Experimental Game Design

ARTS 4510 section 01 & section 02
ARTS 6400 section 01 graduate level
Spring 2015  VAST Studio, Sage 2411
4 credits
Prerequisites: part of GSAS core (or by permission)

Gravity’s Pull created in EGD.  Winner Best Design, Gamefest 2014
© 2014 by Jeffrey Steel, Kevin Hendricks, Michael Lechner, with music by Jonathan Reed
Download Demo for Windows or Mac:  http://goo.gl/VxAylu
Vimeo:  http://vimeo.com/kridily/gravityspull
Gravity’s Pull is a 2D text-based action platformer, made in Unity, composed of text generated at runtime.
The player must navigate a world full of floating islands and strange creatures in order to find their way back home.
The story is told through the platforms that the player is exploring, and both change based on the actions that the
player takes throughout the game.

Instructor:
Kathleen Ruiz
Associate Professor of Integrated Arts
e-mail: ruiz@rpi.edu
phone: 518-276-2539
office: West Hall 314c
office hours: Thursdays 11 am to 1 pm by appointment
(please use sign up board on office door WH 314c or via email ruiz@rpi.edu)

Experimental Game Design is an upper level hands-on studio and seminar focusing on the creation of large scale workable game projects and prototypes that advance innovative paradigms, emerging forms and dynamic interfaces. Primary to the course is the formation of trans-disciplinary collaborative teams whose members learn by making and experimenting. Students present their work in a series of formal and informal critiques that help to guide and expand their iterative process. Games are analyzed as cultural artifacts reflecting behavior, social
formation, and the representation of gender, ethnicity and identity.

Starting with creating an archeological, socio-cultural and ethical overview of their own history of game and toy preferences, students then create two short projects in a temporary teams. The short projects are posed as real world problems that broadly seek applied or indy games genre solutions.

Final project teams are then formulated for the remainder of the semester. The final project, which is the main focus of the course, is a purposeful work which shows depth and quality of ideation, innovation and interaction. It is student driven in subject, design and development. The game must be fully functional and be accompanied by a completed, detailed game design document using the format: Model Game Design Document

Social action games & simulation, art games, applied or serious games, indy games, problem solving, blended/augmented reality, educational games, mobile and locative games, abstract play, and other inventive forms have been created in the course. Factors in game design including flow and game play gestalt are taken into consideration. The aesthetics of game design including interaction design, character development, level design, game play experience, and delivery systems are developed as students create the various game assignments. Interdisciplinary collaborative teams consisting of talents from visual and sound artists, programmers, cognitive science, designers, engineers, IT professionals and others. Elements of successful collaboration are covered and camaraderie of invention is encouraged.

Course Objectives/Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of the course:

1. students will have the ability to explore new approaches to the concepts of “game,” “play”, and “simulation” and start to define alternate paradigms and expressive forms as demonstrated in the individual and team based projects

2. students will develop one or more of the following skills: design, art making, game programming, or engineering strategies which merge concept, process and form - encouraging approaches that are at once inquisitive, analytical, creative, experimental and articulate
3. students will be able to create an archeological, socio-cultural and ethical overview of their own history of game and toy preferences

4. students will demonstrate the ability to work together in trans-disciplinary teams to conceptualize, design, produce and express ideas through game or simulation projects

5. students will become more articulate in the work of artists, theorists, and institutions who engage in game creation

6. students will demonstrate their process, code, art, design and experiments in a detailed game design document, summation overview, poster and short video game trailer

7. students will successfully articulate informed ideas relating to the representation of gender, race, and behavior in games and simulations and an increased awareness of games as cultural and aesthetic artifacts as demonstrated in class discussions and critiques and in short written reaction papers to relevant readings and events

Course Assessment/Measures: Assignments:
Kindly upload all projects and studies to your drop box

week 1. Personal Game Archeology & Analysis
5 points
due Jan 28

Archeology and analysis of personal gaming preferences from:
a. childhood and
b. today as an adult.
Research and present a short power point or web presentation and demonstration of your favorite game/toy as a child and why it was your favorite, and your favorite game/toy as an adult and why. Include a brief history of the origins of each game, and why this is/was a compelling game experience for you. Thoughtfully research and consider the socio-political context of the game/toy you have chosen and its use. Please consider not only the game industry, but also the larger context as well. Include references in your presentation—web links, documentation.

week 2. Experimental Game Jam # 1
The theme this semester is “Space”
5 points
due Feb 4
Working collaboratively in temporary teams, (ideally creating a balanced team consisting of the following talents: visual artist, programmer, engineer, sound composer & designer) create an experimental game around the theme of “space”.

This is purposefully broad so use your imagination and creativity and open yourself up to experimenting. Trust your intuition! Innovation is key here.

Possible suggestions to open up ideas about space could include our in-class discussions about the expanded notion of the exploration of game space, physical space, deep space, interior space, open world space, games as spatial metaphors, speed running through space, exploration of space of all kinds. The realms of possibility of space beyond space as we may currently know it. Possibly breaking through the 4th wall or considering new kinds of studies in perspective, or time in space such as real-time, slo-mo, bullet time, rewinding time and space, or the joy of exploring space, the violence of speed, the construct of what it is to create a game or simulation space, numerical space, mental space, the space within the computer, an exploration of the space we physically use to play the game, locative, mobile or hand held games and space, what markers you design to indicate what part of space you want the user to use. Pay attention to the ethics of space and intentionality (what world or possibility you create, the realms of possibilities to do what kinds of activities in). For instance addiction could broadly be interpreted as a dimension of time in that the time spent playing becomes excessive through obsession.

Do market research on your ideas. If it has been done before, why repeat it? Original ideas are more important than polished graphics and optimized code for this study.

**Deliverables:** (place in your folder in the class drop box)

* initial working or semi-working experimental game prototype
  teams will present a power point that contains the following background research:
* concept ideas and sketches of your team’s creative response to the theme
* storyboards explaining and illustrating the project
* Answers to the following questions:
  - Why create this game? Why would someone want to play it?
  - Immediate and Long Term Projected Socio-cultural Project Impact?
  - Predecessor or previous games/ distinctive factors in this genre?
  - Target Audience?
  - What is the game?
  - What is the ethical space of the game?
  - Where does the game take place?
  - What do the players do?
  - How many characters are there, if any?
  - What is the main focus?
  - What is different?
* List of technical information and methodologies of production: any necessary hardware, software, SDKs, and APIs, etc. needed.
Readings: **due Feb 4**
* Experimental gameplay project - *How to Prototype a Game in Under 7 Days*
*Create a short, one paragraph reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box*

Readings for Masters and Ph.D. Students (Optional Extra Credit for Undergrads):
* **Homo Ludens: A study of the Play Element in Culture** by Johan Huizinga
* **Man, Play, and Games** by Roger Caillois
*Create a short reaction paper of each the above and place in your folder in the class drop box*

week 3. & 4. **Experimental Game Jam #2**
The theme is "**Gaming responds to the big questions of our time.**"
10 points
due **Feb 18**

**What are the big questions of our time?** Being aware of them could mean being beyond the cutting edge of the game field and being a cultural producer, rather than a follower.

What do we mean by “the big questions of our time”? What larger forces of nature, culture, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, economic, shifts are on the horizon? What world events are happening or about to happen that may be of intense interest to you and your future? You decide on the top three issues that will become our themes.

**Deliverables:**
* workable game (or app) prototype responding to the theme
* PowerPoint or web presentation of the team’s research and ideas that also answers the following questions:
  ~ Why create this game? Why would someone want to play it?
  ~ Immediate and Long Term Projected Socio-cultural Project Impact?
  ~ Predecessor or previous games/ distinctive factors in this genre?
  ~ Target Audience?
  ~ What is the game?
  ~ Where does the game take place?
  ~ What do the players do?
  ~ How many characters are there, if any?
  ~ What is the main focus?
  ~ What is different?
  ~ List of technical information and methodologies of production: any necessary
hardware, software, SDKs, and APIs, etc. needed.

Readings: due Feb 11
* your research readings and
* look through and play at least 4 social awareness games that may be of interest. Here are some preeminent sites:
  Games for Change: http://www.gamesforchange.org/play/
  Persuasive Games: http://www.persuasivgames.com/
  Paolo Pedercini: www.molleindustria.org
* Be a game critic: create a short, 1 to 2 paragraph analysis and critique with suggestions about your 4 chosen games

Readings for Masters and Ph.D. Students (Optional Extra Credit for Undergrads):
building your research with relevant selections from the following:
  vpn or log in to rensSearch then go to http://link.springer.com.libproxy.rpi.edu/journal/13347/27/2/page/1
* Game Studies: The International Journal of Computer Game Research http://gamestudies.org/0601
* create a short reaction paper to 2 relevant papers from the above and place in your folder in the class drop box

Final Project Experimental Game Trajectory
working with permanent teams from this point out

week 5. Final Project Starting Sketches, Ideas & Concepts
Informal presentation 6.6 points
due Feb 25

Deliverables: drop in drop box and also print out the following:
First ideas about your final project game
These are all iterative and will be changed and perfected as your ideas unfold.
* rough concept ideas and sketches of your team’s ideas
* rough storyboards explaining and illustrating the project your team has in mind
* rough initial prototypes
* Fill in the Game Structure template
* Answers to the following questions:
  ~ Why create this game? Why would someone want to play it?
  ~ Immediate and Long Term Projected Socio-cultural Project Impact?
  ~ Predecessor or previous games/ distinctive factors in this genre?
  ~ Target Audience?
  ~ What is the game?
  ~ Where does the game take place?
~ How many characters are there, if any?
~ What is the main focus?
~ What is different?
~ List of technical information and methodologies of production: any necessary hardware, software, SDKs, and APIs, etc. needed.
* Answer Ernest Adams Game Design Philosophy Questions:
  - What dreams does the game fulfill?
  - What is the player going to do?
  - What are the physical, intellectual, emotional, economic and ethical spaces of the game world?

Please remember that your completed game project is an innovative, original, purposeful work which goes beyond conventional style gaming paradigms and shows depth of creative goals, sensitivity to social issues, and quality of interaction. The game must be fully functional.

Additionally the final project must be accompanied by an iterative, completed, (web ready, standalone) game design document and a well-designed poster, project overview sheet and promotional game trailer.

See samples:
Nova Radix:
Game Design Document
Game Overview Sheet
Game

Readings: due Feb 25
* your research readings
* Play as Design by Brenda Laurel Play as Design by Eric Zimmerman
* create a short, one paragraph reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box

____________________________________________________________

week 6 Phase I Proposal  Final Project  Formal Group Presentation  6.6 points
due March 4
Deliverables:
rethink and refine your project based on your resonation of the feedback your team received in class previously:
* concept ideas and sketches
* storyboards
* GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT TEMPLATE with blocked out time frame of production, a schedule and an outline of individual responsibilities and deadlines
* Game Structure template
* list of technical information and methodologies of production: any necessary software, SDKs, and APIs, etc. needed.
* produce new work and progress on your game assets including design, art, programming, etc.

Readings: due March 4
* From Sun Tzu to Xbox: War and Video Games by Ed Halter
* Baudrillard and Hollywood: subverting the mechanism of control and The Matrix by Jim Rovira
* The Oxymoron of Virtual Violence, J. Baudrillard
*create a short, one paragraph, reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box

Readings for Masters and Ph.D. Students (Optional Extra Credit for Undergrads):
* Origins of FPS by Galloway
* Lenoir-Lowood_TheatersOfWar
*create a short reaction paper of each the above and place in your folder in the class drop box

____________________________________________________________
________________

week 7.
due March 11 Phase II Reiteration Informal presentation 6.6 points

Midterm assessments
(please upload all perfected work to drop box for evaluation)

Reality check on scope of project and schedule presented

Deliverables:
* gameplay experiments showing clear proof of concept and progress on your game assets
* evidence of new research and work
* updated and refined GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT TEMPLATE that includes a game overview sheet, more refined story boards, at least 5 citations of games/ websites/readings/ literature/ films that have influenced your team’s research,

Readings: due March 11
* Complete Freedom of Movement: Video Games as Gendered PlaySpaces by Henry Jenkins
*create a short, one paragraph, reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box

Readings for Masters and Ph.D. Students (Optional Extra Credit for Undergrads):
* The Construction of Experience: Interface as Content David Rokeby
*Everything But the Words: A Dramatic Writing Primer for Gamers by Hal Barwood
* Storytelling in Action by Bob Bates
* The Rhetoric of Video Games by Ian Bogost
* Materials for an exploratory theory of the network society by Manuel Castells
* Delightful Identification & Persuasion: Towards an Analytical and Applied Rhetoric of Digital Games by Steffen P. Walz
*create a short, one paragraph reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box
Week 8.
Due March 18 Phase III Game Prototype Formal Group Presentation 6.6 points

Deliverables:
* Evidence of progress incorporating critical feedback, polishing and refinement of content, assets, gameplay, methodology, and delivery system
* Final definitive schedule for entire project which will be used as clear milestones for further project development
* Your team’s progress of the above reflected in your evolving game design document including completed game overview sheet and image, refined answers to the philosophical question section
Please print and hand in prior to your team’s presentation in class

Readings: final project research readings

Readings for Masters and Ph.D. Students (Optional Extra Credit for Undergrads):
* A Game of One’s Own: Towards a New Gendered Poetics of Digital Space by Tracy Fullerton, Jacquelyn Ford Morie, and Celia Pearce
* Create a short reaction paper of the above and place in your drop box

Week 9. March 25 Spring Break

Week 10. Phase IV Game Content Informal presentation 6.6 points
due April 1

Deliverables:
* Evidence of refinement and progress on your team’s project in design, development, gameplay and depth of research reflected in the project and game design document

Readings: final project research readings

Week 11. Phase V Refinement Formal Group Presentation 6.6 points
due April 8

**Deliverables:**

- Play Testing Plans due
- Refinement and progress on your team's project for pre-review and three week trajectory for individual team work
- Order all gear in advance for Gamefest for May 1 & 2, 2015

**Related Readings:** final project research readings

---

week 12. **Phase VI Further Refinement**  Informal Group Presentation 6.6 points
due April 15 (class will be held due to the early date of Gamefest)

**Deliverables:**

- Play Testing Summary results and Recommendations
- Refinement and progress on your team's project based on critiques
- Printed Project Posters 34" x 24" Print early, as other students across the campus will be vying for these printers soon.

~ you can print archival prints on the Epson 9800 printer in Sage 2410 by appointment only see details and instructions at: [http://www.hass.rpi.edu/pl/teaching-facilities-s17/large-format-printer-suite](http://www.hass.rpi.edu/pl/teaching-facilities-s17/large-format-printer-suite)

or

~ on the VCC Pltg

Instructions for Printing your Poster at the VCC (Voorhees Computing Center) on the RCS Public Plotters:

You need to configure your computer with the proper drivers in order to print to the plotter


The plotter paper is 36 inches wide, but the actual content space is 34 inches. So your document should be 36 wide, but have an inch of whitespace on either side.

The minimum height is 24 inches, but I would recommend the same amount of padding there. If your poster is vertical you can of course rotate it to fit into this space for the lowest cost. File formats: .jpg or even a .png file works from a well configured computer, but to ensure success you should make a PDF. You can possibly use Photoshop and output your file as a PDF or use Illustrator (proven to work very well) (it is on the VAST lab computers if you don't have it), create a document 36" by height + 2", then use File->Place to insert your document. You can then do "Save As" and switch the file type to PDF.

If your computer is not configured you can physically take the PDF file to the VCC and open it in Acrobat (or Reader? whatever it's called these days). Switch the printer to vcpltg for glossy ($0.25 more per foot, not bad for the shiny effect). I think the checkboxes are something like:

- "Automatically select paper size"
- "Allow use of custom sizes"

Select both of those and the rulers in the preview should update to be your document's size. Then you should be able to send it.
The printouts show up rolled in the racks on the right side of the VCC building, near the glass-enclosed classroom on that side. In general, they will put obviously bad printouts up without saying anything, but you can get a refund if there was a problem on their end by going to the help desk.

**Related Readings:** final project research readings

---

week 13. **Phase VII & Formal Group Presentation**  6.6 points  
due April 22

* Your final printed project summary in .doc format with summation image

* high quality edited high def. 1920 x 1080, H264 mp4 promotional video trailer. Please include:
  the title, credits (for all team members and their roles, and any music credits). Show an overview of the distinctive features of your project including interaction and gameplay on and off screen if desired. 2 to 4 minutes maximum should be enough time to give a person a taste of your game project and for them to want to play it.

**This video will be used to judge whether your game gets into the competition so please make a good one.**

**Related Readings:** final project research readings

---

week 14. **Phase VIII**  
due April 29  second to last class

* informal reviews

* intensive work studio* final refining of the game and project assets

**Related Readings:** final project research readings

---

GAMEFEST in EMPAC MAY 1 & 2nd

---

week 15. **Phase IX**  6.6 points  
due May 6 (second to last class)
* decompression and discussion of Gamefest
* refinement of all work for portfolios


 week 16. **Phase X** Formal Group Presentation of Final Projects
60 total points
due May 13  **(last class of the semester)**

**All perfected work due this day.**
**NO EXCEPTIONS**

Please ensure that all work is spell checked.

Submit work on a labeled DVD or thumb drive
Please include:
* all work from the semester, all short studies, all code, art, reading reactions, event reactions
* Your game and all elements including all art, programming code, files, etc.
* Printed and digital posters
* Printed and digital Final Game Design Document
* Printed and digital project summary in .doc format with summation image
* Printed and digital final user Evaluation Testing Summary and Recommendations
* Video Trailer: High quality edited high def. 1920 x 1080, H264 mp4 video trailer of gameplay. Please include your title, overview, interaction, gameplay and credits.


**Class Schedule**
week 1. Jan28
* Introduction to the course
* review game archaeologies and student aspirations
* formulate temp teams Experimental Game Jam #1
* lecture & discussion on the issue of “space”
* lecture & discussion on ideas for the future of games and gaming as we may not know it now to be, content, platforms and interfaces
week 2. Feb 4
* Review Game Jam #1
* briefly discuss prototyping, short project as opposed to longer project trajectories
* lecture and discussion and student input on "The Big Questions of Our Time"
* vote on 3 top questions to use as the theme of Experimental Game Jam #2
* teams form for the new Experimental Game Jam #2
* lecture & discussion of The Big Questions of our Time

week 3. Feb 11
* Review progress on Experimental Game Jam #2 Big Question
* discuss selected social awareness games from Games for Change, Persuasive Games, & Molleindustria,
* grads discuss chosen papers within The Philosophy of Computer Games

week 4. Feb 18
* Review and critique Experimental Games from Jam #2 The Big Questions of Our Time
* Formulate permanent Final Project teams

**Final Project Experimental Game Trajectory**
working with permanent teams from this point out

week 5. Feb 25
* Informal review of Final Project Starting Sketches, Ideas & Concepts
* team meetings with Game Industry Experts giving feedback on initial ideas
* Discuss the iterative process of game design and production as given in Play as Design reading selection

week 6. March 4
* Formal review of phase I prototypes
* Lecture, video and discussion about virtual violence, catharsis and desensitization

week 7. March 11 **Midterm Review**
* Informal review of phase II content and reiteration
* Reality check on scope of project and
schedule
* Lecture, video and discussion about the representation of gender, love and emotion in games and the game industry

week 8. March 18
* Formal presentation and critique of phase III prototypes
* Lecture, video and discussion about the representation of race representation in games and the games industry

week 9. March 25 Spring Break

week 10. April 1
* informal presentations and reviews of phase IV refinements
* review poster and promotional design and high end printing

week 11. April 8
* formal critiques of Phase V refinements
* review of playtest plans
* review team 3 week trajectory schedules
* Lecture, video and discussion about addiction and games

week 12. April 15
* informal presentations and reviews of phase VI
* examine playtest results and take appropriate actions to refine
* review methodologies of producing game video trailers
* Lecture, video and discussion about Breaking through the 4th Wall and issues in player created content

week 13. April 22
* formal presentations and critiques of phase VII
* review project summaries, game design documents and game trailers
* review installation requirements, tech, and gear

week 14. April 29
* informal reviews of phase VIII
* intensive work studio
* prepare for Gamefest May 1 & 2nd

week 15. May 6 second to last class
* decompress and discussion of Gamefest
* perfect all studies

week 16, May 13 last class
* final project formal reviews
* all posters, game design documents, video trailers, etc. reviewed
* all work from the semester, all short studies, all code, art, reading reactions, event reactions are handed in on individual DVS or thumb drives and in student drop boxes for final review
* lecture and discussion on The Future is Here Starting a Small Business and wrap up
lecture and discussion on what the future may be like in new game worlds

Grading:
Evaluation: Students must demonstrate satisfactory achievement of course objectives through fulfillment of course projects and by contributing to class discussions and critiques.

Short study #1. Personal Game Archeology & Analysis 5% = 5 points
Short study #2. Experimental Game Jam # 1 5% = 5 points
Short study #3. Experimental Game Jam #2 “Gaming responds to the big questions of our time.” 10% = 10 points
Final Project 60% (incremental evaluation over 9 due dates, each 6.666% = 6.6 points each x 10= 60 points

Participation in class 10% = 10 points
Reaction papers 10% to readings 5 and your events 3 = 8 total @ 1.25 points each = 10 points

Point to Letter grade equivalents for the course are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER GRADES</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE DESIGNATION</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>EXCELLENT</td>
<td>90-100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>EXCELLENT</td>
<td>85-89 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td></td>
<td>80-84 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>GOOD</td>
<td>77-79 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>GOOD</td>
<td>73-76 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td></td>
<td>70-72 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>SATISFACTORY</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td></td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>MARGINAL</td>
<td>57-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td>53-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td></td>
<td>50-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>UNSATISFACTORY</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation:** you are invited, encouraged, and expected to engage in discussion, reflection and activities.

**Class Attendance Policy**
As an enrolled student, you have made a commitment to this class and your attendance is a significant part of that commitment. Attendance will be taken at every class. An absence is considered excused if the student has informed the course instructor by email or in person before the beginning of the class and the excuse is considered reasonable by the instructor.

**Late Policy:** All students are required to be on time and in attendance for each and every class. Students arriving to class more than 10 minutes late may be counted as absent. Two (2) unexcused absences will result in a reduction of one entire letter grade.

Adherence to deadlines is expected. It is the individual student’s responsibility to keep track of deadlines and to present the work to the class and instructor on the specified dates. 15% per day will be subtracted from late assignments.

If you are concerned about your creative trajectory or your grade at any point during the semester, please do not hesitate to contact your Instructor and schedule an appointment.

**Academic Honesty:**

**Statement On Academic Integrity**

**Class Specific**
Collaboration and discussion about class projects is actively encouraged, and is in no way considered cheating. This is a studio course, and personal ownership of information is not deemed to be appropriate. **Original game design, art and design, programming and production are required.** Projects are expected to reflect personal endeavor, but may also be collaborative in
nature when the nature of the collaboration is clearly indicated.

**Academic Integrity**

Student-teacher relationships are built on trust. For example, students must trust that teachers have made appropriate decisions about the structure and content of the courses they teach, and teachers must trust that the assignments that students turn in are their own. Acts, which violate this trust, undermine the educational process. The Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities defines various forms of Academic Dishonesty and you should make yourself familiar with these. In this class, all assignments that are turned in for a grade must represent the student’s own work. In cases where help was received, or teamwork was allowed, a notation on the assignment should indicate your collaboration. Submission of any assignment that is in violation of this policy will result in a penalty of a grade of F given for failure in the course and also further disciplinary action as outlined in the Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

**Addressing Academic Dishonesty at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**

Intellectual integrity is critical to the foundation of all academic work. Academic dishonesty, therefore, is considered a serious matter and will be addressed as such. As defined in the current Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities, examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: academic fraud, collaboration, copying, cribbing, fabrication, plagiarism, sabotage, and substitution. Additionally, attempts to commit academic dishonesty, or to assist in the commission or attempt of such an act, are also violations of the academic dishonesty policy. If found in violation of the academic dishonesty policy, students may be subject to two types of penalties. The instructor administers an academic (grade) penalty of F, and the student may also enter the Institute judicial process and be subject to such additional sanctions as: warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, and alternative actions as defined in the current Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

**Required Materials**

- An active RCS account.
- Approximately 10 to 15 dvds, or a 60 GB usb drive and or high capacity external hard drive will be necessary to back up and archive your work
- Other materials on a project basis
- You may be making a number of digital
prints/manifestations of your work on or off campus. The costs of digital printing vary, but be prepared to incur approximately $25 in fabrication/material costs.

**Electronic Communication**
Email: All students are expected to have an active electronic mail account, and should check mail at least four times a week for class information. Some essential class information is communicated by email only.

**Work Habits**
Always back-up your work frequently; that is, every time you make something you think is worth keeping. Systems crash when least expected and you could lose all your work. It is a good idea to make three backups (on different media), as storage media are sometimes unstable. Always save onto your own media or into your account as files left on hard drives will be removed.

Also, please keep in mind the highly addictive aspects of working with computers. Many people lose track of time and later wonder why they have severe back, neck and eye problems. It is a good idea to take a rest every 15 to 20 minutes. Look up or beyond your computer or, better still, at a long distance to relax your eyes. Take a walk or stretch. Fatigue can lead to frustration. Stay in touch with your body's needs.

Try not to harm or deface any equipment or software in any way or lose files and folders belonging to our class or other classes.

For problems in the studio please be specific in your email and contact: hasshelp@rpi.edu

HASS Information Services assistance: http://www.hass.rpi.edu/pl/helpdesk

Please follow the guidelines for working in each studio very carefully, as you will be held personally responsible for problems you incur. At all times please keep the lab clean and sanitary.

**Overview of Game Design Document:**
Title of the Game, Artist Statement/Philosophy/The WHY Factor (why create this game? why would someone want to play it?), Predecessors or previous games/ distinctive factors in this genre, Target Audience, Introduction & Story, Immediate and long term projected socio/cultural project impact, Delivery System & Requirements, Interface, User Interaction, The World Layout, Level Design, Visualization (characters, flow charts), Music/ Sound Design, Rules and Game play (Setup, Scoring (if applicable)), Program Structure, Technical Specs (such as Physics,
Rendering Systems, Lighting Models), Implementation, Production Timeframe, Research, References and other Features Unique to the Project.

**Background needed:**
Students entering the course should have a basic general awareness of contemporary socio-cultural issues, have some exposure to interactive digital simulation, and possess the ability for personal expression using any one or combinations of the following: media applications, drawing, music composition, programming, visual art, design, narration, or engineering. Students entering this course have had varied backgrounds coming from Computer Science, Arts, Communication & Media, Cognitive Science, Engineering, IT, Management, and other areas.

**Suggested further readings:**

Wardrip-Fruin, Noah and Pat Harrigan, Editors. *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance and Game*

Laurel, Brenda and Zimmerman, Eric, editors. *Play as Design*

Saarkeesian, Anita. [www.feministfrequency.com](http://www.feministfrequency.com)

Halter, Ed. *From Sun Tzu to Xbox: War and Video Games*

Huizinga, Johan. *Homo Ludens: A study of the Play Element in Culture*

Caillois, Roger. *Man, Play, and Games*

Schell, Jesse. *The Art of Game Design*

Lenoir-Lowood. *Theaters Of War*

Nitsche, Michael. *Video Game Spaces. Image, Play, and Structure in 3D Worlds*


Jenkins, Henry. *Complete Freedom of Movement: Video Games as Gendered PlaySpaces*

Baudrillard, Jean. *Passwords*


(There are many other evolving and emerging relevant titles of interest. Please ask the instructor.)