SVAD

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor:	Dr. Anastasia Salter		Term:	Spring 2018
Office:	OTC 500		Class Meeting Days:	Online
Phone:	N/A		Class Meeting Hours:	N/A
E-Mail:	anastasia@ucf.edu		Class Location:	N/A
Website:	Webcourses		Lab Location:	N/A
Office Hours:	Mo 11-2 / Wed 2-5			

Course Overview
Understanding of digital cultures and narratives theories from an interdisciplinary perspective. Conceptual structure and design of visual and interactive storytelling.

Online Course Structure
This course will consist of four modules with a combination of video, written materials, tutorials, and assigned readings. Modules each cover approximately three to four weeks of the semester, and end with either an online exam or a creative project. Each module will open on its scheduled date and include at least one video lecture recorded in advance. Remember that while this course is online, it is not self-paced: discussion topics open every week and are due at the end of the week, and the scheduled exams and projects are due as listed in this syllabus and will not be accepted late. The syllabus will be reviewed in detail as part of the first lecture, but students are also encouraged to read through these materials carefully and ask for clarifications if necessary.

Course Objectives
This course focuses on the design and interpretation of digital narratives using a range of media and methods. We will engage with the history of playful and experimental creative writing while playing both new and significant canonical interactive works. Throughout this course, students will be asked to combine practice and theory through first analyzing and later developing their own original digital narratives.

Students will:
1. Learn "close play" strategies for reading and analyzing digital works
2. Participate in and analyze social media discourse
3. Read and discuss critical works on digital culture
4. Practice creative writing strategies and journaling habits
5. Prototype digital narratives and games
6. Conduct peer review of writing and interactive works

Course Prerequisites
None.

Required Texts and Materials

> *Writing Interactive Fiction with Twine.* Melissa Ford. 2016.

In addition to the required text, students will be required to play a number of different games and read several other online texts. These are freely available and linked from each module. If you have difficult accessing or running any text, contact the professor immediately for assistance. Options will be offered for Mac or PC users but will require installation of some software programs: if you are not familiar with how to install software from the web on your computer consult a tutorial.

Grading

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Exams	20%
Creative Projects	40%
Participation in Discussion	40%
	100%

Grading Scale (%)

94-100 A	80-83 B-	67-69 D+
90-93 A-	77-79 C+	64-66 D
87-89 B+	74-76 C	60-63 D-
84-86 B	70-73 C-	0 - 59 F

Grade Dissemination
Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually only by request. You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

Course Policies: Grades
No late work will be accepted in this course. Modules close at their scheduled deadlines and will not be re-opened. Pay attention to deadlines and your time management.

Course Policies: Technology and Media
Email: Students can email at any time. All emails will receive a response within one business day (this does not include weekends or holidays.) UCF policy requires you to use your UCF email account to communicate. Students are encouraged to use the Webcourses messaging feature, particularly when sending files.

Webcourses: All assignments and class materials will be managed through Webcourses. Plan on checking the site at least three times a week for updates and assignment information.

Backups: You are required to maintain your own backups. If you lose your project, you will be responsible for completing it on time: file loss is not an acceptable excuse for missing deadlines in the industry or in this class.

Copyright: This course may contain copyright-protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used consistent with the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Course Policies: Student Expectations

Disability Access: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Professionalism Policy: As this is an online course, students will be participating in virtual discussions throughout the semester. While the professor will be moderating, please remember to use the discussion boards professionally and respectfully. Harassment of fellow students, racist and sexist attacks, and trolling will not be tolerated. Students who continually engage in harmful and disruptive behaviors impede other students from learning and will be asked to leave the class. If you experience problems with another student in the class, please report it to the professors for further assistance.

Academic Conduct Policy: Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero

on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

Important Dates to Remember

Skills Survey Due:	Fri, January 12th
Progress Quiz Due	Sun, February 11th
Project One Text Due:	Sun, March 4th
Project Two Visual Due:	Sun, April 8th
Final Exam Due:	Sun, April 29th

Class Schedule (Important Dates and Times)

Date	Module Title	Monday	Concluding Activity
Open 1/10	**Module One: Writing for the Web**	**Lecture: Making Stories with Twine** **Module Topics**: • Course Overview • Practicing Exercises in Style • Working with Twine • History of Text Games	**Progress Quiz** Due 2/11 at 11:59PM
Open 2/13	**Module Two: Playing Stories**	**Lecture: Games and Digital Culture** **Module Topics**: • Adventure and Roleplaying Games • Massively Multiplayer Online Games • Fan communities and digital culture • Agency and choice in play	**Twine: Text** Due 3/4 at 11:59PM
Open 3/6	**Module Three: Remixed Art**	**Lecture: Interactive Visuals** **Module Topics**: • Current digital art and remix culture • Continuing with Twine and art • Metagames and game mechanics • Visual culture in online communities	**Twine: Visual** Due 4/8 at 11:59PM
Open 4/10	**Module Four: Digital Culture**	**Lecture: Social Media, Global Village** **Module Topics**: • Social Media • Memes and Viral Content • Simultaneous Happenings • Online communities and identity	**Final Exam** Due 4/29 at 11:59PM

* Note: The Schedule is subject to revision

Project Assignments

Skills Survey
Due Date: January 13th
As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity no later than January 13th. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. For this class, you are required to complete a short skills survey. Access your Webcourses@UCF (Canvas) course site following the directions below.

- Go to the myUCF portal (https://my.ucf.edu) and select the Webcourses@UCF button on the left side of the screen.
- Log in with your NID and NID password, then access each course by selecting it in the "Courses" drop-down menu at the top of the page.
- Find the "Skills Survey" under quizzes and complete all questions

Discussions
Due Date: Every Sunday
Each student has been randomly assigned to a discussion group for the duration of the semester. Each week, a new prompt will be posted on Monday. Responses are due by Sunday and will require responding to fellow students in the group, so students should be prepared to check in at least three times throughout the week for the best grade. Discussion prompts generally involve responding to readings, sharing progress on projects for peer feedback, or completing collaborative creative exercises.

Exams
Due Date: See Schedule
Each exam is completed online and will be released at the beginning of the module prior to its Sunday deadline. Exams are open book, untimed, and evaluate understanding of the readings and other materials. The first is a progress quiz to confirm you are reading and progressing through the module material successfully, and the second is the final exam.

Projects
Due Date: See Schedule
Each project is an individual creative task using the specified platform to build an interactive narrative. While each project will have its own rubric with specific requirements, all projects share a focus on developing students' voices and understanding of narrative. Projects should demonstrate:

- **Developed Narrative.** The story told across whatever media and interactive components you use should have a beginning, middle and end–even if the player does not encounter them in whole or in order and must piece together the logic for themselves. It can be open to several interpretations but must make use of some concrete details.
- **Strong Characters and Environments.** Remember to have a clear sense of your character's needs and desire as they drive the narrative, and create tension between characters and the world they inhabit.
- **Your Personal Voice.** With attention to the lessons learned from *Exercises in Style*, focus on sharing your unique perspective through your use of language and development of the story. This does not mean that the central character needs to reflect or have anything in common with you–but it does mean you need to pay attention to style.
- **Reader/Player Agency.** The reader or player should be able to guide their exploration of the narrative in some meaningful way: this can span from navigating the different layers of a hypertext, making decisions for certain characters, or outright occupying the role of a character within the narrative. Make sure the choices feel meaningful.
- **No Broad Stereotypes or Cliches.** Writing characters that are distant from your own identity can be challenging: to avoid avoid bad storytelling and overly familiar tropes, don't rely on stereotypes of race, gender, sexuality or faith and try to honestly inhabit the characters' perspectives.
- **Thoughtful Use of Tools and Interfaces.** Using the specified platform, students should demonstrate their understanding of the tools and possibilities for creating an experience.