**Syllabus LMC 4720  Interactive Narrative / LMC 6317 Interactive Fiction**
**FALL 2016**
**T/Th 1:30 -3:00 PM**
**Skiles 002**

Professor Janet H. Murray
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Office Hours Monday 4-6 PM TSRB 320A

Game Resources are available online and in the Game Archeology Lab (GAL), TSRB Room 113
VR Headsets and resources are in the new Digital Integrated Liberal Arts Center (DILAC) Skiles 318
Official web site for the course is on http://tsquare.gatech.edu
Refer to the tsquare site for revisions to  this syllabus and for the most complete assignment details.
**Course Prerequisites (4720)**
- ENGL 1102
- LMC 2100 or LMC 2700 or LMC 2800
- CS 1322 or CS 1331

For LMC 4720 ad 6317
- Knowledge of CSS and JavaScript and Unity will be helpful.
- Familiarity with or ability to quickly master Twine 1.x or a similar rapid prototyping environment of your choice is essential. If you cannot meet this requirement you should not take this course until you can.
-  Please note: There is **no TA** for this course this semester so all tech support will be ad hoc through DILAC or through the kindness of your classmates.

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 survey multiple strategies for the representation of narrative in interactive, digital formats. It will present a structured approach for analyzing and creating coherent interactive storytelling systems that require the participation of one or more interactors. The course will be conducted through instructor presentations and active discussions, student oral reports, in-class discussion of students' written analytical and creative assignments, and in-class group workshop projects.  Students will be responsible for multiple prototypes and design documents, and a substantial final project in the form of a digital interactive narrative.

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

**Attendance Policy**
Students are expected to attend every meeting and to actively participate, including attentive and responsive engagement with the reports of other students. **Students will be asked to leave if they engage in any non-class activities during clas**s, such as web surfing, reading email, or texting, and will be expected to immediately leave the room for the duration of that class period. If you are sick, please do not come to class but send the instructor an email indicating why you are absent.

x **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, come and see me about it as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements for work that has been missed, and continue coming to class.

**Sharing of work**

Participation in the course implies permission for sharing work with others in the class and with future students if your work is judged to be a good example. If you are not comfortable with this, please let me know. Unless I am informed by you in writing  (email) that you do not want your work shared with others in the context of current and future versions of this course, I will assume that it is available.

**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.

Georgia Institute of Technology
353 Ferst Drive, Suite 210
Smithgall Student Services Building
Atlanta, GA 30332-0285
404-894-2563 (V)
404-894-1664 (TDD)
404-894-9928 (FAX)

**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) identify 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.

**Requirements and Grading**

This is a workshop course, focused on design insights that can be immediately applied to the creation of interactive narratives. There are 4 short analytical assignments (2 for UGs) requiring responses to games, tv shows, and 4 brief and rapid prototypes for interactive narratives (2 for undergraduates), as well as 1 final project which is a substantial, playable individually created story/game that is also part of a shared Storyworld developed in groups of 5.

- 10% class participation. This is includes active involvement in discussions, testing and responding to other students' prototypes and projects, coherent presentation of assignments when called on in class, constructive participation in group projects, and constructive critical responses to other students' creative and analytical work, as well as participation in the in-class design exercises.
- 20% for 4 Rapid Interactive Prototype assignments  (10% each for UG; 10% each for grads) UGs do any 2 of the 4.
- 20% for  tightly focused analytical posts (brief essays or interpretative diagrams) related to assigned texts (10% each for UGs, 5% for grads) Undergrads do any 2 of the 4 analytical assignments
- 50% Final Project – A complete, individually created story/game that is also part of a larger Story World created collectively by 5 students.
    - o  Group Planning Documents 5%
    - o   Individual Planning Documents 5%;
    - o  Mockup and response to user testing 10%
    - o  Group Oral / slide presentation 5%
    - o  Individual Oral / slide component of final presentation 10 %;
    - o  Working final project 10%;
    - o  Video documentation of a persuasive demonstration run of your individual final project, posted to a web page, illustrating the appropriateness of this approach for this particular story content, the experience of dramatic agency, and the exploitation of replay 5%.
- Bonus Credit: Helpfulness to other students (technical help, artistic contribution, etc.) up to 5% bonus.
- **All work is to be handed in by uploading to your folder in the RESOURCES section of the website and then linking it to the tsquare class wiki page for that week's assignment. Students will hand in final projects by uploading them to folders organized by Storyworld group. All work is due by  noon of the first meeting day of the week they are due and students should be prepared to discuss their work in class.**
- **Late submissions will be penalized by 1 point off class participation for each late assignment.**

**Required Texts**
- Propp, V., *Morphology of the Folktale* 1928, Austin: University of Texas Press. (Intro to Second Edition and Chapter II, on tsquare)
- Jenkins, Henry, "Transmedia Storytelling 101," Confessions of an Aca-Fan, March 22, 2007

**Required Videos One of the Following:**
- "Bowling," *Malcolm in the Middle,* Season 2, Episode 20 (2001) Episode  available streaming from Netflix   ;
- Alternate choice:  "Remedial Chaos Theory" *Community* Season 3 Episode 4 (2011)

**Required Storygames**
- Anna Anthropy, Dys4ria (2012) (Play online)
- Pedercini, Paolo. "Everyday the Same Dream" (2009) (Play on line)

**One of the Following**
- The Fullbright Company, *Gone Home* (2013)*,* PC or Mac game: purchase for download or play in GAL
- Inkle Studios, 80 Days (2014)
- Grad students also view : Vimeo: Meg Jayanth "Unfair Game" (2015) https://vimeo.com/149286981

**One of the Following**

Storyworld TV  and Game Episodes One of the Following:  (Disturbing Content Warning – feel free to fast forward through violent or revoltingly gory scenes and substitutions accepted  with consultation with instructor)

- HBO, *Game of Thrones* (any episode). (alternative *Walking Dead*)
- Tell-Tale Games, *Game of Thrones: Fire from Ice (2014)*. Purchase for download or play in GAL  (Alternate: Tell-Tale Games *Walking Dead Season 1* game – available in EGL)

**Default Authoring Environment for rapid prototypes:** Twine – tutorials available on twinery.org. You are responsible for learning it on your own to level required to fulfill assignments.  See instructor for permission to use alternate platforms,

**Recommended Story-games**
- Leibling, D., et al. (1979). *Zork,* available on line at http://thcnet.net/zork/
- Weizenbaum, Joseph (1966). Eliza, available on line at http://nlp-addiction.com/eliza/
- Barlow, Sam. *Her Story* (2015)
- Pope, Lucas. Papers Please (2013)
- Chen, Jenova, *Journey* (2012)  ThatGameCompany
- Pedercini, Paolo and Jim Munroe. Unmanned (2012) Molleindustria

Recommended VR (more details to follow)
- Clouds over Sidra (and related Ted Talk)
- Nonny de la Pena (Versions talk) and online versions of her projects….
- Easter Rising
- NYTimes  **refugee stories**

**Additional Recommended Texts**
See the folder on tsquare for extensive related recommended readings in pdf form, from many scholars and critics in this field including Brenda Laurel, Mary-Laure Ryan, and David Herman and see the blogs below for pointers to other interactive narratives and critical works:
- Campbell, Joseph (2008). The hero with a thousand faces. (excerpt) Novato, Calif., New World Library. Originally published 1949. (pdf on tsquare) (Part I – The Adventure of the Hero)
- Murray, J.H., *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* 1998, Cambridge MA; London UK: MIT Press.  Chapters 3,4,5 (on tsquare) ; Recommended: ebook edition with updates published 2016.  (Available on reserve in Library with their Kindle.)
- http://emshort.wordpress.com/ Commentary on interactive storytelling by an inventive practitioner and very perceptive critic
- http://nickm.com/if/  Nick Montfort's page of Interactive Fiction resources
- http://inventingthemedium.com  Janet Murray's blog with a section on interactive narrative, including video of  Janet's Ted Talk (1998)  and Janet's Future of StoryTelling (FoST 2015) video on Dramatic Agency – also   Some related FoST 2015  videos: http://futureofstorytelling.org/films/2015-films/

## Schedule and Assignments

| Topics and key critical terms | Assignment details on Wiki |
|---|---|
| **Week 1** INTERACTIVE STORYTELLING in an emerging new medium<br><br>August 23, 25<br>Key Concepts:<br><br>Interactivity, Immersion, Dramatic Agency, Active Creation of Belief, Replay, Multiform vs Multisequential Narratives, Genre, Story World | Due Thurs Noon<br>A webpage identifying a digital story/game that offers the experience of dramatic agency  - SEE WIKI FOR COMPLETE ASSIGNMENT<br><br>Note: This assignment counts toward your class participation grade<br><br>Discussed in class<br><br>Anna Anthropy, Dys4ria (2012)<br><br>Eliza  http://nlp-addiction.com/eliza/<br>*Zork* http://thcnet.net/zork/<br><br>Paolo Pedercini, "Everyday the Same Dream"<br>http://www.molleindustria.org/everydaythesamedream/everydaythesamedream.html<br><br>The default authoring environment for the rapid prototypes is Twine Try it out this week using whichever tutorial environment you find most useful .<br><br>Begin thinking about what story genre you want to focus on for your major project and who you want to form a Story World group with. |
| Week 2<br>August 30, Sept 1<br>Spatial Storytelling<br><br>Key Concepts:<br><br>Space v Place<br>Navigation as dramatic agency<br>Journey episodic narratives<br>Room architecture in interactive narrative design<br>Hiding/Unlocking<br>Spatial segmentation of narrative elements<br>Enclosure/Escape<br>Navigation as Investigation, Secret-Seeking | **Due Tues Week 2 noon** on tsquare:<br><br>Spend at least 2.5 hours playing either *Gone Home* or 80 Days and then explore videos and descriptions of alternative plays online*.*<br><br>Draw a diagram indicating how specific story elements are associated with specific places. Indicate barriers to reaching the places and differences in routes through the space if relevant.<br><br>Undergrads *Gone Home* (2013) The Fullbright Company<br><br>Grad Students: 80 Days (2014) Inkle Studios<br>and also view Meg Jayanth "Unfair Game" (2015) https://vimeo.com/149286981<br>Your chart should indicate how well the game exemplifies the principles she discusses. |
| Week 3<br>Labor Day – no Tuesday class<br>Thursday 9/8<br><br>SPATIAL STORY STRUCTURES<br>**Lab Week/ Spatial Prototype Preparation** | **Thursday 9/8: Attend tutorials on Unity**<br><br>You should have learned Twine on your own by now as well – tutorials on http://twinery.org |
| Week 4<br>Spatial Story Structures<br>Prototype I<br><br>Sept 13, 15 | Prototype I  Due Noon Tues Week 4<br><br>Create a Spatial Story Prototype using Twine or Unity for Virtual Reality with at least 2 locations within a common story scenario and at least 1 clickable object with high story-telling value. |

| Week 5<br>Sept 20, 22<br><br>TEMPORAL STORY STRUCTURES<br>Key Concepts:<br>Time Steps<br>Story Beats<br>Parallelism Markers<br>Time Lines<br>Point of View<br>Epistemological v Ontological Variation<br>Time Travel<br>Simultaneity<br>Replay with substitution of narrative elements | Create a diagram illustrating the time scheme and parallel events of one of the assigned TV episodes.<br><br>"Bowling," *Malcolm in the Middle,* Season 2, Episode 20 (2001)  (available streaming on Netflix)<br><br>Alternate: "Remedial Chaos Theory" from the TV show *Community* Season 3 Episode 4 (2011)<br><br>**Discussed in class:**<br><br>Ramis, H. (1993). *Groundhog Day*. USA, Columbia Pictures. |
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| Week 6<br>Sept 27, 29<br><br>TEMPORAL STORY STRUCTURES<br>**Prototype** | Due Tuesday  Week 6  Noon<br>Create a Temporal Story Prototype using Twine  or Unity |
| Week 7 October 4,<br>October 6  NO Thursday CLASS<br>Genre   Fiction   as   a Substitution System<br>Key Concepts<br>Genre<br>Plot<br>Formulaic  writing<br>Procedural Substitution<br>Episodic Composition<br>Hero's Journey<br>Story Formalisms | Due Tuesday Week 7 at Noon<br>Read the Propp assigned text and create a schematic representation of a similarly formulaic set of stories, such as a a TV sitcom or drama.<br><br>Propp, V., *Morphology of the Folktale* 1928, Austin: University of Texas Press.<br>(Intro to Second Edition and Chapter II, on tsquare) |
| Week 8  Oct 11 – recess no Tuesday class<br>October 13 Thursday<br>Genre-Based System for Recombining Plot Elements PROTOTYPE: | Due THURSDAY  Week 8 at Noon<br>Genre Substitution System Prototype |

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| Week 9 October 18, 20<br><br>Creating Storyworlds<br><br>Key Concepts<br>Backstory<br>Story Arc<br>Character Arc<br><br>Character Roles<br><br>RPG Formalism:<br>Act – Scene –<br>Setup/Resolution -Tilt-<br>Aftermath<br>Relationships<br>Objects (Props)<br>Locations<br>Character Needs | Due Tuesday Week 9 NOON<br> Read Henry Jenkins' essay on Transmedia Storytelling.  Then watch any episode of *The Walking Dead*  or *Game of Thrones* TV show and play any episode of the corresponding Tell-Tale Game for at least 2 hours. Create a diagram that you can use to describe what makes them part of the same storyworld.<br><br>Henry Jenkins, "Transmedia Storytelling 101," Confessions of an Aca-Fan, March 22, 2007<br><br>Telltale Games, *The Walking Dead I Season 1* (2012) or *400 Days* or *Season 2* *(2013)*. Purchase for download or play in  TSRB Game Lab<br>  OR<br>Telltale Games. *Game of Thrones: Fire from Ice* (2014) Purchase for download or play in  TSRB Game Lab<br><br><br>Graduate Students Recommended:<br>Janet Murray, "Transcending Transmedia" from blog Inventing the Medium |
| Week 10 October 25, 27<br><br> CHARACTER PROTOTYPE | DUE TUESDAY WEEK 10 NOON<br>Character Dialog Prototype:<br>NOTE: These characters will be the basis for your self-sorting into groups to create shared story worlds and they should be a first pass at a dramatic event within your individual final project.  If you choose this as one of the prototype assignments you are skipping, write a brief description of such a character and scene instead so that it can serve as a taste of your contribution to the collective story. |
| Week 11  Nov 1, 3<br>Forming STORY<br>WORLD GROUPS for<br>Final Project –group<br>conferences during<br>class time | **By end  of class on Thursday, group will have posted:**<br>**Group Storyworld Documentation**<br><br>Exercises in class to form groups and refine stories for final projects<br>Format for group planning documentation is on the wiki |
| Week 12  Nov 8, 10<br>INDIVIDUAL<br>CONFERENCES | Individual Conferences on Stories – bring your individual storygame  planning documentation which should be posted by Noon on MONDAY Nov 7 and finalized by Thursday Nov 10 3pm<br><br>Sign up on Wiki for individual conferences<br><br>Format for individual story planning documentation is on the wiki. |
| Week 13  Nov 15, 17<br>PLAYABLE MOCKUPS | A playable version of one narrative sequence from your individual final project story/game that affords dramatic agency for playtesting. This will be an excerpt from the final story/game that lets you see how the interactor will engage with it. You will be testing one another's story/games, providing feedback, and recording the results of the test runs of your own story/game. This will also be the opportunity to adjust the correspondences among the group's separate versions of the Story World. WE WILL MEET IN SKILES 346 TUESDAY AND THURSDAY for testing.<br><br>Week 13  Nov 15, 17<br>PLAYABLE MOCKUPS |

| Week 14 Nov 22, 24 (Thanksgiving) | No class Tuesday – work on your final projects<br>Week 14 Nov 22, 24 (Thanksgiving) |
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| Week 15/16<br>Tuesday Nov 29,<br>Thursday Dec 1<br>And Tuesday Dec 5<br>FINAL PROJECT<br>PRESENTATIONS | Final Project Presentations due including slide design documentation, video documentation, and running code handed in to tsquare site.<br><br>The three last class meetings will be devoted to formal In-Class Oral Presentations, individually in Story World groups, with live demo or video screen capture of the finished story-games |
| There is no final exam. | By Thursday Dec 7 all the story/games should be playable in final form and all documentation should be complete, including videos. |