

Course Syllabus

Course Information:

ATCM 3376 : HISTORY OF GAMES

Monday – Wednesday 10:00-11:15 AM

ATC 2.602

Fall 2017

Professor Contact Information

Instructor: Michael Andreen

Email: mta072000@utdallas.edu

Email MUST have atcm3376 in subject line.

Office: ATC 1.501

Office Hours: Appointment only

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

ATCM 2365

Course Description

ATCM 3376 is an examination of the history of video games, starting briefly with analogue game structures and following the growth of the computer gaming industry into the early 2000s. This course will not only look at the chronological history of games, but will investigate the design origins and decisions in a variety of computer game genres that have led to modern game design philosophy.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Learning the history behind the development of the video game industry
Understanding the impact of past design decisions on modern game design
Developing critical analysis skills when evaluating both modern and past games

Suggested Course Materials

Replay: The History of Video Games, Tristan Donovan

<https://archive.org/details/internetarcade>

classicreload.com

playdosgames.com

<https://www.gog.com/>

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Week 1

Aug 21-23: Intro, brief history of analogue and tabletop games

Week 2

Aug 28-30: Early computer strategy programs and the advent of the video games

Week 3

Sept 4-6: Flood of the game market and the industry crash

PAPER 1 DUE THURSDAY SEPT 6

PC Unit

Week 4

Sept 11-13: Translation of analogue games to PCs, university mainframes, and the birth of RPGs

Week 5

Sept 18-20: Adventure games and computer sims

Week 6

Sept 25-27: 90s in PC, the rise of the RPS, Shareware, expansion of RPG systems

PAPER 2 DUE THURSDAY SEPT 27

Week 7

Oct 2-4: PC games as major places for story experimentation, Valve and the revival of PC gaming

Console Unit

Week 8

Oct 9-11: Nintendo and the revival of the console industry in America

PAPER 3 DUE THURSDAY OCT 11

Week 9

Oct 16-18: Sega, the console wars, and the ESRB

Week 10

Oct 23-25: Sony Playstation and rift with Nintendo, console movement into the 3d space

Week 11

Oct 30-Nov 1: The rise of open world console games, games as artistic expression, and the beginning of the console and PC worlds recombining

PAPER 4 DUE THURSDAY NOV 1

Arcade Unit

Week 12

Nov 6-8: 80s arcade competition scene, Twin Galaxies arcade and Sega's arcade presence

Week 13

Nov 13-16: Fighting games scene, its relationship to competitive game play, and the effects of arcades on modern game trends

FALL BREAK NOV 20-24**Week 14:**

Nov 27-29: Floating day for lectures based on class interest

Week 15

Dec 4-6: European and experimental games, Class wrap up

Final Work Due**Assignments:**

Papers should look critically at games and evaluate them as a designer would, considering to the best of the author's ability the technological limitations and design philosophies of the games' era.

Paper 1 (2 Pages): Play a popular arcade game from the 70s or early 80s and dissect what the developers were trying to accomplish, and how they did it. As an example, Pong attempts to represent table tennis, so the devs had to decide which elements of the game to systematize, which to leave out, and how to best represent those elements in the game. A good discussion will analyze all of these parts.

Paper 2 (2 Pages): Pick a game from the 80s PC generation and analyze in the same fashion as paper 1.

Paper 3 (2Pages): Pick a game from the 90s PC generation in the same genre as your game for paper 2.

Paper 4 (2-3 Pages): Play a console game from the 80s AND one from the 90s. Analyze them as you have in previous papers and then compare the advancements.

Final Paper (3-5 pages): Choose a particular design element you see threaded throughout games and analyze its uses in various formats or genres. Include at least three games in your discussion.

Revisions: You may select any two papers from assignments 2-4 to revise. You may earn up to 20 points back on each paper (which translates to roughly 4.3 points on your final grade). Papers that have had points deducted for late turn-in cannot earn back points above the late deductions (so if you have a 70 for turning in a paper 3 days late, 70 is the highest that paper can achieve).

Grading Policy:

First Paper 5%
3 Short Papers 55%
Participation: 10%
Final Paper: 30%

Course & Instructor Policies

Late assignments will be docked 10% per day late.

Students are responsible for determining what assignments they miss if they are absent.

Students must contact the professor about absences. After two absences, 30% will be deducted from the participation grade (this is 3 points off of the final grade total).

Requirements and schedule are subject to change at the discretion of the instructors (all changes will be furnished to students in writing).

Information on university policies and procedures: <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>