Fall 2021 LMC 6317 Interactive Fiction (Interactive Narrative)

VERSION 5 August 22 updated versions posted to Canvas and announced)
MW 2:00-3:15
Skiles 343 with online and outdoor meetings, as appropriate to the needs of the class

Office hours: Fridays 2-3 (email or speak before or after class for video conference appointment, or for another time or meeting arrangement)

Students are expected to follow the guidelines of the CDC and the strong "encouragement" of Georgia Tech leadership to limit transmission of the COVID-19 virus on campus, by **wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth, getting vaccinated if you have not done so already, and getting tested weekly**. No one should come to class if they have cold, flu, or intestinal symptoms or if they have tested positive or experienced COVID-19 contact. The instructor will make remote learning options available to accommodate anyone who is self-isolating, quarantined, or who feels uncomfortable with in-person attendance because of health concerns.

Requirements and Grading

Details of assignment instructions will be posted on Canvas on weekly Assignments pages that are also structured as Discussions pages to allow students to see one another's work. Assignments are handed in via pasting, attachment, or link on Canvas by noon on the due date. Late assignments may lose up to 2 points.

Regular Weekly Assignment (brief responses, no more than 100 words each)

Weekly posts on the assigned texts in the form of:

At least one design term from the readings with brief definition and example to illustrate, improve, or refute it

or

Description of 1 interaction convention from this week's artifacts that created the experience of dramatic agency (or failed to in a meaningful way)

or 100 words on any similar focused topic arising from the assignment that helps us build a design vocabulary for interactive narrative

Report Assignment (2 required at your choice during the semester)

Choose any work on the Required or Assigned list for this week and prepare a short slide presentation (5-10 succinct, readable slides, 5-10 minutes to present) and lead class discussion,

highlighting the key analytical vocabulary of the text, key design decisions and interactive narrative conventions of the artifact.

The detailed extended assignment for the Iterative Interactive Digital Narrative Project which is the major focus of this class and 60% of the grade is here https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/pages/assignment-for-iterative-interactive-digital-narrative-project as well as on the appropriate weekly assignment pages.

Participation in synchronous and non-synchronous class posts and discussions about weekly assigned readings, viewings, and playthroughs and in in-class exercises	20
Offering two oral/slide presentations (1 on an article or book chapter and 1 on a TV show, game, or interactive research artifact) and leading class discussion based on a required or recommended reading or media	20
Interactive Digital Narrative Project version 1 Implementation and Presentation	10
Interactive Digital Narrative Project v 2 Implementation with Presentation	10
Interactive Digital Narrative Project v 3 with testing	10
Final Interactive Digital Narrative Project, functional and complete, with Oral/Slide Presentation and Video Documentation	30
Extra credit (up to 10 points for extra assignments, helpfulness to others)	10
Total Possible Points	110

Schedule (Find assignment details on weekly Canvas Assignments pages)

Week	Dates (MW)	Topic	Required Readings*	Required Media Artifacts*
1.	8/23, 8/25	Intro	JHM, "Research into Interactive Digital Narrative: A Kaleidoscopic View"	Student Twine Projects (shown in class)
2.	8/30, 9/1	Spatial Design	Murray, HoH Chapters 3, 5 Liebling et al, Zork IEEE article	*Zork,* *Gone Home* + Student Projects
3.	… , 9/8	(Monday: Holiday) Replay Design(1)	H. Koenitz, Towards a Specific Theory of Interactive Digital Narrative	Malcolm in the Middle: "Bowling" (on Netflix)
4.	9/13, 9/15	Replay Design(2)		Timeline Stories
5.	9/20, 9/22	Authoring Labs	(To Come)	
6.	9/27, 9/29	Project v 1	Project Presentations	
7.	10/4, 10/6	VR Non-Fiction Storytelling	Murray, Ch 4 Immersion	N. de la Peña VRs *I Am a Man*
8.	…, 10/13 (Monday Holiday)	Augmented Reality Non-Fiction Storytelling	Pickrick Materials [to come]	
9.	10/18, 10/20	Artificial Intelligence Storytelling	Weizenbaum, Mateas	*Eliza* *Façade*
10.	10/25, 10/27	Open Lab	Individual Conferences	
11.	11/1, 11/3	Project v 2 with Design Document	Project Presentations and Critique	
12.	11/8, 11/10	Open Lab		
13.	11/15, 11/17	Testing w Project v 3	Testing w Project v 3	
14.	11/22, …	Open Lab		
15.	11/30,12/1		Final Project Presentations	
16.	12/6		Final Project Presentations	
	12/13 5 pm		Final deliverables including video documentation due	

- Expanded, hyperlinked version of the assigned readings and media artifacts in this table plus additional recommended items begins on next page

Weekly Required and Recommended Reading / Media Artifacts * (expanded references from table above; full assignments will be on the Assignments page for the appropriate week)

Week 1

Janet H. Murray, "Research into Interactive Digital Narrative: A Kaleidoscopic View," *Interactive Storytelling: Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling (ICIDS),* Dublin, Ireland, December 2018.

http://penlab.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/09/T2B_Essay.pdf

(Twine Student Projects will be shown in class)

Recommended Week 1
    Florence (2018)

Pedercini, Paolo and Jim Munroe. Unmanned (2012) Molleindustria
http://unmanned.molleindustria.org/

Anna Anthropy, Dys4ia (2012)

Aditya Anupam et al, *Essential Workers* (2021) https://essential-workers-new.herokuapp.com/

Week 2 Spatial Stories

Zork (1979)

    Zork : Anderson,T, et al. (1979). *Zork,* playable game available on line at
    http://textadventures.co.uk/games/view/5zyoqrsugeopel3ffhz_vq/zork

    Article:

    Lebling, P. D., et al. (1979). "Zork:A Computerized Fantasy Game." IEEE Computer
    12(4): 51-59.
    https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20in%20PDF?preview=24251995

The Fullbright Company, *Gone Home* (2013)*,* Available through DILAC
https://gonehome.com/ (promotional site)

Janet H. Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (Updated edition), Chapter 3 and 5. Available in PDF on Canvas:

HoH Chapter 3: (on the four affordances of digital media for narrative)
https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20in%20PDF?preview=24250113

HoH Chapter 5: Agency
https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20in%20PDF?preview=24250131

Recommended Week 2
Inkle Studios, 80 Days (2014) plus Vimeo: Meg Jayanth "Unfair Game" (2015)
https://vimeo.com/149286981

Jenova Chen, *Journey* (2012) ThatGameCompany (available in DILAC)

Week 3 Replay Stories (1)

H. Koenitz, "Towards a Specific Theory of Interactive Digital Narrative" in *Interactive Digital Narrative: History, Theory, Practice.* Routledge, ed. Koenitz, et al, 2017.
Available in PDF on Canvas:

https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20in%20PDF?preview=24250143

"Bowling," *Malcolm in the Middle,* Season 2, Episode 20 (2001) Episode available streaming from Netflix

Recommended Week 3
Remedial Chaos Theory" *Community* Season 3 Episode 4 (2011) episode available streaming from Hulu

Harold Ramis (writer), *Groundhog Day*. Feature Film, Columbia Pictures, 1993.

Natasha Lyonne, *Russian Doll* Netflix TV Series, 2019.

Pope, Lucas. Papers Please (2013) (available in DILAC/GAMELAB)

Jason Mittell, "Narrative Complexity in Contemporary American Television" 2006
https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Recommended%20Reading
s/Narrative%20Structure%20Readings?preview=24251993

Week 4 Replay Stories (2)
Timeline Stories linked from this page:
https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20i
n%20PDF?preview=24292305

Monday: Timeline stories

Wednesday:
Design exercises

Week 5 Authoring Systems Open Lab with Tutorials

Week 6 --- Project v 1 Presentations

Week 7 Virtual Reality Storytelling
HoH Chapter 4 Immersion
https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Required%20Readings%20i
n%20PDF?preview=24250141

Nonny de la Peña VR Projects (available in DILAC)
Out of Exile: Daniel's Story. 2017 https://emblematicgroup.com/experiences/out-of-
exile/

Hunger in Los Angeles, 2013, documentation video:. immersivejournalism.com
http://www.immersivejournalism.com/hunger-in-los-angeles-machinima-video/.

Derek Ham, I Am a Man (in DILAC)
http://iamamanvr.logicgrip.com/

Recommended Week 7 [to come]

Week 8 Augmented Reality Storytelling
Pickrick Project Materials for site-specific historical non-fiction AR Project – to come)

The site of this project is Haverhill Road near Ferst St, and weather-permitting we will be meeting there on Wed 10 /13 to discuss an on-going DILAC/PenLab project about an historical Civil Rights struggle site which is now on the GT campus.

Week 9 Artificial Intelligence Storytelling

Eliza (1966)

Emulation of original ELIZA program: https://christopherdrum.itch.io/eliza8 **(download for your PC and run it. You will need to press Control-Q when you want to quit)**

Weizenbaum, J. (1966). "Eliza-- A Computer Program for the Study of Natural Language Communication between Man and Machine." *Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery* Volume 9, Number 1 (January 1966): 36-35.(1): 36.

Façade (2005)

Michael Mateas and Andrew Stern, Façade: An Experiment in Building a Fully-Realized Interactive Drama. Game Developers Conference. San Jose CA. (2003)

Playable (maybe) version / videos of gameplay https://www.playablstudios.com/facade
2005 version

Recommended Week 9

Murray, "A Tale of Two Boyfriends," http://penlab.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/09/T2B_Essay.pdf

HoH Ch 7,8

Riedl and Young, "Narrative Planning: Balancing Plot and Character" (2010) https://gatech.instructure.com/courses/246480/files/folder/Recommended%20Readings/Other%20Narrative%20Readings?preview=24251975

Weeks 10-16 Final Project Iterative Design and Production Sequence, no outside texts (see Table Above for more detail)

Additional Recommendations

Storygames

Sam Barlow, *Her Story* (2015) video database game (available in DILAC)

Sam Barlow, *Telling Lies* (2019) video database game (available in DILAC)

Jenova Chen, *Journey* (2012) ThatGameCompany (available in DILAC)

Paolo Pedercini, "Everyday the Same Dream" (2009) (Play on line)

Zoe Quinn, "Depression Quest" (2013)

"Interactive Journalism" Examples (includes some VR)
OpenDocs Project at MIT Media Lab:
http://opendoclab.mit.edu/interactivejournalism/

Texts in PDF on Canvass
Other relevant readings are available on Canvas but not listed here including pdfs
of articles by Brenda Laurel, Mary-Laure Ryan, and David Herman, and also.

Campbell, Joseph (2008). The hero with a thousand faces. (excerpt) Novato, Calif., New World Library. Originally published 1949 (Part I – The Adventure of the Hero) (pdf on Canvas)

Fernández-Vara, C. (2008). "Shaping player experience in adventure games: History of the adventure game interface*." Extending Experiences: Structure, Analysis and Design of Computer Game Player Experience*: 181-190.

Web Resources
http://emshort.wordpress.com/ Commentary on interactive storytelling by an inventive practitioner and very perceptive critic

http://inventingthemedium.com Janet Murray's blog with a section on interactive narrative, including video of Janet's Ted Talk (1998) ; Janet's Future of StoryTelling (FoST 2015) video on Dramatic Agency https://futureofstorytelling.org/video/janet-murray-dramatic-agency/

Janet Murray's Prototyping eNarrative Lab (formerly eTV Lab)
Project videos from PeNLab http://penlab.gatech.edu/projects/
Papers from PeNLab http://penlab.gatech.edu/publication/

[additional important information on following 5 pages]

Course Prerequisites
- Familiarity with or ability to quickly master Twine 2.0 or a similar rapid prototyping environment of your choice is essential. **If you cannot meet this requirement, you should not take this course.**
- Knowledge of CSS and JavaScript will be helpful

Core Area/Attributes
- Humanities/Fine Arts/Ethics

Course Description
The larger objective of this course is to contribute to the expansion of human expressive powers by creating and critiquing artifacts that exploit the affordances of the emerging digital medium for the purposes of the ancient human practice of storytelling. The course will blend theory and practice, analyzing artifacts and identifying emerging structures and conventions of digital narrative design, particularly those that allow us to capture human experience with greater complexity.

Multiple preliminary interactive digital narrative projects will form a process of iterative design leading to the final complete and functional interactive digital narrative project. The final project will be documented in a slide talk in the final weeks and in a required project video.

Multi-year Sharing of Assignment Responses
The collaborative nature of the course requires students to hand in all assignments to a shared webpage. It is assumed that you are giving permission to use your assignment responses with attribution to you in future iterations of the course as exemplary samples, just as this course uses selective works of previous students. If you do not want to participate in this multi-year sharing, you can opt out by sending an explicit email to the instructor refusing permission.

Programmatic Learning Outcomes
- Students can create digital artifacts with an awareness of media traditions, audience, and context.
- Students can appreciate and evaluate future trends in the development of digital media

Attendance Policy for this Course
Please let me know if you have any trouble attending in-person classes or participating in the online components of the course. This course fuses theory and practice, and much of the learning takes place by showing your work and receiving critiques, critiquing the work of others, and collaborating in real time on group exercises. If you have health vulnerabilities, bandwidth limitations, or any other barriers to participation , please let me know as soon as possible.

This semester it is particularly important that you never come to class in person if you have any flu-like symptoms. Please send me an email to let me know you will be

out, and notify your teammates as necessary. All health-related absences will be excused, and arrangements will be made for virtual attendance if requested..

What to do if you fall behind
Everybody drops the ball sometimes, and students often find themselves unable to keep up due to an illness or family emergency. If this happens to you, please contact me about it as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements for work that has been missed, and continue coming to class even if you have not handed in the assignment for the week.

Honor code statement
The members of the Georgia Tech community believe the fundamental objective of the Institute is to provide the Students with a high quality education while developing in them a sense of ethics and social responsibility. We believe that trust is an integral part of the learning process and that self-discipline is necessary in this pursuit. We also believe that any instance of dishonesty hurts the entire community. It is with this in mind that we have set forth a Student Academic Honor Code at Georgia Tech. You can find the Georgia Tech Honor Code at this address:
http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9

Some Special Applications of the Honor Code to Work in this Course
Students may use computer code, story elements, and images produced by others as part of their work in fulfillment of assignments for this course, if (a) they clearly identify and credit the source of any work not original to them and (b) they point to a substantial part of the assignment that is their own original creation and is equivalent in creativity and effort to the work of others who have not included borrowed elements.

In collaborative projects, students should clearly identify who is responsible for each element of the design and implementation. Credits should be assigned by mutual agreement and any dispute about crediting should be brought to the attention of the instructors as soon as possible in the process. Any collaborations beyond group work explicitly assigned in class must be approved by the instructor in advance.

Recordings of Class Sessions and Required Permissions:

Classes may not be recorded by students without the express consent of the instructor unless it is pursuant to an accommodation granted by the Office of Disability services. Class recordings, lectures, presentations, and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole purpose of educating the students currently enrolled in the course.

Students may not record or share the materials or recordings, including screen capturing or automated bots, unless the instructor gives permission. Digitally proctored exams may require students to engage the video camera, but those recordings will not be shared with or disclosed to others without consent unless legally permitted.

- For classes where participation is voluntary, students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded.
- For classes requiring class participation, if students are identifiable by their names, facial images, voices, and/ or comments, written consent must be obtained before sharing the recording with persons outside of currently enrolled students in the class.

Communications Center

The Communication Center is located in Clough Commons 447. Trained professional and peer tutors help undergraduate and graduate students with written and oral presentations. Take advantage of this resource in preparing your assignments. They are available for online consultations:
http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu/make-appointment

Adapts Disability Services Program

Students with disabilities at Georgia Institute of Technology will find programs designated to coordinate academic accommodations and promote access to all phases of university life. Such programming is coordinated through the ADAPTS-Disability Services.

The ADAPTS-Disability Services Program is a functional part of the Office of the Dean of Students. ADAPTS-Disability Services Program personnel oversee and coordinate programs to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities on an individual basis. The Georgia Institute of Technology strives to provide equal access to a college education as well as support to students with disabilities in their experience in the university community. During the COVID emergency they should be able to provide services via teleconference: https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/ 404-894-2563 (V) 404-894-1664 (TDD)

Coping with our High-Stress Culture

The known stresses of academic life can intensify other sources of personal or societal anxiety, and we all get overwhelmed at times. In Fall 2021 we are all under significant added stress from the uncertain course of the pandemic and the contentious political atmosphere surrounding university health policies. Even though our workload may be high, it is important to take time to look after ourselves and one another. The beginning of the semester is a good time to think about pacing your work so you don't have to pull all-nighters and you don't get into a cycle of lack of sleep, loss of perspective, and accelerating anxiety. Try to set aside some regular time to escape to something you enjoy for its own sake. Many people find yoga and meditation helpful to getting perspective on life. Others find relaxation in daily exercise routines or regular craft practices. I am personally a firm believer in the healing power of narrative which can simultaneously distance us from our everyday world and reveal to us what we most

deeply love, hate, and long for. So remember to make time to do the things that can refresh your spirit.

If you are experiencing anxiety or depression or a medical, personal, or family crisis, or if you just feel overwhelmed and unable to cope with the many pressures of being a student at Tech or a human being on this planet at this moment in time, please do not hesitate to reach out for help. Everybody needs help sometimes, and college and graduate school years are often a personally challenging time in ways that can feel frightening and isolating. You are not alone, and many of us – including me -- are available to be sympathetic listeners and to share our own strategies for coping with stressful situations. In addition, professional counselors and medical practitioners have expertise that can be very helpful. The Dean of Students Office has a list of services here: http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/services.

Dean of Students Office, CARE Center, Counseling Center, Stamps Health Services, and the Student Center:

The **CARE Center** and the **Counseling Center**, Stamps Health Services, and the Dean of Students Office will offer both in-person and virtual appointments. Student Center services and operations are available on the **Student Center** website. For more information on these and other student services, contact the Dean of Students or the **Division of Student Life**.

Information Related to Covid-19:

- Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Institute guidelines, information, and updates related to Covid-19. Find campus operational updates, Frequently Asked Questions, and details on campus surveillance testing and vaccine appointments on the **Tech Moving Forward site.**

- From President Cabrera's message of 8/2/21

> **If there is one thing each one of us can do to protect ourselves and keep others safe, it is to get vaccinated.** If you have questions or concerns about vaccination, it's critical that you discuss them with your healthcare provider or any member of our Stamps Health Services team led by Dr. Ben Holton. I ask that you reach out to them, get any information you may need, and get vaccinated if you haven't already. Getting vaccinated at Georgia Tech is easy and free.
>
> To lower the risk for you and others, you are encouraged **wear a mask in indoor public places**, **including campus buildings, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).** If you are unvaccinated and are exposed to someone with Covid-19, you will be subject to quarantine per current Georgia Department of Public Health guidelines.
>
> **The CDC recently issued new interim guidance recommending the use of masks inside public buildings even by fully vaccinated individuals as a precaution given the broad circulation of the highly contagious delta variant of the virus. At Georgia Tech, everyone is encouraged to wear a mask or face covering while inside campus facilities.**
>
> The free asymptomatic surveillance testing program, which has been so instrumental in our ability to contain the virus on campus this past year, remains available to all students and employees. You may participate in regular testing even if you have been fully vaccinated, but I especially encourage those who have not been vaccinated to **get tested weekly**. We regularly update campus testing sites and hours. If you have Covid-19 symptoms, please book a test for symptomatic students.