Introduction to Game Design 2

Norse Culture and Myths

Introduction

Welcome to Game Design II--the second semester in our introductory sequence in game design. In this semester, we aim to deepen your understanding of the design concepts introduced in GD 1, while bringing some new design issues and approaches into the mix. In terms of practical content-creation skills, we will introduce you to C# coding in Unity, basic character creation, and world-building techniques and workflows between Maya and Unity. As part of the humanities focus of our approach in Tesseract, we will also introduce you to the unique challenges involved in representing historical content, in a critical way, through game play. The culture used as a test-case this semester is the Norse, between roughly 700 - 1300 CE, as known through their epic literature, historical sources, and archaeology. We are not experts in the Norse, and this is not the goal of this course. Our aim is to learn enough together to make for interesting projects that try to represent Norse culture and myths in game form, and to begin to think through the challenges that this process poses that are not ordinarily found in commercial game development. We will also shift from individual to group-based work. Virtually every game made these days is built by a team, sometimes 2-6, sometimes 200-500. The ability to do **collaborative work**, efficiently and positively, between team members involves **fundamental social and practical skills, and is an absolute necessity in game design**.

Required Readings

- *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*; Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman
- *Poetic Edda: The Mythological Poems*; Henry Adams Bellows trans.
- *Poetic Edda: The Heroic Poems*; Henry Adams Bellows trans.
- *Vinland Sagas;* Keneva Kunz trans.
- *Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*; Peter Sawyer ed. **(pdf chapters provided)**
- *Ethics and Game Design*; Karen Schrier and David Gibson eds. **(pdf chapters provided)**
- *Game Design, Prototyping, and Development;* Jeremy Gibson **(pdf chapters provided)**

Instructors

- David Fredrick, PhD, Director of Tesseract Studio for Game Design and Immersive Visualization
- Keenan Cole, Technical Director
- Taylor Yust, Lead Software Engineer
- Chloe Costello, Art Director
- Greg Rogers, Design and Narrative Lead
- Email: tesseract.interactive@gmail.com

Inclement Weather Policy

If the university is open, we will have class. In case of inclement weather that prevents you from coming to class, please contact us to arrange to make up any missing work. If the university is closed, we will notify students as soon as possible provide instructions for bringing the course back on schedule.

Academic Integrity

For issues of academic honesty, you should review the Code of Student Life from the Student Handbook. You should also review the official academic integrity policy.

Student Dropbox

We will use a Dropbox account for holding class related files and projects when they are completed and ready for grading. Go to http://www.dropbox.com/ and log in as "tesseract.interactive" with the password "changeme."

Assignments/Grading

Coding Project	25	Character Creation project	25	World-Building Project		First Group Project		Final Group Project		Blogs #1-5 (10 pts each)	50	
				Concept work	10	Design Document	10	Design Document	20			
				Final Scene	15	Sketches	10	Sketches	20			
						First Iteration	10	First Iteration	20			
						Final Build	20	Final Build	40			Total
	25		25		25		50		100		50	275

Class Calendar

			TUESDAY		THURSDAY
Coding	Week 1	Jan 19	Intro to Course	Jan 21	Overview of C# in Unity: Variables and Functions, Print(), if(), Math Operations
					RoP: pg. 502-513; Ch. 29, Defining Culture
					OIHV: pg. 1-18, ch. 1, The Age of the Vikings and Before
Coding	Week 2	Jan 26	Discussion of Norse Mythology; C# Coding: Finding and Accessing GameObjects / Components, Unity API, Unity Input	Jan 28	Historical Evidence for the Norse; C# Continued: More Input, Triggers / Collisions, Instantiating
			PEM: Voluspo, Baldr's Drauma		**PEM:** Vafthruthnismol
					OIHV: pg. 110-133, ch. 5, The Atlantic Islands
			Coding project assigned *Blog #1 assigned*		
Coding	Week 3	Feb 02	Norse Boats; Even More C#: GUI, Timers	Feb 04	Workday
			PEM: Grimnismol **OIHV:** pg. 182-201, ch. 8, Ships and Seamanship		
			Blog #1 Due		

Characters	Week 4	Feb 09	Overview of Characters: Skin Mesh, Bone Transforms, Mechanim and States, Importing Characters	Feb 11	Evidence for Norse Bodies; Fuse: Create a Character, AutoRigger, Animations from Mixamo, Importing
			PEH: Reginsmol **OIHV:** pg. 202-224, ch. 9, Religions Old and New		**PEH:** Fafnismol **EGD:** pg. 1-15, ch. 1, Values Between Systems: Designing Ethical Gameplay
			Coding project due *Character project assigned* *Blog #2 assigned*		
Characters	Week 5	Feb 16	Characters in Maya: Maya Control Rig, Animation in Maya, Importing, More Mecanim	Feb 18	Workday
			PEH: Sigrdrifumol **EGD:** pg. 255-273, ch. 16, Using Mission US		
			Blog #2 due		
World-building	Week 6	Feb 23	Interior Design and Level Design Video; Intro to Unity Viking Demo; ProBuilder	Feb 25	Deconstructing the Unity Viking Demo: Modeling in Maya, Texturing and Normal Mapping in Photoshop, Crazy Bump, Zbrush
			VS: Introduction, Saga of the Greenlanders pg. 1-15		**VS:** Saga of the Greenlanders pg. 16-21; Eric the Red's Saga pg. 22-36 **RoP:** pg. 420-459, ch. 27, Games as the Play of Simulation
			Character project due *World-building project assigned*		

World-building	Week 7	Mar 01	Deconstructing the Unity Viking Demo: Texturing cont'd., Standard Shader, Lighting	Mar 03	Introduction to SpeedTree
			VS: Eric the Red's Saga pg. 37-50		**Ian Bogost, Ecology of Games,** pg. 117-40, The Rhetoric of Video Games
			World-building concept due *Blog #3 assigned*		
World-building	Week 8	Mar 08	DOG Day	Mar 10	Workday
			Blog #3 Due		
VS Project	Week 9	Mar 15	Introduction to *Vinland Sagas* Project; Discussion of Agile Method	Mar 17	Scrum + Discussion of Norse Readings
			Bernadette Flynn, pg. 1-26, ch. 17, The Morphology of Space in Virtual Heritage		
			World-building project due *VS Project assigned*		
	Week 10	Mar 22	**SPRING BREAK**	Mar 24	**SPRING BREAK**
VS Project	Week 11	Mar 29	Scrum + VS Idea Presentations	Mar 31	Scrum + DOG Day
			RoP: pg. 514-535, ch. 30, Games as Cultural Rhetoric		
			VS Project Design Document and Sketches Due		

VS Project	Week 12	Apr 05	Scrum + VS Project Prototype Reviews at Desk **VS Project Prototype Checkpoint**	Apr 07	Scrum + workday
PEM Project	Week 13	Apr 12	Vinland Sagas Project Presentations **VS Project Due**	Apr 14	Introduction to *Poetic Edda: The Mythological Poems* Project *PEM Project Assigned* *Blog #4 Assigned*
PEM Project	Week 14	Apr 19	Scrum + workday **Blog #4 Due**	Apr 21	Scrum + PEM Project Idea Presentations **PEM Project Design Document and Sketches Due**
PEM Project	Week 15	Apr 26	Scrum + DOG Day	Apr 28	Scrum + workday *Blog #5 assigned*
PEM Project	Week 16	May 03	Scrum + Final Project Prototype Reviews at Desk **PEM Project Prototype Checkpoint**	May 05	Scrum + workday **Blog #5 Due**

PEM Project	Finals Week	May 10		May 12	**Final Presentations** **3:15-5:15pm at lab**