

Course	Interactive Storytelling
Modules	Module 1 'Introduction to Digital and Interactive Narrative' Module 2 'Narrative Design Elements For Video Games' "
ects (cfu)	12
hours	72
year running	2
semester	1
lecturer	Giada Marinensi (Module I); Brunella Botte (Module II)
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consultation time	After class or by appointment previously arranged by e-mail

### LEARNING AND SKILLS OUTCOMES

The course aims to enable students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- In terms of knowledge and understanding:
  - o Know the characteristics that distinguish interactive storytelling from linear and traditional forms of storytelling;
  - o Know the different formats and main applications of interactive storytelling;
  - o Understand the historical evolution and future development potential of interactive storytelling;
  - o Understand the basic narrative mechanisms (such as archetypes and structural patterns) that make a story engaging and compelling;
  - o Understand the characteristics of the products that currently express the full potential of interactive storytelling, namely video games.
- In terms of applying the acquired knowledge and skills
  - o Be able to devise an original narrative by defining the synopsis, the characters and the storyworld;
  - o Develop the narrative according to the guidance offered by the structural models analysed in class;
  - o Identify the most appropriate interactive narrative model according to the digital product to be designed;
  - o Be able to design an interactive story.
- With regard to communication skills
  - o Master the technical language of the subject.

### PRE-REQUISITE QUALIFICATIONS

No preliminary knowledge is requested.

### COURSE DETAILED CONTENTS

Module I of the course, 'Introduction to Digital and Interactive Narrative', examines the narrative dynamics underlying the interactive context, enabling students to conceive a narrative animated by interesting characters and complex plots.

Module II of the course, 'Narrative Design Elements For Video Games', teaches students how to bridge narrative and interactive mechanics through the narratological theories used in the film and video game industries, guiding them in the creation of contexts and backgrounds capable of supporting the purely playful experience. The course also teaches the main techniques of script writing for video games.

The main topics are listed below.

#### Module I - Introduction to digital and interactive storytelling

- General aspects (What is interactive storytelling, Examples of interactive storytelling, The roots of interactive storytelling).
- Narrative (What is a story, The archetypes of narrative, Imagining the story, Defining the narrative universe, Outlining the characters, Developing the plot).

#### Module II - Narrative Design Elements for Video Games

- Introduction (Brief history of the development of narrative in video games; What is the agency)
- The spectrum of interactive narrative (Conventional vs. interactive narrative; The String of Pearls model; Case studies).
- Elements of narrative design (What is narrative design; How to design an interactive narrative; The design and development team; Intellectual property; Case studies).

### **TEACHING METHODS**

The course consists of face-to-face teaching, alternated with active case studies and content production by the students, aimed at putting into practice what they have learnt in theory.

### **TEACHING MATERIALS**

Students are required to prepare for the examination by integrating the teaching materials discussed during the in-class lectures with the following compulsory textbook:

- J. Lebowitz, C. Klug. *Interactive Storytelling for Video Games: A Player-centred Approach to Creating Memorable Characters and Stories*. Taylor & Francis, 2011.

The non-attending student must also study the following compulsory textbook:

- C. Vogler. *The writer's journey*. Michael Wiese Productions, 2007.

### **FINAL EXAM**

The exam consists of a written test (including both closed and open-ended questions), aimed at verifying the theoretical and practical knowledge acquired during the course. Students may also, at their discretion, submit an individual project (the project must involve the development of an original story and the integration of interactivity to create a video game).

### **ASSESSMENT METHODS**

Assessment methods concern:

- Knowledge and ability to understand: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to distinguish the main formats and application areas of interactive storytelling. They should also be able to describe the basic narrative mechanisms (such as archetypes and structural patterns) that make a narrative engaging and compelling.
- Application of the acquired knowledge and skills: Upon completion of the course, students should be able to apply the knowledge gained in the course to the creation of an original interactive story.
- Communication Skills: At the end of the course, students should have acquired the specialized language of the subject and be able to correctly expound on the topics covered.

### **MARKING CRITERIA**

The final grade (expressed in thirtieths) will be awarded according to the following criteria:

- 18-21: acquisition of skills sufficient; application of knowledge sufficient; minimal autonomy in relating the various topics covered; property of language not completely adequate.
- 22-24: acquisition of skills good; application of knowledge good; need for support in relating the different topics covered; language property adequate.
- 25-27: acquisition of skills more than good; application of knowledge good; autonomy in relating the different topics covered; language property good.
- 28-30: acquisition of skills very good/excellent; application of knowledge very good/excellent; complete autonomy in relating the different topics covered; language property very good/excellent.

### **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

If students also intend to discuss the project during the exam, they must send it to the teacher at least 7 days before the exam date.