Syllabus for GDD 201: Professionalism Practice in Game Design

Fall 2024
Class meets M/W 10:30 – 11:45 am
Course website: http://mywebspace.quinnipiac.edu/egbertozzi/201

Professor: Elena Bertozzi Ph.D. (elena.bertozzi@qu.edu • 203-582-7998)

OFFICE HOURS

M/W 1:30-2:30, or by appointment in my office: CAS1 322
I am available via email during the week (Monday- Friday) and will try to respond to emails within 48 hours. Emails received on the weekend will be answered by the beginning of the following week.

DESCRIPTION

In this course students will practice skills needed to be a successful professional in Game Design. They will apply readings on principles of game design to analyzing, brainstorming, and prototyping games. Students will research the way these skills are applied in the field by exploring available internships, graduate study and job opportunities. They will learn how to use HTML, CSS, and Javascript to construct a web portfolio that demonstrates their acquisition of the skills required to be successful in their chosen area of interest.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Research future potential career paths, understand required skillsets and documentation, and develop a plan to acquire them.
- Create profiles on LinkedIn and Handshake and practice using them to develop a professional network, obtain internships, research job leads.
- Design, develop, and populate a professional quality portfolio website that demonstrates skills required for desired career path. This will be prototyped in HTML/CSS/Javascript and then published.
- Improve ability to formally analyze games, produce polished analytical papers, and effectively document game design processes. In-class critiques should be informed by the ASK (Actionable Specific, and Kind) feedback model

Deliverables (Assignments)

Desired/Achievable Jobs and path to get there (ELO #1 -- 150 pts)

Part 1: Based on your existing strengths and desired career path, find 3 entry level jobs that you would like to be qualified for when you graduate. Find another 3 jobs that would be a Plan B – for example jobs using that same skill set, but not in the game industry. Create a spreadsheet with a list of the required skills for each jobs and a second list with the "nice to have skills". Due: Week #2 (100 pts.)

Part 2: Using the GDD course planner or some other tool, plan the classes that you will enroll in for the next 3 semesters to acquire needed skills. Given the high value placed on real-world experience, determine which internships/collaborations/study abroad will be the most useful to you. Share this plan with your advisor at your next appointment. Due: Week #3 (50 pts)

Professional Profiles and Networking (ELO # 2 -- 150 pts)

Create a LinkedIn profile for yourself. Ensure that you have filled in as many of the available sections as you can with past experience. Use LinkedIn to find (min) 3-5 people who are doing the kind of work you seek. Message them and ask them about their job, what they recommend you do to prepare, and if they would be willing to review your portfolio. Start building a network. Stay active on Linked-In, liking others posts and connecting to GDD grads. Seek to connect with at least 3 people every week. Link to your profile from Blackboard and note progress over the course of the semester. (75 pts.)

Create a Handshake profile for yourself. Populate it with your current skills and indicate that you are interested in internships. Create a weekly notification alert and record how you have researched opportunities for yourself and followed up on the suggestions that are sent to you. Link to your profile from Blackboard and note progress over the course of the semester (75 pts.)

Professional quality portfolio website (ELO #3 -- 250 pts.)

Professional quality portfolio website. We will dedicate class time to this process. You will research professionals in the field you seek to join and find portfolios you admire and would like to emulate,

Part 1: design a wireframe portfolio in Miro or Figma. The organization of the portfolio should relate directly to the required skills on your job description spreadsheet. Testers should easily be able to find evidence of required and "nice to have" skills for the target jobs you have identified. Due: Week 5 (75 pts.)

Prototype portfolio using basic HTML/CSS/Javascript and tested. Due: Week 13 (75 pts.)

Published final portfolio.. Final Exam day (100 pts.)

Evidence of skills (ELO #4 -- 400 pts)

Every year GDD students have won top prizes in the GDC Narrative Analysis competition. Many jobs require evidence of critical thinking and the ability to express yourself cogently in writing. You will produce two papers:

- Game Analysis I - Analysis and critique of a game mechanic and suggestions for improvement Due: Week 7 (150 pts.)
- Game Analysis 2 - Analysis and critique of game content – could be narrative, level design, game economy, etc. Due: Week 12 (150 pts.)
- Additional materials (100 pts.) Due: Week 13

It is also important that your portfolio contain documentation of your skills and process. This will be different for each student based on the job requirements. Your additional materials could include: game design documents, project management documentation, art development processes, usability/playtesting documentation, etc.

Classroom citizenship i.e. ASK (ELO #4 -- 50 pts)

CLASS RULES

No eating in the lab. No cellphone use during class time. No working on projects, browsing the web or watching YouTube while other students are making presentations or during class discussions. Such behavior is extremely disrespectful towards your classmates and will negatively impact your grade. If you are compelled to use social media during class, leave the room.

TEXT/ RESOURCES

Reading/doing assignments available electronically are linked to the class website.

SCHEDULE: (see website for details)

WEEK 1 (Aug. 26-28)
- Topic: Introduction to the course
- Reading: Critical Thinking
- Skills: Job search resources and tools
- Due: class index page

WEEK 2 (Sept. 2-4
- Topic: Thinking about your professional career hopes and identifying paths to get there.
- Reading: LinkedIn
- Skills: Practice using LinkedIn to look for jobs, connect with mentors, and network.
- Due: Goal internships and jobs spreadsheet. Study the requirements for each position so

that you have a clear understanding of what skills you need to demonstrate to be competitive for them.

WEEK 3 (Sept. 12-15)

- Topic: Handshake
- Reading How to use Handshake
- Skills: Leveraging all means of connecting with alumni and connecting with people working in a range of fields
- Due: Course Plan for Skills Acquisition

WEEK 4 (Sept. 19-22)
- Topic: The value of Experiential Learning
- Reading WSJ article
- Skills: Start wireframing portfolio
- Due: Handshake Profile

WEEK 5 (Sept. 26-29)
- Topic: Preparing resources for Game Analysis 1
- Reading: Bibliography for paper
- Skills: Using the paper to explore topics relevant to career goals.
- Due: LinkedIn Profile

WEEK 6 (Oct. 3-6)
- Topic: Determine code needed for portfolio
- Skills: Demo initial organization of portfolio
- Reading: Optimal Portfolio Design
- Due: Game Analysis 1 draft

WEEK 7 (Oct. 10-13)
- Topic: Edit and critique game analyses
- Skills: Determine what you need for portfolio structure
- Reading Portfolio tools
- Due: Game Analysis 1 (

WEEK 8 (Oct. 17-20)
- Topic: Building Portfolio
- Skills: learning needed tools
- Reading: as needed
- Due: Midterm Course Evaluation and Porftolio Design

WEEK 9 (Oct. 24-27)
- Topic: Understanding the Document Object Model and using Javascript to load and

replace elements on the page.
- Skills: loading images, video, and audio dynamically

WEEK 10 (Oct. 31- Nov. 3)
- Topic: Understanding Javascript
- Skills: loading PDFs and other content
- Prepare bibliography for Game Analysis II

WEEK 11 (Nov. 7-10)
- Topic: Writing cover letters & resumes
- Skills: Reaching out to employers
- Due: Draft of Game Analysis 2

WEEK 12 (Nov. 14-17)
- Topic: Working completing HTML portfolio
- Due: Game Analysis II

WEEK 13 (Nov. 28- Dec 3)
- Due: HTML Portfolio
- Topic: Write up testing summary and recommendations for improvement
- Finalize all materials

WEEK 14 (Dec. 5-8)
- Mentor interviews
- Due: Portfolio Usability feedback

WEEK 15 (Dec. 12-15)

- Final Exam day: Present final game and Passport

GRADING SCALE

Your final letter grade is based on the Quinnipiac Grading Scale as follows:

A 93–100	B+ 87–89	B- 80–82	C 73–76	D 60–69
A- 90–92	B 83–86	C+ 77–79	C- 70–72	F 0–59

NOTE: A C- or better is required in all departmental prerequisites.

It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades throughout the semester. Grades will be posted on Blackboard and may be checked at any time. If you are not doing as well as you would like to be, you can meet with the professor to discuss extra credit projects BEFORE the semester ends. If you feel that a mistake has been made recording or entering a grade, please email the professor so that it can be corrected.

All students are expected to read and comply with the QU policy on Academic Integrity and the Statement of Inclusive values that are available via the Blackboard site for this class, in the Student Handbook, and summarized in the final pages of this syllabus.

In addition, GDD has the following policies:

GDD INCLUSIVITY AND EQUITY POLICY

GDD is committed to maintaining an environment in which all members are treated equitably, feel fairly represented, and are comfortable discussing topics, particularly controversial ones, with civility and open-mindedness. We are working to build a community of diverse individuals who can celebrate differences while building on what we have in common. Game design is a creative practice, so we encourage wide- ranging explorations of what is possible while respecting practices that work toward the greater good.
We ask all members of the community to think about the work they are producing and ask themselves ifthey are consciously or unconsciously reproducing or reinforcing hurtful stereotypes. We are committedto recognizing and seeking to eliminate racism, sexism, bigotry and other inequalities. Games can change the world; let's make sure we are changing it in a positive way.

VPA ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to be in class ready to work at the beginning of the scheduled class time. PROMPTARRIVAL TO CLASS IS EXPECTED. Three late arrivals to class will equal one absence. PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU HAVE 6 OR MORE ABSENCES YOU MAY BE ASKED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE COURSE. 7ABSENCES DURING THE SEMESTER WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE. Attendance for the last
class meeting scheduled during Finals Week is required.

There is no distinction between "excused" or "unexcused" absences - missed course work, content and class participation are an issue in any absence and can negatively impact the rest of the class members. In the case of extenuating circumstances, such as an ongoing illness or the death of a loved one, the professor should be consulted as soon as possible, and documentation from the Student Affairs office may be required. In such circumstances the faculty and student can negotiate the possibility of granting an "Incomplete." In the rare cases where a student is allowed to take an "Incomplete"

as the result of extenuating circumstances, the student must follow the guidelines and timelines in the Student Handbook

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VPA LATE WORK POLICY

The assignments for this class must be turned in complete and on-time for full credit. You have until the last day of class to turn work in late for partial credit.

POLICY ON DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who wish to request reasonable accommodations should contact the Office ofStudent Accessibility in Arnold Bernhard Library north wing at (203) 582-7600 or North Haven at SLE 340 (203)-582-7600 (access@quinnnipiac.edu). Quinnipiac University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

STUDENT HANDBOOK

The Quinnipiac University Student Handbook is intended to serve as a source of information on themany services, activities and policies of Quinnipiac. The handbook can be found on MyQ.

LEARNING COMMONS

The Learning Commons is a place for students to go when they want to achieve a level of performancethey can't reach on their own. In a setting of practice and growth, student resources are provided through Peer Educator programs, the Office of Student Accessibility, and Academic Development & Outreach professional staff. The Learning Commons can be found at the Mount Carmel Campus in theNorth wing of the Arnold Bernhard Library; and at the North Haven Campus on the third floor of the Law School (SLE-340). Students are encouraged to visit The Learning Commons for support with class content, to improve study skills, to consult on academic success strategies, and for general developmental advising needs. Phone: 203-582-8628

Email: LearningCommons@Quinnipiac.edu

Website: https://www.qu.edu/student-resources/academic-support.html

CARE

Quinnipiac is dedicated to supporting our students through high-touch practices from CARE (Community, Assessment, Response and Evaluation). The CARE team employs a caring, preventive, early intervention approach with students who exhibit concerning or disruptive behaviors.

The CARE team works to promote student well-being and success in the context of community safety. CARE referrals are submitted by faculty, staff, students, and community members. Referrals rangefrom topics including: helping a student during difficult times such as the passing of a loved one, when astudent needs support for their physical, emotional, mental,

spiritual, financial health, and/or when experiencing social challenges with roommates, friends, and/or peers.

More information about the CARE team, behaviors of concern, how to make a referral, and answers to frequently asked questions can be found on the [CARE page](#) on MyQ. If you are concerned about a peer,student, or yourself, please submit a referral [CARE and Conduct](#) [Incident Reporting Form](#).

QU statement on Inclusive Values:

"At Quinnipiac University, we believe excellence is inclusive and built upon equity, so all groups feel welcome to fully participate in and contribute to our mission.

Achieving this level of excellence requires creating a sense of belonging for all individuals — especially historically marginalized members of society — by affirming the worth, dignity, legitimacy and equality of everyone in the Quinnipiac community and beyond, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, national origin, political viewpoints, veteran status or socio-economic background.

Reasoned, academic and rigorous debate requires us to hear viewpoints with which we may disagree. However, those disagreements must not question the worth, dignity, legitimacy and/or equality of our fellow community members.We affirm our belief in the ideals of inclusive excellence as a way to continue nurturing Quinnipiac as a university full of people who care deeply about each other and the communities around us."

QU expectations for integrity:
 "In keeping with these values, Quinnipiac University expects its community members to comply with the usual expectations for honest academic work. In general, community members
• May not cheat on any work
• Must properly cite sources in all academic work
• May not provide or procure unauthorized assistance on any assignment or test
• May not falsify or alter university documents, tests or assignments
• May not impede the course work of any other student
• May not do any other thing that violates or allows another person to violate the accepted

standards of academic integrity