Syllabus and Schedule for ds650 Creating Digital Narratives

Course Details

Fall 2011

Class Time/Location: Monday, 6-7 PM PST, online in the Wimba classrom in Blackboard

Class url: Blackboard CourseSites

Instructor: Dianne Rees, JD, PhD

Email: drees327@gmail.com

Phone: (972) xxx-xxxx

Office Hours: Thursday, 6:00-7:00 PM PST, online in our Wimba classroom, or by appointment

Required Text: Digital Storytelling: A Creator's Guide to Interactive Entertainment (2nd edition) by Carolyn Handler Miller, available at www.Amazon.com.

Course Description

We live in a world of multimedia content and increasingly, multimedia is an important aspect of how we communicate. This course will enable you to research and use multimedia to construct digital stories that engage and inform. You' ll apply critical thinking skills as you convey messages that are important to you. You can explore fictional or nonfictional approaches to convey these messages.

We will have weekly live class session via Wimba each Monday at 6:00 PST. You'll be expected to have completed the identified readings and assignments prior to class since class activities will be based on these readings and assignments. The goal of these class sessions is not to test you but to enrich our group activities as we explore, brainstorm, and solve challenges. Classroom sessions will be recorded if your work schedule precludes your attendance. Please contact your instructor if you will be unable to attend a class.

Course Objectives

In this class, you'll learn to:

- Review and constructively critique digital stories using a reflection checklist
- Develop story maps and storyboards with digital media in mind
- Create a digital narrative using a technology platform of your choosing
- Correctly apply copyright law as you identify and incorporate media assets into your digital story

Prerequisites

You should feel comfortable:

- Reading and writing in English
- Searching the internet, taking screen captures
- Downloading photos, software, and documents
- Recording audio
- Taking pictures and recording video with a digital camera for your own personal use.

Technical Requirements

Hardware requirements

- Access to a Windows or Macintosh computer
- A high-speed internet connection
- Noise-cancelling headphones
- A digital camera

Software requirements

You will be able to use a wide variety of software tools in this course. Open-source applications and tools will be suggested in different class modules as you explore them to complete

assignments. You should have access to image capturing and editing software, audio recording and editing software, and video recording and editing tools. Please see Tools 101 for a list of free tools you can use.

Your Online Classroom

Blackboard CourseSites is is the online site for this course. You will receive an email providing you with a link to register at this site. You will need to set up an account to activate a user name and password. Just follow the on-screen instructions. When you log in, be sure to look at the Learning Roadmap, which will take you on a brief tour of the site. You'll also find helpful information in the course FAQ.

How This Course is Organized

The course schedule is detailed below. In this class, you'll be building your digital storytelling skills gradually. You'll be inspired by, and also learn to critique, the works of others as you begin to think about the stories you want to tell. You'll also gain a basic understanding of copyright law since you'l l be applying this throughout the course as you plan, design, and develop your own digital narrative. You'll examine the basic core of stories to develop a story map and storyboard to flesh out the details of your story. As you do so, you'll continually assess and consider the impact of the media you are going to use in your digital story. After developing a draft story, you'll learn how to edit and re-envision your work, with some help from your classmates, and of course, your instructor. Your final project will be your completed digital narrative that you'll publish to the web.

Our Live Classes

As noted above, our online classes are scheduled each Monday, from 6:00-7:00 PST. These classes will be interactive and we'll use them to help you get the most out of assignments due before the next class. In some cases, we'll actually start the assignments in class. You'll benefit most if you review the Module section related to each online class so you can share any questions you have with your classmates and instructor.

If you can't make a class because it interferes with your work schedule, our sessions will be recorded. Please let your instructor know before the class if you'll be unable to make a class.

Engaging With Activities and Each Other

Assignments

Class assignments include individual projects described further in each module. For many assignments, you'll be asked to reflect on questions and/or activities and post your reflections in the discussion forum. Providing constructive feedback on the postings of your classmates is also a requirement of this class and guidelines will be provided in individual modules in which this is expected. Optional " Extend" activities associated with each module are for your personal enrichment and do not count towards your letter grade. Each module includes detailed rubrics to help you to be successful in this course. The complete list is also attached at the end of this page. Don't hesitate to ask your instructor if you have any questions as you work through individual modules.

Assignments (Activities and Reflections) for a given module are due before the online class associated with the next module. For example, the Module 1 activity and Reflection is due before 6:oo PST on the Monday of our online class for Module 2. If you turn in assignments after this time, points will be subtracted for each day the assignment is late. Each module builds on other modules and if you are in sync with the rest of your classmates, you're more likely to benefit from this class and interact with your peers. That being said, life happens. Please contact your instructor if you anticipate being late for an assignment or feel that there are circumstances that should be taken into account.

Guidelines for online communications

Critiquing stories is a skill you'll be developing in this class and you'll receive more detailed guidelines as you investigate the course modules. In general, remember that if you wouldn't say something in a regular classroom, it's likely to be inappropriate in an online course as well. You can find some basic tips on netiquette here.

Reaching your instructor

My contact information and office hours are listed above. Barring unusual circumstances, I'll respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them. Part of what you'll learn as an online student is to conduct independent research, so please share your questions to the General Forum of the Discussion Board, so others can learn from them as well. Your fellow students may also have good advice and tips. Please also review Being an Online Learner for additional guidelines on being a successful online student.

Additional information can be found in the FAQ posted in Blackboard.

Class Schedule

Module 1. Welcome: An Overview of Digital Storytelling
Sept 5, 2011- Sept 12, 2011

Outcome

- Familiarize yourself with the Blackboard CourseSite

Explore: Module 1 Online

Module 1 Online Class: September 5, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST September 12 (before our Module 2 Online Class)

- Post your introduction to the Discussion Forum
- Post your course goals to the Discussion Forum
- Email your self-assessment (found in Module 1) to your instructor

Module 2. Exploring the Digital World
Sept 12, 2011 –Sept 19, 2011

Outcomes

- You'll be able to distinguish digital storytelling from traditional storytelling.
- You'll critique a digital story using guiding questions.
- You'll prepare for your role as a content creator by Identifying sources of media available under Creative Commons licenses or in the public domain and attributing these media sources correctly.
- You'll begin to develop a "digital viewpoint" by starting a digital journal.

Explore: Module 2 Online

Module 2 Online Class: September 12, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST September 19 (before our Module 3 Online Class)

- Activity 1
- Activity 2
- Reflection

Module 3. Mapping the Story Core
Sept 19, 2011 –Sept 26, 2011

Outcomes

- You'll create a story map of a digital story you've identified.
- You'll explore the basics of story creation by suggesting modifications to an existing story.
- You'll create a story map for your own story.
- You'll critique your own story map and the story map of at least 2 other students using a critiquing checklist.
- You'll identify a platform for your story project and describe how your platform selection will influence your narrative's structure.

Explore: [Module 3 Online](#)

Module 3 Online Class: September 19, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST September 26 (before our Module 4 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Activity 2](#)
- [Activity 3](#)
- [Activity 4](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 4. Fleshing Out a Story With Characters, Dialogue, and Emotion
Sept 26, 2011 –Oct 3, 2011

Outcomes

- You'll identify examples of 8 types of character transformation.
- You'll reexamine your own story map to look at your protagonist's transformation.
- You'll develop character profiles for your story's protagonist and antagonist (or another character your protagonist will interact with) and character dialogue.
- You'll use audio recording and editing tools to record and edit dialogue between two of your characters.
- You'll use media to demonstrate emotion and mood.
- You'll identify media assets for use in your digital story or generate your own.

Explore: [Module 4 Online](#)

Module 4 Online Class: September 26, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST October 3, 2011 (before our Module 5 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Activity 2](#)
- [Activity 3](#)
- [Activity 4](#)
- [Activity 5](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 5. Points of View and Strategies for Immersion
Oct 3, 2011 –Oct 10, 2011

Outcomes
- You'll be able to distinguish between 4 points of view in storytelling.
- You'll be able to identify techniques used in digital stories to create a sense of immersion.
- You'll choose a point-of-view from which to tell your own digital story and you'll describe one or more strategies for creating a sense of immersion in your story.
- You'll describe how your storytelling platform/technology will impact the strategies you use to create a sense of immersion in your own story

Explore: [Module 5 Online](#)

Module 5 Online Class: October 3, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST October 10, 2011 (before our Module 6 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Activity 2](#)
- [Activity 3](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 6. Developing a Storyboard
Oct 10, 2011 –Oct 17, 2011

Outcomes
- You'll develop a storyboard and evaluate it using a development checklist.

Explore: [Module 6 Online](#)

Module 6 Online Class: October 10, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST October 17, 2011 (before our Module 7 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Activity 2](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 7. Producing a Digital Story: Part I
Oct 17, 2011 –Oct 24, 2011

Outcome
- You'll start your first draft of your digital story using the platform of your choosing.

Explore: [Module 7 Online](#)

Module 7 Online Class: October 17, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST October 24, 2011 (before our Module 8 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 8. Producing a Digital Story: Part II
Oct 24, 2011 –Oct 31, 2011

Outcome
- You'll complete your draft digital story using the platform of your choosing.

Explore: [Module 8 Online](#)

Module 8 Online Class: October 24, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST October 31, 2011 (before our Module 9 Online Class)

- [Activity 1](#)
- [Reflection](#)

Module 9. Editing and Re-envisioning
Oct 31, 2011 –Nov 7, 2011

Outcome

- You'll review and edit your digital story using the rubrics for this module.
- You'll constructively critique the digital stories of at least two of your classmates using the same module.

Explore: Module 9 Online

Module 9 Online Class: October 31, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST November 7, 2011 (before our Module 10 Online Class)

- Activity 1
- Activity 2
- Reflection

Module 10. Publishing
Nov 7, 2011 –Nov 14, 2011

Outcome

- You'll publish your digital story on the Web
- You'll post a reflection on your experiences in this course

Explore: Module 10 Online

Module 10 Online Class: November 7, 2011

Assignment(s): Due before 6:oo PST November 14, 2011

- Activity 1
- Reflection

Grading

Detailed rubrics for assignments are provided in each module. A total of 260 points is possible if you complete all of the Apply and Reflect activities in this course.

Module	Total Points Possible	Points Awarded
Module 1. Welcome: An Overview of Digital Storytelling	3	
Module 2. Exploring the Digital World	20	
Module 3. Mapping the Story Core	37	
Module 4. Fleshing Out a Story With Characters, Dialogue, and Emotion	36	
Module 5. Points of View and Strategies for Immersion	15	
Module 6. Developing a Storyboard	70	
Module 7. Producing a Digital Story: Part I	15	
Module 8. Producing a Digital Story: Part II	10	
Module 9. Editing and Re-envisioning	10	
Module 10. Publishing	44	
Total Course Points Possible: 260 (Students may earn up to 8 extra credit points in Module 10, which would be added to the total course points awarded.)		

Total points will be weighted against a 100-point scale. For example: 240/260 = 92/100 and would get a letter grade of A- according to the table below.

Grade Letter	Points
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
And so on...	76 and below

A's are awarded for the highest achievements, but B's still represent exemplary work. C's represent average work and satisfactory achievement for this course.

The Ethics of Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling is a creative act though we are inspired by others and may be able to use certain media assets under the appropriate circumstances and with the right permissions. You'll be finding out more about copyright law in this class and how to apply it and this may be a learning process. However, plagiarism or willfully copying the words of others without giving appropriate credit, will be considered a violation of course ethics. Have faith in yourself and your own creative abilities and don't hesitate to ask your instructor (and your classmates) about the proper ways to give credit to others as you construct your digital narratives.

Students' Privacy and Intellectual Property

Your grades and instructor feedback on individual assignments are password protected to ensure privacy.

All the work you create in this course belongs to you; however, you agree to copy and distribute your work on the course Website to share it with other students in this class. The final project for this course also requires that you publish your digital narrative on the Web. You can choose to publish your final work under a Creative Commons license or retain full rights, as you choose. Your instructor may request your permission to use your work in whole or in part as an example for future classes. You may refuse without any impact on your grade.

Disabilities

Students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific accommodations for which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at (972) xxx-xxxx, please do so before making an appointment to see your instructor.

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