New Course Proposal

Department: School of Computing
Contact Person: Robert Kessler
Date Initiated: Nov 11, 2010
Phone: 14653
Email: kessler@cs.utah.edu

1) Course Title: EAE:MGS Game Design I
2) Short Course Title: EAE:MGS Game Design I (23 char limit)
3) Course Number: CS 6070
4) Desired First Offering Date: Fall, 2011 (Sem, Year)
5) Credit Hours: 3
6) Total # of times course can be taken for degree credit: 1
7) Allow multiple enroll in term? [ ] Yes [ X ] No
8) Cross listed or Meets with: FILM 6701
9) Component (choose one): Lecture
10) Co- or Pre-requisite(s): [ X ] Yes [ ] No. If so: Student must be admitted to EAE:MGS.
11) Course description: This is the first in a three part series of seminars designed to educate students about the video game industry, common practices within the industry with an emphasis on how games are designed and produced. This course focuses on a ludological approach to games, focusing on game mechanics. Students will read works covering game history, ludology, as well as current practices in game development. Game mechanics, production processes, and game theory will be the core content of the class. Students will both learn about and write game pitches in addition to other types of pre-production documentation.

Please attach any supporting material, including a syllabus from a previously taught special topics version of the course (and the semester/year the course was taught), as separate pages.

Step 1: Departmental Approval:

Martin Berzins
Please Print Name
______________________________ Signature, Department Chair ______________________ Date

Step 2: College Curriculum Committee Approval: (The CCC has reviewed the proposal and concurs with its recommendation.)

H. James de St. Germain
Please Print Name
______________________________ Signature, Curriculum Committee Chair ______________________ Date

Step 3: College Dean Approval: (I have reviewed the curriculum proposal and am satisfied that all requirements have been met.)

Richard Brown
Please Print Name
______________________________ Signature, College Dean ______________________ Date
Supporting Materials

Overview of EAE

Entertainment Arts and Engineering (EAE) is the overarching term we use to describe the interdisciplinary work between the School of Computing and the Department of Film and Media Arts in the areas of video games, computer animation, special effects, etc. A key feature of EAE is its interdisciplinary nature. Students from both departments work closely together throughout their academic careers. This partnership of engineer and artist reflects the state of the entertainment business world where artists and engineers constantly work together on a daily basis. In 2010, an undergraduate emphasis in EAE was approved for bachelor’s degrees in each department.

In the fall of 2010, we created a graduate version of EAE, focused on video games. We call this Entertainment Arts and Engineering: Master Games Studio (EAE:MGS). EAE:MGS is designed to provide master's level students with an education to be successful in the game industry, both immediately and into the future as the industry continues to evolve. The academic experience includes an intense focus on industry application that incorporates both theory and research. There are three tracks - Game Engineering, Game Arts and Game Production. Students in the game engineering track are awarded the MS in Computing degree from the School of Computing, while students in the game arts and production tracks are awarded the MFA degree from the Department of Film and Media Arts.

EAE:MGS Game Design Sequence

Game design is at the very core of the game development process. While the term “game designer” appears in various forms of game writing, design is frequently an eclectic and collaborative process. All participants in the EAE:MGS study game design, so that they may both have an opportunity to participate in the creative direction of games, so that they can better understand the design process, and so they may understand how to read and write game documentation. Additionally, game design is a burgeoning academic field, and scholarly inquiry into both praxis and theory are now available to those interested in game design.

All three courses focus on theory, praxis, and performance. The first course, Game Design and Development I focuses on game mechanics, ludology (the study of games and other forms of play) and the history of games. The second course focuses on game content, narratology (the theory and study of narrative and narrative structure and the ways that these affect our perception), and the pipeline. The third course focuses on critical perspectives, elements of game genres, as well as game post-production.

Game Design I (CS 6070)

This is the first in a three part series of seminars designed to educate students about the video game industry, common practices within the industry with an emphasis on how games are designed and produced. This course focuses on a ludological approach to games, focusing on game mechanics. Students will read works covering game history, ludology, as well as current practices in game development. Game mechanics, production processes, and game theory will be the core content of the class. Students will both learn about and write game pitches in addition to other types of pre-production documentation. Currently being offered Fall 2010 as special topics course: CS 6955.

Game Design II (CS 6071)

This class will start with a deeper exploration of the game pipeline. It will then explore the “content is king” mentality of the ludology/narratology debates (the opposite perspective of Game Design and Development I), and explore three types of game design literature: professional, critical, and experimental/performative. Students will read and discuss game content in its various forms in depth. Students will both learn about and write documentation to design all content aspects of games, ranging from characters and level design to more abstract concepts including theme and style.

Game Design III (CS 6072)

Focusing on the final stages of game design and production this course will incorporate the ludological and narrative approaches to games discussed in the previous two semesters to explore and analyze the game design and content aspects of specific genres of games. Students will learn about genre development, traditions, and trajectories. Students will learn how to conduct and write a postmortem in addition to a game critique.