|  |
| --- |
| **TCOM 499: Special Topics - The Video Game Industry** |

SUM 2017

PROFESSOR RANDY NICHOLS

Office:

Office Hours : By appointment

Office Phone:

E-mail: rjnic@uw.edu

|  |
| --- |
| FINAL GAME DESIGN AND PRESENTATION |

As part of the course conclusion, students will be asked to write an explanatory document for a video game that takes into account some of the concerns we’ve covered over the course of the term. You should use the chapter “The Design Document” from Tracy Fullerton’s book *Game Design Workshop* as a model for how to structure your paper. The explanatory design document needs to discuss overall design of the game (interface, style and genre, platform, game purpose, etc. - See pp 396-399 of the chapter).

Because you can’t address much of the technical detail that might go into a design document, your proposals need to pay special attention to the following issues: the ideal target audience(s) for their game, how your product or game broadens the markets the industry has focused on, and any companies or competing products your research has revealed, estimates of the costs and labor needed to produce your product, any externalities related to your product, and the social impact of the game as well as the educational/ideological potential for your product. Beginning your research with the reports from the ESA, IGDA, or any of the reference chapters on particular markets should help you begin to think through some of the challenges of particular markets and products.

In considering markets and audiences, your proposal should also explain how your game will serve to reach underserved markets, open new territory for character or avatar representation, or provide an educational or ideological point of view not typically represented in mainstream games. In other words, how will you expand the possibilities of representation – and tap into new audiences – in this industry? Be sure to cite the research you’ve done so far as evidence for why your product provides something new and groundbreaking in the gaming world. What are you adding that has been missing? Remember that your audience isn’t just in the United States, but around the world. And as you’ve studied, the industry lacks diversity among its workforce, so include, too, what would you do to help ensure diverse employees as part of your strategy.

For example, a proposal focused on developing a game would want to address the storyline of the game, competing games and the companies that made them, the range of labor involved and estimates of cost of production. It should also describe the characters in the game, and to describe the environment and challenges posed on each of the major levels as well as how they intend to transition between those levels. Explain, too, what the overall meaning or message of your game is: what do you want players to think about at the end? What makes your characters compelling and dynamic? How will you challenge some of the problematic elements of gameplay that you’ve studied in order to forge new kinds of stories and characters that appeal to wider segments of the market, including women, LGBTQ gamers, and gamers of color?

In contrast, a proposal focused on developing a new piece of hardware would need to consider supply chains, environmental impacts, labor, and externalities as part key parts of the proposal rather than focusing on story, character, and gameplay elements, while still needing to discuss how your product expands access and use of video games in its key market(s) as well as questions of equity and diversity in its manufacture.

As a way to help guide the groups through the design, a presentation will be made to the class during the final two weeks of the term. Presentations should cover the general concept of the game, your choice behind key avatar/agent designs, a brief story flow, who the target audience is and how the game expands the market for video games. Presentations should run approximately eight to ten minutes. Peer evaluation of the proposal will count as a portion of the grade, and knowledge of students’ game ideas will be important for the final essays. This proposal is designed to raise questions for the students that they can incorporate into the final written project due the day of the final.

|  |
| --- |
| Sources focused on Issues of Representation |

Alexander, J. with McCoy, M. & Velez, C. (2007). “A Real Effect on the Gameplay”: Computer Gaming, Sexuality, and Literacy In C. L. Selfe & G. E. Hawisher (Eds.), *Gaming Lives in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 203-216). New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Blackmon, S., & Terrell, D. J. (2009). Racing towards Representation: An Understanding of Racial Representation in Video Games. In C. L. Selfe & G. E. Hawisher (Eds.), *Gaming Lives in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 203-216). New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Dunlop, J. C. (2007). The US video game industry: Analyzing representation of gender and race. *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction (IJTHI)*, *3*(2), 96-109.

Huntemann, N. (2013). Women in Video Games: The case of Hardware Production and Promotion in N. Huntemann and B. Aslinger (Eds) *Gaming Globally: Production, Play and Place*. London: Palgrave-Macmaillan, pp 59-74.

Kress, Gunther and Van Leeuwen, Theo (1996). “Representation and Interaction: Designing the Position of the Viewer” in Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design. Routledge: London; pp. 119-158.

Ong, S. (2016). The Video Game Industry's Problem With Racial Diversity. *Newsweek*, p. Newsweek, Oct 21, 2016, Vol.167(15).

Packwood, D. (2018). “The Future of Gaming: The Era of White Male games for White Male Gamers Is Ending” Quartz, October 31. Accessed: <https://qz.com/1433085/the-era-of-white-male-games-for-white-male-gamers-is-ending/>

Ramanan, C. (2017). “The Video Game Industry has a diversity problem - but it can be fixed” The Guardian, March 15. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/mar/15/video-game-industry-diversity-problem-women-non-white-people>

Ritsema, J. & Thakore, B. K. (2012). Sincere Fictions of Whiteness inVirtual Worlds: How Fantasy Massively Multiplayer Online Games Perpetuate Color-blind, White Supremacist Ideology. in D. G. Embrick, J. T. Wright, and A. Lukacs (eds) Social Exclusion, Power, and Video Game Play. New York: Lexington Books. pp 141-54.

Sarkessian, A. (2019). Feminist Frequency. Accessed at: <https://feministfrequency.com/>

Shaw, A. (2017). [What’s next?: The LGBTQ video game archive](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15295036.2016.1266683). *Critical Studies in Media Communication* *34*(1): 88-94.

Shaw, A. and Friesem, E. (2016). [Where is the Queerness in Games? Types of Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Content in Games](http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/viewFile/5449/1743). *International Journal of Communication* 10: 3877-3889.

Shaw, A., Lauteria, E.W., Yang, H., Persaud, C.J., Cole, A.M. (2019). [Counting Queerness in Games: Trends in LGBTQ digital game representation 1985-2005.](https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/9754) *International Journal of Communication* 13: 1544-1569.

Sommerfeldt, C. (2005). The Embodied Adventurer. In N. Garrelts (Ed.), *Digital Gameplay: Essays on the Nexus of Game and Gamer* (pp. 160-173). Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company.

Subrahmanyam, K., & Greenfield, P. M. (1999). Computer Games for Girls: What Makes Them Play. In J. Cassell & H. Jenkins (Eds.), *From Barbi to Mortal Kombat: Gender and Computer Games* (pp. 46-71). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Waggoner, Z. (2009). Videogames, Avatars, and Identity *My Avatar, My Self: Identity in Video Role Playing Games* (pp. 3-20, 186-186). Jefferson, NC: McFrarland and Company.

Williams, D., Martins, N., Consalvo, M., & Ivory, J. D. (2009). The virtual census: Representations of gender, race and age in video games. *New Media & Society*, *11*(5), 815-834.

|  |
| --- |
| Sources focused on Accessibility |

AccessibleGames (2019). “Accessible Play Experience” from Accessible.Games. Accessed at: <https://accessible.games/accessible-player-experiences/>

Bailey, J.M. (2019). “Adaptive Video Game Controllers Open Worlds for Gamers with Disabilities” from *The New York Times*. Accessed at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/business/video-game-controllers-disabilities.html>

Barlet, M.C. And Spohn, S.D. (2012). “Includification: A Practical Guide to Game Accessibility” The Able Gamers Foundation. Accessed at: <http://gameaccessibilityguidelines.com/>

Egliston, B. (2019). “It’s Designers Who Can Make Gaming More Accessible for People Living with Disabilities” from [TheConversation.com](http://TheConversation.com). Accessed at: <http://theconversation.com/its-designers-who-can-make-gaming-more-accessible-for-people-living-with-disabilities-107594>

|  |
| --- |
| Sources focused on the Industry and Game Development |

ESA (2019). 2018 Essential Facts About the Video Game Industry. Accessed at: https://www.theesa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ESA\_EssentialFacts\_2018.pdf'

Bartlett, E. (2000). *So You Want to be a Game Designer?* Retrieved April 27, 2002, Accessed at <http://www.igda.org/Endeavors/Articles/ebartlett_printable.html>

Dyer-Witheford, N. and G. De Peuter (2006). ""EA Spouse" and the Crisis of Video Game Labour: Enjoyment, Exclusion, Exploitation, Exodus." Canadian Journal of Communication **31**(3): 599-617.

IGDA. (2012). *Quality of Life Survey*. Retrieved from International Game Developers Association website: <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.igda.org/resource/collection/9215B88F-2AA3-4471-B44D-B5D58FF25DC7/2009_IGDA_QualityOfLife_WhitePaper.pdf>

IGDA. (2016). *Developer Satisfaction Survey 2014 & 2015: Diversity in the Game Industry* (p. 90). Retrieved from International Game Developers Association website: <https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.igda.org/resource/collection/cb31ce86-f8ee-4ae3-b46a-148490336605/igda_dss14-15_diversityreport_aug2016_final.pdf>

IGDA. (2018). *2017 Developer Satisfaction Survey*. Retrieved from International Game Developers Association website: [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.igda.org/resource/resmgr/2017\_DSS\_/!IGDA\_DSS\_2017\_SummaryReport.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.igda.org/resource/resmgr/2017_DSS_/%21IGDA_DSS_2017_SummaryReport.pdf)

Kerr, A. (2006). *The business and culture of digital games gamework/gameplay*. London: SAGE.

Kerr, A. (2017). *Global games : Production, circulation and policy in the networked era*. London ; New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Nichols, R. (2014). *The video game business* (International screen industries). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan on behalf of the British Film Institute.

Ruggill, J., McAllister, Ken S., Nichols, Randy, & Kaufman, Ryan. (2017). *Inside the video game industry : Game developers talk about the business of play*. New York: Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an Informa Business.

Salen, K., & Zimmerman, E. (2006). The Game Design Process. In K. Salen & E. Zimmerman (Eds.), *The Game Design Reader: A Rules of Play Anthology* (pp. 21-26). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Santiago, K. (2015). Independent Game Development. In D. S. Heineman (ed).  *Thinking About Video Games: Interviews with the Experts.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Shaw, A. (2013) How do you say gamer in Hindi: Exploratory research on the Indian digital game industry and culture. In N. Huntemann and B. Aslinger (Eds.) *Gaming Globally: Production, Play and Place*. London: Palgrave. P. 226-250.

Zackariasson, P., & Wilson, Timothy L. (2012). *The video game industry : Formation, present state, and future* (1st ed., Routledge studies in innovation, organization and technology ; 24). New York: Routledge.

|  |
| --- |
| Sources focused on International Game Development |

Aslinger, B. (2010). “Video Games for the ‘Next Billion’: The Launch of the Zeebo Console” in *The Velvet Light Trap*, 66 (Fall), pp. 15-25.

Batchelor, J. (2019). “Brazilian games industry has more than doubled in size since 2014” from [GameIndustry.biz](http://GameIndustry.biz). Accessed at: <https://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2019-07-01-brazilian-games-industry-has-more-than-doubled-in-size-since-2014>

Bozorgzadeh, A. (2016). “Publishing Your Game in Saudi Arabia is not as hard as you’d think” from [VentureBeat.com](http://VentureBeat.com). Accessed at: <http://venturebeat.com/2016/02/07/publishing-your-game-in-saudi-arabia-is-not-as-hard-as-youd-think/>

Campbell, N. (2015). “Meet the Game Developers of Mexico: a Growing Community” from [VentureBeat.com](http://VentureBeat.com). Accessed at: <https://www.polygon.com/features/2016/5/9/11593900/the-game-industry-of-argentina>

Fernández, A. P. (2013). Video Game Development in Argentina. In N. B. Huntemann & B. Aslinger (Eds.), *Gaming Globally: Production, Play, and Place* (pp. 79–81).

McCrea, C. (2013). Australian Video Games: The Collapse and Reconstruction of an Industry. In N. B. Huntemann & B. Aslinger (Eds.), *Gaming Globally: Production, Play, and Place* (pp. 203–207).

Moss, R. (2013). “Big Game: The Birth of Kenya’s Games Industry” from [Polygon.com](http://Polygon.com). Accessed at: <http://www.polygon.com/features/2013/7/3/4483276/kenya-games-industry>

Moss, R. (2016). “The State of Games Development in Africa” from [Gamasutra.com](http://Gamasutra.com). Accessed at: <http://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/264888/The_state_of_game_development_in_Africa.php>

Mulligan, G. (2015). “Africa’s Game Makers Dream of Exporting to the World” from [BBC.com](http://BBC.com). Accessed at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-33335555>

Nichols, R. (2013). Who Plays Who Pays? Mapping Video Game Production and Consumption Globally in N. Huntemann and B. Aslinger (Eds) *Gaming Globally: Production, Play and Place*. London: Palgrave-Macmaillan, pp 19-40.

Portnow, J., Protasio, A., & Donaldson, K. (2013). Brazil: Tomorrow’s Market. In N. B. Huntemann & B. Aslinger (Eds.), *Gaming Globally: Production, Play, and Place* (pp. 75–77).

Šisler, V. (2013). Video Game Development in the Middle East: Iran, the Arab World, and Beyond. In N. B. Huntemann & B. Aslinger (Eds.), *Gaming Globally: Production, Play, and Place* (pp. 251–271).

Usmani, B. (2016). “The Game Industry of South Africa” from [Polygon.com](http://Polygon.com). Accessed at: <http://www.polygon.com/features/2016/2/3/10781618/the-game-industry-of-south-africa>

Wilson, T. (2016). “Water Shortages and Power Outages: The Challenges of Game Development in Africa” from [Gamespot.com](http://Gamespot.com). Accessed at: <http://www.gamespot.com/articles/water-shortages-and-power-outages-the-challenges-o/1100-6439171/>

Wong, L. (2016). “The Game Industry of Argentina” from [Polygon.com](http://Polygon.com). Accessed at: <https://www.polygon.com/features/2016/5/9/11593900/the-game-industry-of-argentina>

Yates, K. (2015). “Aurion: the mission to create African video-game heroes” from The [Guardian.com](http://Guardian.com). Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/nov/27/aurion-kiroo-games-cameroon-african-kickstarter-video-game-heroes>

|  |
| --- |
| Sample Games to Consider  |

Aurion: Legacy of the Kori-Odan: <https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/deafverse/>

DeafVerse: <https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/deafverse/>

Kawaida’s Journey:   http://www.kawaidasjourney.de/

Never Alone: <http://neveralonegame.com/>