CS798 Games for Health—Fall 2015

Administrivia

Course Objectives, Schedule, and Grading

Chrysanne Di Marco

Cheriton School of Computer Science
Department of English Language and Literature
Games Institute
University of Waterloo

September 18, 2015
Course Objectives

- Review of current major applications of games in healthcare.
- Reading seminar and game design course.
- Case studies of representative health-related games: from “best-practices” to still pretty terrible.
- By the end of this course students should have:
  - Good understanding of current major topics in health-related games.
  - Appreciation of what makes for good "gamification" in healthcare.
  - Ability to apply good game design principles in healthcare applications.
Schedule of Topics

- Characteristics of serious games.
- Games versus gamification (panel).
- Board and card games.
- Exergaming and rehabilitation games.
- Cognitive and mental health.
- Games for children and youth.
- Social and virtual reality games.
- Narrative and storytelling.
- Class poster session.
- Public and global health.
- Final discussion: Serious games on sensitive subjects.
Canonical Reference—“Games for Good”

- Multiple copies in DC Library. Overnight loan. Inexpensive to buy.
- Also see: http://janemcgonigal.com
References—Games for Health

- K. Bredl and W. Bosche (eds), Serious games and virtual worlds in education, professional development, and healthcare, 2013.
- Two copies of each reference in Davis Centre Library – short-term loan.
In-class workshops led by Jonathan Rodriguez, Games Institute researcher (Sept 25, Oct 9, Nov 6).


Jesse Schell, The art of game design: A deck of lenses, 2014. (Cards to accompany the book)

Multiple copies of each in Davis Centre Library. 3-day loan.
Course Delivery

- Each session addresses a different genre of health game:
  - Case studies of representative games.
  - Research papers. Evaluations.
  - Individual or two-person presentations. Promoting discussion.

- Series of in-class workshops on game design:
  - Choosing a game design project idea. Forming teams.
  - In-progress: Developing the game prototype.
  - Games Institute mentoring.

- Final deliverables:
  - Game prototype (board, card, paper, digital) and walk-through.
  - Design document.
  - Poster.
Grading Breakdown

- 60% Course project—Game prototype (1–4 person team):
  - (5%) Project proposal (one page)—due Friday October 2.
  - (10%) In-class design workshops (Sept 25, Oct 9, Nov 6).
  - (10%) Poster presentation (Thursday November 26).
  - (35%) Design document—due Friday December 11.

- 30% Presentations of papers and case studies (1–2-person).

- 10% Participation (discussions, workshops, attendance).

- **Bonus:** (up to 5%) Individual “thinkpiece”.
Required Background

- No formal requirements.
- Where you might participate in this new field.
- Possible course project—real-world case study:
  - Collaboration between Games Institute and Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).
  - CAMH interested in designing games to address difficult health issues for young people (problem drinking; mental health).
- Project topic: Design aspects of these potential games:
  - Gamifying sensitive subjects.
  - Good game mechanics for serious (health) games.
  - Better models of interactive narrative for health games.
  - Interactions between narrative and game mechanics.
  - Integrating cognitive behaviour therapy into gameplay.
  - ... and more.
More Details

- Chrysanne Di Marco, DC1308, cdimarco@uwaterloo.ca
- Workshop leader: Jonathan Rodriguez, j2rodrig@uwaterloo.ca
- Course website: http://www.cs.uwaterloo.ca/~cdimarco/cs798f15
- Note: Non-CS students can enrol starting Monday Sept 21.

Getting started:
- Also see: http://janemcgonigal.com

Excellent introduction to game studies on www.coursera.org:
- “Understanding Video Games”, new session started Sept 1.
- Thorough coverage of various aspects of game studies and design.
- Extremely well-researched—extensive readings and references by game scholars and game designers.
- History of videogames—huge number of case studies, demos.
- No programming involved.