COMM 294: Web Video & Game – GameZombie.tv (DoubleJumpGamingNews.com) Practicum Spring 2018

McGraw 127
5:00pm – 7:30pm Thursdays

Instructor: Fred Leighton, Assistant Professor MAGD / Communication Department
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Office hours: Mondays 2pm – 5pm, Thursdays 2 – 4pm, or by appointment
Office: L1217K, Andersen Library, located in the L1217 corridor (near TV Station)
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Prerequisites
COMM 238 or consent of instructor.

Course Overview
Web Video & Game Industry Practicum is an intermediate-advanced level, hands-on production course intended to deliver students an applied learning experience, centered around the development of the DoubleJumpGamingNews.com (formerly GameZombie.tv) website. Students will be expected to produce content for the site and stay informed of current game industry news.

During the course of the semester, students will collaborate to create original content for the site. Students will gain an understanding of the overall production process while specializing in one of four main production areas: Writing (Online Journalism), 2D Art Production, Videography, and Web Design and Development. A Producer and Associate Producer will lead the overall production of the site. Each of the four main production areas will have a Team Leader who is responsible for setting goals and evaluating performance of students in their specialty.

Students will select from one of the following teams:

Web Design & Development: Creating a website that incorporates human-computer interaction design principles, i.e. is user-friendly. Developing and maintaining the CMS (WordPress) driven site.

Writing, Online Journalism: identifying original news stories, scripting, and developing stories for the website.

2D Artwork: working with all the other teams to support their activities and provide all necessary 2D assets.

Videography: researching the video game industry and current topics in-depth, casting and shooting game videos, both documentary-style and in the studio. Creating game capture videos, asset accumulation, and maintaining quality control. Videography includes Development, Scripting, overseeing Voice Talent, and Post-Production, including Motion Graphics, Editing, and Sound Design.

Course Objectives
Students will:

Produce a professional game video and news site with informed, original content while developing digital media production skills.

Enhance portfolio, cultivate connections to industry sources, and create a presence on the web and on social media sites.

Work in an energetic, creative, and collaborative environment.

Course Format
One class meetings per week, lab/studio time. A second meeting (not mandatory for attendance, but encouraged), without the instructor, per week, along with on-going production directed by team leaders and producers.

Materials
Software will be available on computers in class. Any software tools used beyond what is
on class computers will be free or open-source software.

Course materials will be available on D2L.

Students should have some means of saving files, a thumb drive or other external drive, or online means of saving files (dropbox.com, google drive etc.)

Grading Opportunities
The final course grade will be calculated from the following areas (% reflects weight of area towards final percentage grade).

40% **ongoing work, as evaluated by the course instructor** throughout the semester, comprised of:

      online research, understanding state-of-the-industry, finding information to present to team, or entire class (reading / watching).

      on-going project work in teams.

(Please see criteria for evaluation below)

40% **portfolio of work, as evaluated by the instructor**, throughout the semester.

Specifics for format and presentation of your **portfolio**, will be communicated in writing and posted to D2L.

20% attendance / participation

Attendance policy: You are expected to attend class. Attendance and participation will be worth 20% of your overall grade. You can miss up to two classes without it impacting your attendance grade. Beyond missing two classes, you will loose 5% of your attendance / participation grade for every class missed. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing class, i.e., doctors appointment, emergency, or illness, you need to communicate with the instructor and provide documentation to not have the absence negatively impact your attendance / participation grade.

Grading Standards
Letter Grades

A   (93 and above) – Outstanding
A- (90 – 92) – Excellent
B+ (87 – 89) – High Achievement
B   (83-86) – Good
B- (80 – 82) – Meets Requirements
C+ (77 – 79) – Acceptable
C   (73-76) – Average
C- (70 – 72) – Below Average
D+ (67 – 69) – Below Average
D (63 – 66) – Below Average
D- (60 – 62) – Below Average
F (59 or below) – Failure

Criteria for evaluation:

Teams Leaders will set expectations for their areas of production. The Producers will also communicate goals for the site and areas of production in conjunction with the team leaders. By the fourth class meeting, February 15, the exact number of expected deliverables for production will be communicated directly to students. This may be a set number of writing pieces, videos, podcasts or other media deliverable, depending on the area the student is working in, or it may be an expectation of a number within a range.

The **portfolio** grade will be based on the quality of the work, as well as the style and creativity shown. Details of the expectations for the portfolio will be posted to D2L by the time of the class meeting on Thursday, February 2.

Please see postings on D2L**: Team Goals for the Semester,** this details the expectations for production and outlines areas of evaluation. This information will be posted to D2L by February 15. Team Leaders will communicate with the instructor who will assign a **letter grade** for a student's **project work** on that team for the 'ongoing work' portion of the final grade.

Attendance Policy
Class attendance is critical to understanding the subject matter and successfully completing the course. Missing class without the following valid excuses will negatively impact attendance as it relates the in-class participation part of your final grade:

Family emergency illness and can provide a doctor's note or equivalent from Health Services.

UWW extracurricular activity and can provide note from coach or advisor.

Internship or job interview and can provide documentation from company.

You must communicate with the instructor and provide documentation within one week for an absence to be counted as excused. Be on time for class and stay for the duration of class session.

You are allowed two absences during the semester. Any absences beyond two will negatively impact your attendance / participation grade. Please see details in the Grading Opportunities area above for more information.

Student Conduct
The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding Special Accommodations, Academic Misconduct, Religious Beliefs Accommodation, Discrimination and Absence for University Sponsored Events (for details please refer to the Schedule of Classes; the "Rights and Responsibilities" section of the Undergraduate Catalog; the Academic Requirements and Policies and the Facilities and Services sections of the Graduate Catalog; and the "Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures (UWS Chapter 14); and the "Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures") (UWS Chapter 17).

Students with Disabilities
Learning support services for students with disabilities is provided. Students can get more information at the Center for Students with Disabilities: http://www.uww.edu/csd

Schedule
Each class meeting will begin with a discussion of the important gaming stories of the week, as well as personal video game-playing experiences. Updates to the site will be highlighted along with any other relevant information.

Production goals, deliverables, and deadlines will be determined by Team Leaders and the Producers. Schedules for production are the responsibility of the Team Leaders and Producers. To understand the schedule for your area of production, communicate with the Team Leader for that area, and when needed, the Producers. To facilitate communication, this information will be posted and updated on D2L.

Final Exam

Tuesday, May 17, 4:45 – 6:45pm

Portfolio reviews, students will sign up for 5-10 minute time slots to meet with the instructor.