CTWR-410L
Character Design and Storytelling for Games
AKA Narrative Design Workshop
Units: 4.0
Spring 2024

Lecture Section Thursday 7 pm-8:50 pm
Location: SCI 108

Spring 2024 Lab Sections
Various Locations and Times

Lead Instructor: Danny Bilson
Office: SCI 201S
Office Hours: Office hours (by appointment only):
Contact Info: bilson@usc.edu

Lab Instructors:
Office Hours: Scheduled on Zoom

Collin Kelly
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Ross Berger
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Course Description
An overview of narrative fundamentals for playful experiences and interactive media. A class that covers the core lessons of designing narratives that are meant to be played and interacted with, building out core lessons of storytelling from cinema and other mediums. Featuring guest speakers in the evening lecture section and hands-on writing in smaller weekly lab sessions.

Learning Objectives
Students will learn how to formulate characters, goals, conflicts, and fundamental story structures for interactive and immersive narratives, as they develop an original game IP (intellectual property).

Prerequisite(s): None.
Co-Requisite(s): None.
Concurrent Enrollment: None.
Recommended Preparation: Experience as a user of interactive media and games.

Course Notes
Letter Grade.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required
Screenwriting software, Google Slides, and Google Docs are all available at no cost.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
None.

Description and Assessment of Assignments
Throughout the semester, students will create an original game IP, writing characters and creating situations that build to a core narrative design for a videogame, interactive media piece, or immersive attraction, with an eye towards that project's mechanics and audience, supported by strong fundamental storytelling. Each assignment will get feedback and revisions and development will be ongoing.

> **Concept Pitch** - A high-level concept for a game or attraction
> **Game Review** - Each student will present a review of a game narrative once over the course of the semester.
> **One Page Outline** - A one-page overview of the project's narrative including character, conflict, and act beats.
> **Three Page Treatment** - Three pages, one covering each act of the story, with more in depth narrative beats, characters and conflicts.
> **First-Draft Narrative Design Deck** - A full presentation of your narrative design, overviewing central conflict, characters and core mechanics.
> **Opening and Closing Script** -A scripted opening and ending for your project, including dialogue and setting.
> **Final Presentation** - Present your original project to the group for peer review.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (Assignments)	% of Grade
Participation	15
Concept Pitch	5
Game Review	10
One Page Outline	10
Three Page Treatment	10
First-Draft Narrative Design Deck	15
Opening and Closing Scripts	10
Final Narrative Design Deck Presentation	25
TOTAL	100

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A   95-100
A-   90-94
B+   87-89
B   83-86
B-   80-82
C+   77-79
C   73-76
C-   70-72
D+   67-69
D   63-66
D-   60-62
F   59 and below

Assignment Submission Policy
Assignments should be handed in via Google Drive by **midnight the day before lab class**.

Grading Timeline
Feedback will be shared within two weeks of a hand in.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Please note that Lab Deliverables and Activities shown here are for the Thursday labs.
Labs taking place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays have an adjusted schedule.

	Date	Lecture Session Topic	Instructor	Lab Deliverables and Activities
Week 1	1/11/24	Intro to Narrative Design for Games and Concept Pitch Assignment	**Bilson**	Introductions. Course overview. Intro to Final Project. Inform the class of concept pitches (officially assigned in Thursday's lecture).
Week 2	1/18/24	Story Structure for Game Designers	**Lemarchand**	Intro to Final Project. Go over the Game Review slide deck and assign presentation dates. Concept Pitches, round 1 (all students).
Week 3	1/25/24	Clive Lindop on World Building	**Johnston**	Concept Pitches, round 2 (all students). Game Review 1
Week 4	2/1	Writing Champions for FTP Multiplayer	**Stauffer**	DUE: One Page Outline. IN-CLASS: Play Diplomacy.*
Week 5	2/8/24	From C.O.D. to Clone Wars.	**Friedman**	DUE: Diplomacy Reports, comments on One-page Outlines. Game Review 2. One-page Outline reviews, part 1.
Week 6	2/22/24	Story Analysis- Breaking Bad.	**Beleteche**	Game Review 3. One-page Outline reviews, part 2. Assign fiction to mechanics exercise.
Week 7	2/29/24	Weird game storytelling: ARGs, Character in Embedded storytelling, Emergent Storytelling, Jigsaw writing,	**Dille**	DUE: Team presentations of fiction to mechanics exercise. Game Review 4. Go over 3-page treatment expectations. "Game openings" demos.
Week 8	3/7	Writing in Screenplay Format plus Critical Thinking as a Writer	**Wheeler**	DUE: 3-page Treatment. Game Reviews 5 & 6. Instruct class on proper screenplay format (including game-writing notations).
Week 9	3/21	Writing for Sequences, Storyboards, and Comics Writing for Open Worlds	**Kelly**	DUE: Comments on 3-page Treatments. Game Review 7. 3-page Treatment review, part 1. Official assigning of Narrative Design Deck (first draft due on Week 12)
Week 10	3/28	Writing for open worlds	**Cantamessa**	Game Review 8. 3-page Treatment review, part 2. Assign mechanics to fiction exercise.

Week 11	4/4	Playing with Emotions	**Straley**	DUE: Team presentations of mechanics to fiction exercise. DUE: First-Draft Narrative Design Deck. Game Review 9. First-Draft Narrative Design Deck presentations, part 1.
Week 12	4/11	Character Design and Conflict	**Krawczyk**	DUE: Opening and Closing Scripts. Game Review 10. First-Draft Narrative Design Deck presentations, part 2.
Week 13	4/18	Dramatic Storytelling and Narrative Design	**Berger**	DUE: Comments on scripts, part 1. Review of Opening and Closing Scripts, part 1.
Week 14	4/25	Feedback and review	**Bilson**	DUE: Comments on scripts, part 2. Review of Opening and Closing Scripts, part 2.
FINAL	5/2	No lecture this week—it's finals week!	**N/A**	DUE: Final Narrative Design Deck Presentations.

***Three hour session, starts one hour earlier than usual, or by negotiation with the lab instructor.*

LECTURE SYLLABUS

WEEK 1

***Introduction to Narrative Design for Games* — Danny Bilson**
An overview on the nature of narrative design and how it is similar and different from traditional storytelling.

WEEK 2-15

***Story Structure for Game Designers* — Richard Lemarchand**
Richard Lemarchand outlines the basic elements and types of story structure, and shows how they can effectively be applied to the creation of game narratives. This session will build on the Week 1 lecture to give you an expanded understanding of the tools in your storytellers toolkit, including thoughts about character, emotion, the Hero's Journey, and other language fundamental to our class.

***Story Analysis:* Breaking Bad — Irving Belateche** (3 hour session)
This seminar will focus on the essential storytelling elements found in all powerful and engaging stories. These storytelling elements are universal and transcend culture, place, and time. The attendees will learn what these elements are, and how to recognize them in scripts and films, and other kinds of stories. Professor Belateche will use the pilot of *Breaking Bad* to examine how these elements work, how they engage an audience in a story, and how they make a story more emotional. Attendees will learn how to transform their stories into works that engage and resonate emotionally with an audience.

> ***Please note that no photography, video recording, or audio recording is allowed in Professor Belateche's sessions, and the use of computers in the sessions is also not permitted. Students are required to take notes by hand.***

***From* Clone Wars *to* C.O.D. *and Beyond: Case Studies* — Brent Friedman**
Primarily drawing on his experiences on two *Call of Duty* titles, Brent will discuss several emergent techniques for incorporating narrative into traditional PvP multiplayer as well as more open world settings such as *Call of Duty: Warzone*. He will lay out his process for rigorous world-building, which ensures that the playable environment for a game, regardless of type or genre, is designed to be "alive" with a deep past/history. He will also demonstrate, using specific examples from several games he has worked on (including *CoD*, *Halo* and *Resident Evil*), how such a dynamic environment can support any type of narrative whether it is a traditional three act structure with a linear, critical path, or a more open-ended emergent story experience with an outcome/ending based entirely on the player's choices.

***The Setup: Three-Act Structure and Story* — Don Bohlinger**

The first 40 pages are the most important pages in the screenplay. The Set-Up is where the screenwriter must establish all of the story and character elements that will be developed and complicated in the Second Act and resolved in the Third Act. It is essential for a writer to understand the importance of establishing essential storytelling elements in the first 40 pages. Areas such as characters, relationships, plot, theme, world, rules, wants and needs, as well as the tone and genre are all established in the Set-Up. The Second and Third Acts are all dependent on the Set-Up. A weak Set-Up will yield a weak story.

Attention, Not Immersion: Making Your Games Better with Psychology and Playtesting, the Uncharted Way

Richard Lemarchand

We use the words "immersive" and "engaging" all the time when we're discussing the things that are most important about great video game experiences, but do we really understand what these words mean? Richard Lemarchand, former lead game designer at Naughty Dog, will explain how videogames work to get and hold our attention. Attention—the process of selectively concentrating on one perception or thought, while ignoring other things—is one of the most widely discussed concepts in the whole of psychology, but it is rarely, if ever, mentioned by game designers. By using practical examples from the design and playtesting of the Uncharted games, Richard will describe how you can use metrics data and other methods to understand the focus of your players' attention, without breaking the bank on elaborate equipment.

Open World Narrative Design **— Christian Cantamessa**

Christian Cantamessa will share his experiences in designing *Red Dead: Redemption* as well as, *Middle Earth: Shadow of Mordor* and *Shadow of War*. He will emphasize the challenges and benefits of open world design, and will present a framework for the creation of an underlying philosophy for successful open world narrative game design, drawing on the concepts of the player's competence, relatedness and autonomy. By examining these psychological concepts, Christian will demonstrate how character-driven stories that draw on the player's ability to direct their own actions can create a rich story world or "narrative space" for the player to explore.

Narrative Usability: Methods Explainer **— Deborah Henderson**

Deborah Henderson is a Principal User Researcher at Microsoft Xbox. She has a PhD from Stanford in Cognitive Psychology, and has been a user researcher for more than a dozen years at Xbox, working on a huge variety of titles and partnering with a large number of studios. She is currently aligned against the first party Publishing arm of Xbox, and either directly working on, or overseeing the UR work for many titles, most of which are unannounced. I'm here to talk about Narrative Usability, a method she developed when she first came to Xbox. In her talk, she describes the usability techniques used for …

***Interactive Pacing from the Museum Flashback Level in* The Last of Us Part II — Evan Hill**
Making "skippable" content can often feel like a waste but when it's done with care it can let a player perfectly tune an experience for themselves. In this lecture, Evan Hill showcases the pacing techniques used in the "Museum Flashback" level in The Last of Us Part II. Specifically, it covers how to structure an experience to be understandable and rewarding for any type of player, whether they want to rush to the next reveal or linger on every word and how the techniques used in *The Last of Us Part II* could be applied to any budget or genre.

***Writing for Sequences, Storyboards and Comics* — Collin Kelly**
Narrative design for storyboards, animatics and comics requires its own skills in how written words are translated and combined with images.

***Writing Champions for FTP Multiplayer* — Drew Stauffer**
Explores the challenges of writing for free-to-play multiplayer arena-based games. Includes an in-depth discussion of history and development of *Apex Legends*. We will also cover *League of Legends* and how it is extending its IP.

Drew Stauffer is a Principal Marketing Creative Director at Riot Games. He was an 18-year Electronic Arts veteran, where among other roles he was a Video Marketing Director for the *Apex Legends* and *Medal of Honor* franchises, and a video content director/creator for *Battlefield, Titanfall, Mirror's Edge, Command and Conquer* and *Need for Speed*. He was a director on *Medal of Honor*, and directed a music video for Linkin Park that earned half a billion views.

***Playing with Emotions: How I Came to Think About Story and Game Design* — Bruce Straley**
An examination in the use of emotions and game mechanics in the world of *The Last of Us.* hosted by its game director. In this presentation Bruce Straley will share his thoughts on how he uses game design to elicit emotions from the player, and how he thinks about story while designing a game. He'll dive into his personal experience with stories in videogames, his most influential playable story experiences and the takeaways from them, storytelling devices he uses when designing core mechanics, and some general "good practice" design principles.

***Character Design and Conflict* — Marianne Krawczyk**
A discussion of character design for games with Marianne Krawczyk, the writer of the original *God of War* (2005) and the co-writer of the *God of War* series from 2007 to 2013. Marianne has a host of other videogame credits, including *Skylanders: Spyro's Adventure* (2011) and as a story and dialogue editor for *Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands* (2010). This session will also include a discussion of tools and the importance of conflict.

Alumni Panel -
Former students describe their post-USC Games work.

sDramatic Storytelling and Narrative Design — Ross Berger
Professor Berger will provide the class with ten pieces of industry advice from his books *Dramatic Storytelling and Narrative Design* and *Storytelling for New Technologies and Platforms*. He will also present the class with real world scenarios, where students will address content challenges for various interactive products (not just games) under the confines of product testing data and limited budgets.

Writing in Screenplay Format plus Critical Thinking as a Writer - David Wheeler
Action, Dialogue, Character, Parenthetical…the ELEMENTS of writing a screenplay. The challenges of writing in the present tense and more…
Critical Thinking has been in the vernacular for a while now, especially in Academia…But what is it really? And why is Critical Thinking so critically important to a Writer?

Writing for Alternate Reality Games, Geo Games, and Jigsaw puzzle writing- Flint Dille.
For the last few years, I've been doing wildly different kinds of narrative for Games. An ARG for Ingress at Niantic, Diablo III, where we had such a muddled lore that we created the 'unreliable world' and 'Emergent Storytelling', 'Embedded storytelling', and various other experimental projects. Trained in this same film school and having written almost every common game format known to man, we'll look at new storytelling paradigms.

Designing Open Worlds - Clive Lindop
Clive Lindop has been in games since the late 90s, first in the UK and currently in the US since 2016. Some of his most notable roles and titles include Lead Games Designer at Creative Assembly (on Alien: Isolation where he was on the team which developed the Xenomorph AI), and Creative Leader of Story Strategy & Development at Riot (where he was involved with the development of Arcane). Clive always seeks out opportunities to push and prioritize narrative in games, no matter what side of the project he may be involved in (whether it's as an Art Director, AI Designer, or Lead Designer).

Weird game storytelling: ARGs, Character in Embedded storytelling, Emergent Storytelling, Jigsaw writing,

LAB SESSION SYLLABUS

(The schedule below applies for lab classes which meet on Thursdays and Fridays. Tuesday/Wednesday lab classes will have different lab activities and due dates, as shown in the Lab Session Guides at the links below.)

Lab Session Guide including assignment details:
- Tuesday Lab Session Guide
- Wednesday Lab Session Guide
- Thursday/Friday Lab Session Guide

WEEK 1

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<u>**Tuesday Lab Session Guide**</u>

The core assignments are the same across all lab sections, and are designed to create discussion with and feedback from both the lab professor and students.

All assignments should be handed in via Google Drive by midnight the day before lab class.
Place your assignments in the folder "CTWR 410 - 2023 Fall - Student Work" at the link immediately below, inside of the folders "Assignment Name/Lab Professor Name."
Make sure to put your name in both the file name and the body of the assignment!
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Rc25xCaOogGlI_Hc4cjrqkV1GYDAP8ht?usp=drive_link

<u>**WEEK 1**</u>

In-class activities:

- Introductions: Who we are and why we are here. What do the students hope to learn? What are their favorite games? Where are they from, their majors, etc.
- Lab professor: Course overview – objectives, assignments, grading, etc.
- Lab professor: Introducing the Final Project
  - Over the course of the semester, students will create a narrative game design for an original game IP, building the game you want to play the most.
  - You will start with a high concept pitch, and evolve the design over the course of four more assignments:
    - One Page Outline
    - Three Page Treatment
    - First Draft Narrative Design Deck
    - Opening and Closing Scripts
  - Ultimately, you will create a Final Student Original Game IP presentation, to be presented in our final exam session, Thursday 7 December 2023 7pm-9pm (Los Angeles Time) This time is assigned by the university, it cannot be changed! Do not make travel plans that conflict. Synchronous attendance is required.).
  - **Example Final Student Original Game IP presentations can be found here:**
    - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OT3QHEH48P2bXUDhb4yWRLImB2ICmJYZ?usp=sharing

- Introductions: who we are and why we are here.
- Course overview – objectives, assignments, grading, etc.
- Introducing the Final Project
  - This semester we will work through a series of assignments to design the game you want to play the most.
- How can good writing advance the interactive experience?

- Fiction before mechanics or vice versa?
- Warm-up games and exercises.

WEEK 2

- What is a Student Game Fiction Review? Assign one student per week.
  - The X and the Y.
- Student Concept Pitches. One to three minutes each. Every student pitch is reviewed in this class.

WEEK 3

- Discussion: Classic characters in games, films, television & literature. What is a character in-game space? What is motivation in gamespace? Backstory? How do these impact the creation of game characters?
- Student Game Fiction Review 1
- Revised Student Concept Pitches. One to three minutes each. Every student pitch is reviewed in this class.

WEEK 4 (3 hours)

- *Diplomacy* play session. An emergent fiction gameplay experience.
- Student Original Game IP One Page Outline due.

WEEK 5
- Student Game Fiction Review 2
- *Diplomacy* Reports - student "journalists" report on their *Diplomacy* stories.
- Instructor and students give notes on the one-page outline assignment (part one).

WEEK 6
- Student Game Fiction Review 3
- Instructor and students give notes on the one-page outline assignment (part two).
- Discussion: How great game fiction inspires great game mechanics.
- Assignment issued: Fiction to Mechanics - teams of two are given existing IP to develop an original game concept.

WEEK 7
- Student Game Fiction Review 4
- Team Presentations: Fiction to Mechanics
- What is a "treatment"?

WEEK 8
- Fall Recess - No Thursday/Friday classes

WEEK 9
- Student Game Fiction Reviews 5 & 6
- Game opening demos - Using media, the instructor demos examples of great game or immersive narrative openings.
- Introduction to screenplay format: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hqvbKZPn68&list=PPSV
- Student Original Game IP Three Page Treatment due.

WEEK 10
- Student Game Fiction Review 7
- Review and note three-page treatments (part one)

WEEK 11
- Student Game Fiction Review 8
- Review and note three-page Treatments (part two)
- Assignment issued: Mechanics to Fiction - teams of two students are assigned to develop original IP based on an in-class exercise.

WEEK 12
- Student Game Fiction Review 9
- Review Mechanics to Fiction presentations
- First-pass Narrative Design Deck presentations (part one)

WEEK 13
- Student Game Fiction Reviews 10
- First-pass Narrative Design Deck presentations (part two)
- Student Original Game IP Opening and Closing Scripts due. 5-10 script pages.

WEEK 14
- This is Flints week to speak on Thursday.

WEEK 15
- Review of Opening and Closing Scripts

FINAL

Thursday 7 December 2023
7pm-9pm (Los Angeles Time)
This time is assigned by the university, it cannot be changed!
Do not make travel plans that conflict.
Synchronous attendance is required.

- Final Narrative Design Deck for Student Original Game IP due
- In-Class Presentations of Final Narrative Design Decks

Additional Policies

Missing an Assignment Deadline, Incompletes
The only acceptable excuses for missing an assignment deadline or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the instructor **before the assignment due date** and present verifiable evidence in order for a deadline extension to be granted. Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor or student assistant before final grades are due.

For assignments turned in after the assignment deadline without prior permission from the instructor, a penalty will be imposed equal to 10% of the total available points for the assignment, for each day or part of a day that the assignment is late, up to a maximum of seven days.

Attendance Policy
Punctual attendance at all classes is mandatory. Students arriving more than five minutes late to three classes, more than ten minutes late to a single class, or leaving early, will be marked as having an absence from class, unless prior permission has been obtained from the instructor. The following guidelines are from the Interactive Media & Games Division handbook regarding absences and grading and apply to all students.

Guidelines for absences affecting grading
- Two absences: lowers grade one full grade point (for example, from A to B)
- Three absences: lowers grade two full grade points
- Four or more absences: request to withdraw from course (instructor's discretion)

Additionally, we may ask you to withdraw if your total absences become excessive.

However, these guidelines may be altered in respect of absences that are for illness, family emergencies, and (with advance notice) commitments related to a scholarship you are receiving, e.g. for a varsity sport or commitments related to your professional practice, such as to attend a festival where you are showing a game or a conference where you are speaking. You must contact us as soon as possible regarding your absence. Generally, we will expect to hear from you before class; in exigent circumstances I would expect to hear from you within 24 hours. If we do not hear from you in a timely fashion you may forfeit your option to make up what you have missed.

All that said:

1. **If you are sick, stay home.** You need to be healthy to learn, and so do your classmates (and instructor).
2. We do not distinguish between mental health and physical health. If you cannot complete an assignment on time or come to class because of mental health issues,

you must contact us promptly, just as with physical health problems. See the Support Systems section below for additional information.

Social Media Use in Class
Social media use, including text messaging, Internet messaging and email, is not permitted in class unless explicitly permitted by the instructor. A 0.5% grade reduction will result from each occurrence of a student being found using social media in class.

Video and Audio Recording in Class
Video and audio recording during class meetings is not permitted, except by prior arrangement with the instructor and the class members.

Content Warnings
If you include content in the work that you produce which may cause distress to your fellow students, please tell me (the instructor) before showing the work in class and make a verbal "content warning" immediately before you present the work in class. Also include a written content warning, either at the beginning of a piece of written work or in the dev blog of a project, when you submit the work for grading.

This is not intended to limit the subject matter that you address with your work: it is intended to expand it. This simple approach is intended to create an environment in which you are free to address any subject matter that you wish, no matter how challenging, explicit or controversial, in a spirit of respect and consideration for your classmates and instructor.

Students who ever feel the need to step outside class during the presentation or discussion of work that warrants a content warning may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see us individually.

The next paragraph contains potentially triggering topics—please feel free to skip ahead.

Content which requires a content warning includes graphic depictions or descriptions of violence, sexual acts, racial, sexual or cultural stereotyping, abuse (especially sexual abuse or torture), self-harming behavior such as suicide, self-inflicted injuries or disordered eating, eating-disordered behavior or body shaming, and depictions, especially lengthy or psychologically realistic ones, of the mental state of someone suffering abuse or engaging in self-harming behavior.

If you have any questions about what requires a content warning, relating to story, game mechanics, and interaction patterns, please let me (the class instructor) know.

If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to material presented in class, either with the class or with us afterwards, we welcome such discussion as an appropriate part of our coursework.

Inclusivity and Diversity
In this class, we make a commitment together to foster a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. This means that you will be expected to offer content warnings when appropriate, use students' preferred pronouns, and respect self-identifications. While debate and discussion are welcome, please remain aware of the implications of your words and the images that you include in your work. If the instructor or another student points out that something you have said or shared with the group might be offensive, avoid being defensive; this is a valuable opportunity for us to grow and learn together. If you have a concern about any aspect of the class, you are encouraged to speak with the instructor. If you feel uncomfortable speaking with the instructor, you are encouraged to speak with either the undergraduate or graduate advisor for your program.

In making games and interactive media in a professional and ethical way, it is important that you consider diversity. When looking at your projects, you should consider who is depicted and how this work will impact others. What kinds of individuals and communities are represented in your work? What point of view does your work express? This class may assist you in learning how to make work that includes diverse viewpoints, and may discuss racial, religious, gender and sexual orientation issues in the context of games and interactive media.

Guidelines for Group Critique
Giving and receiving constructive feedback is a key element of critique. Follow these guidelines:

1. Pair your critiques with compliments. Before pointing out something that you think could be improved, point out something that you like or something that you think has exciting potential.

2. Consider suggesting possible solutions. It can be discouraging to simply hear what somebody thinks is "wrong." Offering ideas for changes or additions that you think might improve your classmates' work can emotionally and intellectually inspire them.

3. Speak from the "I." Rather than stating your critique as fact or your suggestions as imperatives, start your sentences with phrases like "I think…" or "I feel…" or "If this were my game, I would…" Many people use the technique popularized by design firm IDEO, and make a statement in the form of "I like… I wish… what if..?"

4. Listen carefully and calmly. Avoid the urge to defend your work, unless you feel like that defense adds something important to the conversation. Thank your colleague for their feedback.

If you have a question…

1. First, check the class website and the syllabus. Most questions about logistics, assignments, and expectations can be found already listed there.

2. If the information you are looking for is not on the syllabus, contact the course Student Assistant.

3. If the Student Assistant is unable to answer your question, or your question is of a sensitive nature and you would feel more comfortable speaking with the instructor, you can email the instructor at the address listed above. You can usually expect a response within twenty-four hours during the standard work week.

4. Schedule an appointment during office hours. Office hours are a wonderful opportunity to speak with an instructor one-on-one. Note the office hours listed at the top of the syllabus and email the instructor at least twenty-four hours in advance to schedule an appointment.

Fair Use

Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. The Interactive Media & Games Division of USC's School of the Cinematic Arts seeks to apply a reasonable working definition of fair use that will enable students and instructors to develop multimedia projects without seeking authorization for non-commercial, educational uses. In keeping with section 107 of the Copyright Act we recognize four factors that should be considered when determining whether a use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. In general, we regard the reproduction of copyrighted works for the purposes of analysis or critique in this class to be covered by the principle of fair use.

Citation Guidelines
Where appropriate, all projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. The style we use is APA 7th edition and you may refer to these guidelines. (Other styles may be used, by arrangement with the instructor.)

Note for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to us as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am - 5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Disruptive Behavior
Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

Learning Experience Evaluations
Learning Experience Evaluations will be conducted on Thursday, 30 November, 2023. This will be your opportunity to provide feedback about your learning experience in the class. This feedback helps the instructor determine whether students are having the intended learning experiences for the class. It is important to remember that the learning process is collaborative and requires significant effort from the instructor, individual students, and the class as a whole. Students should provide a thoughtful assessment of their experience, as well as of their own effort, with comments focused on specific aspects of instruction or the course. Comments on personal characteristics of the instructor are not appropriate and will not be considered. For this feedback to be as comprehensive as possible, all students should complete the evaluation.

Syllabus Updates:
This syllabus is liable to change up to the beginning of class and possibly over the semester. Please check the posted syllabus regularly and note all changes that are shared by the instructor in class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Student Acessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
osas.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)
ombuds.usc.edu
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE IN THE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX