COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title	Course Code	Semester	Course Hour/Week		Credit	ECTS
			Theory 2	**Practice** 2		
Story Structure in Game Design	GAME 201	3	2	2	3	5

Course Type	Compulsory Course	Department Elective	Faculty Elective	University Elective	CoHE (YÖK) Elective	Other
	YES					

Level of Course	Associate Degree (Short Cycle)		Undergraduate (First Cycle)	Graduate/ Doctoral (Second /Third Cycle)	
	-		Yes	-	

Language of Instruction	English

Course Instructor(s)	Emad Abouata Amlashi	E-mail : emad.amlashi@arucad.edu.tr Office : DA-OFF06
Course Objectives		This course explores the fundamentals of game design as well as story structure in different kind of digital games. Practical, Theoretical, analytical and conceptual understanding of storytelling in digital games will be reviewed and discussed. Students will also practice different methods of creating game motivations.

Course Learning Outcomes	Students will able to:	Teaching Methods	Evaluation Methods
	Define key narrative and structural concepts used in digital game design.	Lectures, Theory-Based Discussions	Mid-term Project / Final Project

	Explain how different game genres influence storytelling approaches.	Case Studies, Comparative Game Analysis	Mid-term Project / Final Project
	Apply the three-act structure and alternative story models to design interactive narratives.	Practice Sessions, Design Workshops	Mid-term Project / Final Project
	Design original game ideas and construct interactive storylines.	Brainstorming Exercises, Group Critiques	Mid-term Project / Final Project
	Plan and build a narrative world based on a central theme or concept.	World-Building Workshops, Visual Mapping	Mid-term Project / Final Project
	Criticize and evaluate narrative structures and gameplay integration in existing games.	Peer Reviews, Game Analysis Presentations	Final Project
Course Content	This course introduces students to the foundational principles of storytelling in game design. Students will examine narrative structures through both classical and experimental lenses, learning how to apply them in various game genres and formats. The course covers linear and non-linear storytelling, world-building, player agency, emotional engagement, and interactive narrative systems.		

COURSE OUTLINE/SCHEDULE			
Week	**Topic**	**Implementation (theory/practice)**	**Required Reading, Preliminary preparation**
1	Introduction to the course. Course syllabus review and outcomes. Explaining the course workflow and the aim.		
2	The Definition of Game Formal elements of games Game Modification / Role of the Storyteller in game design. Narrative Game. The Concept World building Review a game and discuss the structure	T/P	McKee, R. (1999). Story: substance, structure, style, and the principles of screenwriting. London: Methuen.(PN1996 .M465 1997)
3	Game Elements The 'Rules of Play': Directing Gamer and User Behaviour Game System Dynamics: Constitutive rules	T/P	Field, S. (2005). Screenplay: the foundations of screenwriting. New York, N.Y: Delta Trade Paperbacks.(REF PN1996 .F43 2005)

	Operational rules Implicit rules Review a game and discuss the structure		
4	Writing a treatment. Digital Game Concept Story Elements (Character).	T/P	McKee, R. (1999). Story: substance, structure, style, and the principles of screenwriting. London: Methuen.(PN1996 .M465 1997)
5	Game Genres and Their Storytelling Styles Exploration of storytelling in different game genres (RPGs, action-adventure, simulation, etc.) How genre influences narrative complexity and player interaction	T/P	Nelson, M. (2019), Fantasy world-building : a guide to developing mythic worlds and legendary creatures, Mineola, New York : Dover Publications (NC825.F25 N45 2019)
6	The 3-Act Structure in Games Introduction to the 3-Act Model Applying Acts to Game Design Analyzing Games with 3-Act Structures	T/P	Field, S. (2005). Screenplay: the foundations of screenwriting. New York, N.Y: Delta Trade Paperbacks.(REF PN1996 .F43 2005)
7	First Draft presentations, review and discussion of the midterm projects	T/P	
8	**MIDTERM WEEK**		
9	Alternative Structures Non-Linear Storytelling in Games	T/P	Nelson, M. (2019), Fantasy world-building : a guide to developing mythic worlds and legendary creatures, Mineola, New York : Dover Publications (NC825.F25 N45 2019)
10	Multiple Endings and Branching Narratives Experimental Narrative Structures	T/P	Jackson, Ch. (2017). Digital Design in Action creative solutions for designers, Boca Raton CRC Press (QA76.65 .J33 2017)
11	Aesthetics of feelings in game design.	T/P	Jackson, Ch. (2017). Digital Design in Action creative solutions for designers, Boca Raton CRC Press (QA76.65 .J33 2017)
12	Review a game and discuss the structure.	T/P	
13	Interactive Storytelling and Player Agency How to balance storytelling with player freedom and interactivity The concept of "ludonarrative harmony" vs. "ludonarrative dissonance"	T/P	Jackson, Ch. (2017). Digital Design in Action creative solutions for designers, Boca Raton CRC Press (QA76.65 .J33 2017)
14	Story and Gameplay Integration Integrating story progression with gameplay mechanics: pacing, rewards, and challenges	T/P	Jackson, Ch. (2017). Digital Design in Action creative solutions for designers, Boca Raton CRC Press (QA76.65 .J33 2017)

	Avoiding disconnection between gameplay and narrative		
15	Presenting final project.	T/P	
16	Final draft Exchanging prjects and rating Review and discussion of student projects.	T/P	
17	**FINAL EXAM WEEK**		

Required Course Material(s) / Reading(s)/ Text Book(s)	• McKee, R. (1999). Story: substance, structure, style, and the principles of screenwriting. London: Methuen.(PN1996 .M465 1997) • Field, S. (2005). Screenplay: the foundations of screenwriting. New York, N.Y: Delta Trade Paperbacks.(REF PN1996 .F43 2005) • Nelson, M. (2019), Fantasy world-building : a guide to developing mythic worlds and legendary creatures, Mineola, New York : Dover Publications (NC825.F25 N45 2019) • Jackson, Ch. (2017). Digital Design in Action creative solutions for designers, Boca Raton CRC Press (QA76.65 .J33 2017)
Recommended Course Material(s)/ Reading(s) /Other	• Meretoja, H., & Davis, C. (Eds.). (2017). Storytelling and Ethics: Literature, Visual Arts and the Power of Narrative (1st ed.). Routledge. (REF PN56.S7357 .S763 2018)

ASSESSMENT		
Learning Activities	**NUMBER**	**WEIGHT in %**
Mid-Term		40
Quiz		
Assignment		
Project		

Field Study		
Presentation / Seminar		
Studio Practice		
Other		
Contribution of Final Examination/Final Project/ Dissertation to the Final Grade		60
TOTAL		100

CONTRIBUTION OF COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES						
No	PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES	Level of Contribution (1- lowest/ 5- highest)				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	To know and explain the basic concepts, theories, institutional structures of communication.			*		
2	To know the history of the game industry and the foundational theories of game design, thus, to be able to explain the terms of professions, professional ethical roles and responsibilities of the profession.		*			
3	The ability to follow the technological and socio-cultural developments and understand the impact of these development on the game industry and observe the changes.			*		
4	The ability to take part in international working environments and be able to analyse the international game industry's needs.			*		
5	Knowledge of count design, pattern manipulation and terminology for game and production tools.			*		
6	Being able to produce, designs, create and program application works in the production processes related to this profession.		*			
7	Knowledge of the basic principles and processes related to the narrative, aesthetics, technical elements of audio-visual animated and interactive content, and distinguishing successful or unsuccessful works with these aspects.					*
8	The awareness that each design involves social contexts and in some cases, ethical choices, being able to analyse and evaluate these situations.			*		

9	Ability to solve problems using resources to find the best solutions to game development challenges.		*			
10	Ability to create, develop and manage professional workflows,				*	
11	Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues, customers, and colleagues in the industry, in a professional context, using written, oral, and up-to-date communication technology.				*	

ECTS / STUDENT WORKLOAD				
ACTIVITIES	**NUMBER**	**UNIT**	**HOUR**	**TOTAL (WORKLOAD)**
Course Teaching Hour (X weeks * total course hours)	15		4	60
Preliminary Preparation and self- study	15		1	15
Mid-Term	1		20	20
Quiz				
Assignment				
Project				
Field Study				
Presentation / Seminar				
Studio Practice				
Final Examination/ Final Project/ Dissertation	1		30	30
Other				
TOTAL WORKLOAD				125
TOTAL WORKLOAD / 25				5
ECTS				5

ETHICAL RULES WITH REGARD TO THE COURSE

Plagiarism Disclaimer

Detected and undetected plagiarism is a serious offence at any time and it could have devastating effects on your degree result and future professional life.

Plagiarism is easy to avoid if you make sure you thoroughly identify and recognize your sources and do not copy from visual examples, designs or notes taken directly from your sources word for word. The maximum citation limit cannot exceed 20%. Artificial intelligence citations are also considered within this scope. If proven otherwise, the student will fail the course.

ASSESSMENT DETAILS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Final Grades will be determined according to the Course Learning Activities and Final Examination/ Project/ Dissertation Assessment Details as below, and comply with the Education and Examination Regulation set forth by the University.

Students will actively participate in in-class practices, discussions, and hands-on exercises throughout the semester, continuously developing and refining their projects. Given the evolving nature of storytelling, assessment will not be limited to final submissions but will also consider students' engagement, creativity, and progress over time.

Instead of grading individual practices separately, both the midterm and final project grades will reflect students' ongoing work and commitment. This includes:

In-Class Practices: Active participation in workshops and practical exercises, experimenting with different techniques.

Discussions & Critiques: Contribution to peer reviews and class discussions, demonstrating analytical thinking and constructive feedback.

Development & Iteration: Continuous refinement of projects, integrating feedback and improving narrative coherence, aesthetic skills and media adaptation.

70% attendance to courses is compulsory. Health reports belong to 30% absenteeism right.

PREPARED BY	Emad Abouata Amlashi
UPDATED	12-03-2025
APPROVED	