and secure teaching and learning environment. For more information see [http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/](http://www.admin.utas.edu.au/hr/ohs/pol_proc/)

**ASSESSMENT**

**Assessment Items**

**Item 1**
- **Title:** Assignment 1
- **Type:** In-Semester - individual assignment
- **Weighting:** 15%
- **Due:** Will be announced

**Item 2**
- **Title:** Assignment 2
- **Type:** In-Semester - individual assignment
Weighting: 15%
Due: Will be announced

Item 3
Title: Project
Type: In-Semester - individual project
Weighting: 70%
Due: End of Week 4: 4 January 2008

See the 'Assessment' section in unit website for more detailed information about assessment items.

In-Semester Assessment
Unless specifically stated in the specification of the assessment item provided on the unit website, it is required that:

- work submitted by a student is the work of that student alone OR
- where the assessment item is to be completed by a group of students, the work submitted by the group of students is the work of that group of students alone.

Plagiarism

Unless specifically stated in the specification of the assessment item provided on the unit website, it is required that:

- work submitted by a student is the work of that student alone OR
- where the assessment item is to be completed by a group of students, the work submitted by the group of students is the work of that group of students alone.

While students are encouraged to discuss the assignments in this unit and to engage in active learning from each other, it is important that they are also aware of the University's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example downloading an essay wholly or in part from the internet, copying another student's work or using an author's words or ideas without citing the source.

"Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/.

The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed."

It is important that you understand this statement on plagiarism. Should you require clarification please see your unit coordinator or lecturer. Useful resources on academic integrity, including what it is and how to maintain it, are also available at: http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/students.html

Referencing

The preferred text referencing systems for the School is the Harvard system (also referred to as the author-date system). In your written work you will need to support your ideas by referring to scholarly literature, works of art and/or inventions. For information on presentation of assignments, including referencing styles: http://www.utas.edu.au/library/assist/gpoa/gpoa.html
It is important that you understand how to correctly refer to the work of others and maintain academic integrity. Failure to appropriately acknowledge the ideas of others constitutes academic dishonesty (plagiarism), a matter considered by the University of Tasmania as a serious offence. The university document on plagiarism contains information about referencing the work or ideas of others (see http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism/).

**Submissions**

The details of the submission method (paper, electronic or other) for each assignment will be supplied in a separate assignment specification sheet. All in-semester assignment submissions (including electronic submissions) are to include an Assignment Cover Sheet which includes a statement confirming that the submission is your own work. The Assignment Cover Sheet is available from the School Help Desk in Launceston and Hobart, and on the School’s web site: http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/cisview/studyresources.jsp.

Students must take responsibility for the correct submission of their assignments. Students are expected to adhere to the following procedure for submission:

- Submitted files MUST be checked by the student to ensure that correct submission of the file has been undertaken.
- Students are expected to notify the Lecturer WITHIN TWO HOURS of submission if their files have not been submitted correctly.
- Students must take responsibility for safely backing up of their own files during the academic year to ensure that no files are permanently lost.

**Extensions**

Assessment items will not be accepted after the due date except under the conditions stated in the school policy on late assessment. http://www.cis.utas.edu.au/downloads/ExtensionPolicy.pdf (PDF - 100KB).

**Final Grade**

Passing grades will be awarded based on the AVCC guidelines:

- PP at least 50% of the overall mark but less than 60%
- CR at least 60% of the overall mark but less than 70%
- DN at least 70% of the overall mark but less than 80%
- HD at least 80% of the overall mark

In order to comply with the benchmarks set by the Faculty of Science, Engineering & Technology for distribution of grades in units, both the in-semester and examination marks that students obtain may be adjusted either upwards or downwards. See http://fcms.its.utas.edu.au/scieng/scieng/policies.asp for details of the Faculty Assessment Guidelines.