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Syllabus

NYU Los Angeles (Global)

Interactive Narrative: Summer 2022

MD-UY 2314G

Summer 2022

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Go Local/Study Away student for NYU , please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures.

Instruction Mode: Remote Synchronous / Hybrid

*****ALL STUDENTS MUST ATTEND CLASS AND PARTICIPATE IN REAL-TIME*****

Mondays/Wednesdays 10:00A.M.-1:30PM PST (Los Angeles time)

We know that you may be taking courses at multiple locations this semester. If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Go Local/Study Away student for this course site, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via NYU Classes so you are aware of site specific support structure, policies and procedures. **Please contact the site academic staff (egc254@nyu.edu)** if you have trouble accessing the NYU Classes site.

Instructor Information

- Mia Farmer

Course Information

- MD-UY 2314G - LA1 (22404)
- Interactive Narrative
- Academic calendar: [Spring Academic Calendar](#)

Course Overview and Goals

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In this class, we will break down the concept of what an interactive narrative is, how it is designed, and how the elements of traditional narrative are still very much at play, but expanded upon to give a reader/player/audience more agency in the overall experience. We will also examine the current state of the tech and entertainment industries and study how new mediums of storytelling (included but not limited to video games) are shaping the content that is produced. We will also do a deep-dive into the role of a Narrative Designer: a hybrid role within the tech industry that revolves primarily around story concept and execution, but also requires technical expertise and collaboration with other designers, programmers, artists, and licensors.

This course is designed to give you more confidence, practice and proficiency as a skilled writer, engaging presenter, critical reader and adaptive researcher. Our "texts" are diverse and represent a wide breadth of experience and style so that you will be able to recognize and analyze complex relationships between a variety of source material. By introducing you to a spectrum of contemporary and classic representations of narrative and interactivity the course will provide an opportunity to practice communicating your academic ideas verbally, in writing and through creative projects.

Class Participation

You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously. Your **active** participation in class and attendance will be reflected in this part of the course requirements.

Meeting 1: Overview & Introduction - May 25th

- Watch *Journey* game-play and *Journey - The Artistry of Game Design* (Review/Analysis)
- Look at Examples of hypertext fiction: "You Are Jezz Bezos"
- **Reading Assignment** for next class: *Homo Ludens* by Johan Huizinga Ch. 1: "The Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon" (1938) p. 1-28
- **Written Assignments for next class:**
 - In half a page, describe a career path that interests you and name 3 of your potential dreams jobs currently held by real people
 - Submit written notes on reading

***No Class on Monday May 30th**

Meeting 2: What does it mean to Play? - June 1

- "Homo Ludens" presentations and discussions
- Read/Play "Who Stole My Bone?"
- **Written Assignment: Write an example of a "moral" choice in Twine using the principles from the reading assignments below**

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- Reading Assignment for next class:
Playing a Better Me: How Players Rehearse Their Ethos via Moral Choices
The Garden of Forking Paths - Borges

Meeting 3: The Relationship between the Player and Meaningful Choices - June 6

- Discuss “Playing a Better Me: How Players Rehearse Their Ethos via Moral Choices” -**Cy & Angela**
- Discuss “Garden of Forking Paths” - **Kai**
- Introduce goals and stakes
- **Written Assignment:** Finish KoL: FTUE
- **Reading Assignment for next class:**
"I Have a Different Kind of Brain": A Script Centric Approach to Interactive Narratives in Games
Queerness and Video Games Perspectives

Meeting 4: Narrative Design + Inclusivity - June 8th

- Discuss "I Have a Different Kind of Brain" - **Brian**
- Discuss “Queerness and Video Games” **Student Presentation** -
- Watch Dream Daddy documentary
- **Written Assignment: Practice Scene in format of choice.**
- **Reading Assignments for next class:**
- Kawaii Killers and Femme Fatales
The Semiosis of Architectural Identity in The Witcher 3
RPG Article - Emergent affect in Final Fantasy VII and Japanese role-playing games
RPG Article - Procedural Rhetoric in Persona 3

*****Pitches due Friday June 10th*****

Meeting 5: RPGS & the relationship between Player & Developer - June 13th

- Femme Fatales - **Huaze**
- Discuss “Emergent Affect in Final Fantasy VII and Japanese role-playing Games” (2018): - **Alwyn**
- View clips and discuss cultural impact of original FF7 (1997) versus remake Part I (2020)
- Discuss “Procedural rhetoric in Persona 3: Mechanics and narrative as ideological signifier”:
Student Presentation - Edward
- Witcher "Semiosis" article - **Ximena** (**might get pushed to next class depending on time)
- **Reading Assignments for next class:**

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- **It's Like the Gold Rush: The Lives and Careers of Professional Video Game Streamers on Twitch TV**
The Last Wish (read "The Lesser Evil" chapter)

Meeting 6: Subcultures in Adaptations and Streaming Communities - June 15th

- Watch The Witcher pilot
- Discuss *The Last Wish* - **Student Presentation - Alexander**
- View dialogue choices in Wild Hunt and discuss adaptation of the novels/short-story collections directly into games
- Watch interview with showrunner: "Showrunner Lauren Schmidt Hissrich on The Witcher's tough women"
- Discuss Twitch article + **Francesca**
- **Reading Assignments for next class: Atlanta (pilot script) + *Russian Doll* pilot script**
- **Written Assignment: Outlines** are due Friday. See Brightspace.

June 20th - no class

Meeting 7: Story Structure - June 22

- Discuss pilot scripts and clear goals & stakes
- **Written Assignment: Finish final project**

June 27th and June 29th - Final Project Presentations

Final project will be **due before class**. In our last session, we will review all completed Twine narratives/games. Constructive feedback on your peers' final projects will count toward a percentage of your grade on this project. You must attend both sessions, of your grade will be heavily impacted.

Friday June 24th 10A.M. PST (Los Angeles time) - Completed Version of Final Project Due

After you turn in your project, you will have additional time to play-test, fix bugs, and make minor edits. Turn in your final version to me via Brightspace OR e-mail before final project presentations begin on June 27th.

Final Project (25% of grade):

In lieu of a final exam, you will construct a five-minute branching narrative using the free Twine software. You may choose any topic and style for your project. We will develop the story pitch and outlines before you begin work in Twine.

In our last session, we will review all completed Twine narratives/games. Constructive feedback on your peers' final projects will count toward a percentage of your grade on this project.

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Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Attendance	[5%]
In-class Writing Assignments	[15%]
Written Homework Assignments	[15%]
Presentations	[15%]
Class Participation	[25%]
Final Project	[25%]

Letter Grades (This is a sample grading scale, please adjust based on your site policies)

- Stern (and school specific policies still hold (i.e. remove grading table, and include specific language for core and elective policies, etc.)

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade Points Percent

A	4.00	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	65-66
F	.00	Below 65

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

- Required readings will be made available via PDF

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- In addition to Zoom, you will occasionally need to use your internet browser in class
- Twine (available online for free)

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](https://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](https://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](https://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](https://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers or online through NYU Classes if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Unexcused absences will affect students' semester participation grade. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to discuss where at the Academic Center the remote course can be taken** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

SITE SPECIFIC ABSENCE REPORTING POLICY

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email to address any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Classroom Etiquette/Expectations

Things to consider:

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- Put your phone on silent.

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- If you need to have a snack or refreshment during class, please be mindful not to eat super noisy food such as rustling chips or something that would prevent you from typing during an in-class exercise, i.e. BBQ chicken
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.

Final Exams - Final projects will be completed and submitted before class; however, you must attend the final session because peer feedback on other students' projects will count toward your grade.

Late Assignment

(This is sample language, please adjust based on your site specific policies)

1. Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
2. Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
3. Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.
4. Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
5. Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
6. Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
7. Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An "incomplete" is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of "incomplete," present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of "incomplete" to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it should then be submitted to the site's academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

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Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." **Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.**

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU X takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the local Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.

Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, "...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they

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are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU Los Angeles, we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavors.

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center **as early as possible in the semester for assistance**. Accommodations for this course are managed through the site sponsoring the class once you request it.