COURSE CONTENT

Course Code	DT3014
Course Title	Game Design II
Pre-requisites	DT2020 Game Design I
No of AUs	3
Contact Hours	39 hours studio contact

Course Aims

In this course you will expand beyond the foundations of game design to focus on game mechanics. You will explore how game mechanics provides a structure and purpose for a player's participation in a game. You will then apply mechanics theory and principles to create a game that is developed around a distinct game mechanic. The learning in this course contributes directly to further independent study in game design.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe how principles of game mechanics contribute to the design and experience of games.
2. Demonstrate the use of game mechanics to propose a game structure.
3. Design and play-test a game that utilises a central mechanic.
4. Present and evaluate the effectiveness of specific game mechanics.
5. Constructively discuss and critique principles of game design, strategies and mechanics employed by peers.

Course Content

Games and Mecahnics

In this course you will expand upon learning from previous courses in game design. This course focuses mainly on game mechanics – the technical and game-play rules that govern the structure and experience of a game. Game mechanics will be considered in the broadest sense, and so will include technical aspects of game engine structures, including code structures and environment mechanics such as physics and world design. You will also examine the mechanics of game play, and how designed rules can determine many aspects of how the game is played and experienced.

Testing and prototyping

As with all aspects of game design, prototyping and testing, and design iteration are key processes. Games never work out as expected in the first iteration, and so you will design and enact a testing program, where results from tests are objectively collected, analysed, and including to improve the game.

Teamwork

Most class activities will be in teams, although you have the choice to create your final project individually. Teamwork is a generally successful approach for game creation. You will be provided with team management processes and techniques to ensure good team relationships.

Assignments

This course has two assessable assignments.

Assignment 1: Principles of Game Mechanics. The first assignment is assessed continuously with three exercises that cover essential aspects of game design and mechanics. 1: Identifying mechanics in a game and modifying these to create a deeper enriched game structure. 2: Analyse, modify and “break” a game to create a more challenging experience. This introduces the idea of “breaking” rules, and how far a rule can be pushed before it breaks the core idea of the game. You will also discuss the boundaries of a game’s imagination, and how a game creates a defined boundary in which the game play stays. 3: Breakdown all gameplay into rules and mechanics. Work with a team to communicate and share those mechanics. These three exercises may take place physically, or with simple software, and form the foundation upon which the second assignment is based.

Assignment 2: Game World Mechanics. The second assignment combines game mechanics with narrative and world-building. You will explore how these two principles interact, and together form a rewarding immersive experience. Game narrative is a unique form of both linear and non-linear narrative, and a range of forms and narrative mechanics will be discussed. Using appropriate software, you will design and build a simple narrative-based game that implements clear mechanics to provide a reachable goal for the player. Constraints and limitations will be applied to ensure that this assignment is achievable.