SM2105: NARRATIVE STRATEGIES AND AESTHETICS OF TIME-BASED MEDIA

Effective Term
Semester A 2022/23

Part I Course Overview

Course Title
Narrative Strategies and Aesthetics of Time-based Media

Subject Code
SM - School of Creative Media
Course Number
2105

Academic Unit
School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School
School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration
One Semester

Credit Units
3

Level
B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction
English

Medium of Assessment
English

Prerequisites
Nil

Precursors
Nil

Equivalent Courses
Nil

Exclusive Courses
Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

'Narrative' is an important concept in new media creation. Far more than just story-telling, the idea of 'narrative' invites us to think about structures, processes and systems – essential to time-based organization and spatial arrangement. This course examines narrative strategies for all kinds of creative situations: from photo sequence to moving image aesthetics, montage theories for time-based media, from fiction and documentary film, animation to video experiments for ubiquitous screen contexts, game, hypertext, and immersive environments. At the end of the course, students should be able to use the concept of narrative flexibly, playfully, and strategically in their future art experiments.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify the primary narrative and aesthetics elements of a broad range of time-based media and expanded cinema forms			x	
2	Analyze and critique time-based media artworks based on the conceptual vocabulary developed during the semester			x	
3	Create their own time-based media work with the conceptual vocabulary acquired in class.			x	x
4	Conduct extra research to discover new artworks and to playfully name unclassifiable works as new species for the sake of stretching one's conceptual thinking		x	x	x

A1: Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

	TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	To outline all key issues on narrative – definitions, differentiations, usefulness, variety and medium-specific views	1	

2	Tutorials	To gage students' response and personal adaptation of art examples and key concepts in lecturesTo share take-home assignments, individually and occasionally in small groups	1, 2	
3	Take-home reading and writing	Guided reading (theory and history) and additional research for relevant texts and artworks	1, 2, 4	
4	Take-home short creative exercise	To respond to key concepts introduced in lectures for personal experiments	1, 3	
5	Research-based Final Report	To turn learning experiences in the semester into an integrated artistic event in the form of documentation – written, sketches and other media forms	4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	1 Short reviews (assigned reading)	1, 2	15	
2	2 Short reviews (assigned art works)	2	20	
3	Take-home short creative exercise (a conceptual plan for an innovative narrative on paper using images, maps, text and diagrams)	1, 2, 3	25	
4	Research-based Final Report (a dossier of found examples of innovative narratives with a naming exercise and explanatory notes)	1, 2, 4	30	
5	Tutorial participation	1, 2	10	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Tutorial Participation and Contribution to Class Discussion:

Criterion

This assessment task reviews students' participation and performance in discussions, debates and peer critique during the tutorial sessions. The evidence of 'negotiation', the sign of discovery, lies in students' pre-class preparation and interpersonal sensitivity to his/her peer members.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, strong ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on other points
- In-depth pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Interpret others' views with an open mind and ready to negotiate
- Readiness to share personal insight via analysis and synthesis with informed views
- Constructively critical, thus facilitating the discovery of new issues

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Active in-class participation, positive listening, ability to initiate class discussion and comment on other points
- Adequate pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Interpret opinions effectively

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Attentive in in-class participation, listening with comprehension, but only infrequently contributing
- Adequate pre-class preparation but little familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Fair ability in interpreting opinions

Marginal (D)

- Unmotivated to participate in class discussion or comment on other people's views
- Little pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Poor ability in interpreting opinions

Failure (F)

- Unwilling to participate in class discussion and comment on other points, even when requested by the teacher No pre-class preparation and familiarity with peer reports and other materials
- Minimal ability in interpreting opinions

Assessment Task

2. Short Reviews / Final research-based report

Criterion

This assessment will grade on rationality, clarity and fluency of argument and comment. The threshold of 'discovery' lies in a student's ability to negotiate a position that is informed, defendable, and standing on personal insight.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Rich content, excellent ability to interpret and integrate various resources Rigorous organization, coherent structure, systematic composition
- Precision in argument, well defined and reasoned points of view grounded in insightful interpretation of existing literature
- Readiness to respond to peer opinion and other views initiated in class discussion
- Discussion shed light on new dimensions of the issue

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Adequate content, sufficient ability to integrate various resources based on demand

- Reasonable organization with balanced structure and composition
- Clear elaboration of ideas that sticks to the point, with clearly differentiated issues, ability to interpret opinions independently
- Sufficient responses to peer comments to sustain a discussion

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Adequate content, fair ability to integrate various resources based on demand
- Fair organization with adequate structure and composition
- Relevant points made to the subject matter in question
- Ability to respond to other statements and engage in class discussion

Marginal (D)

- Weak content, limited use of resources
- Poor organization, structure and composition
- Relevant points to the subject matter, marginal ability to interpret opinions
- Ability to respond to other comments in simple terms

Failure (F)

- Inadequate content, no/ irrelevant use of resources
- No organization, structure or/and composition
- Irrelevant points to the subject matter, no ability to interpret opinions
- Fail to respond to other comments

Assessment Task

3.Take Home Creation

Criterion

Students should demonstrate ability to utilize primary and secondary sources, execute creative ideas and projects. The threshold of ‘discovery’ lies in a student’s proactively turning theory into praxis, to transform course material into self-owned authorship.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

- Work has strong affective quality and the articulation of personal styles and signature
- Excellent appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Work raises questions and instill insights about the process of conception, creative strategization and production Innovative exploration by combining knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. mathematics, psychology, physics, anthropology, etc.) to create an inter-disciplinary project
- Efficient adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available with constructive adjustment

Good (B+, B, B-)

- Strong appreciation, exploration and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Proper adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available and constructive feedback/ suggestions

Fair (C+, C, C-)

- Basic appreciation and/or application of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Limited ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Marginal (D)

- Marginal appreciation of the aesthetic and expressive qualities of the medium
- Marginal ability to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration

- Limited adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc) available

Failure (F)
- No appreciation of the aesthetics and expressive qualities of the medium
- Fail to create project/ work that demonstrate the processes of thinking and creative exploration
- Minimal adjustment of plans and strategies in response to resources (time, space, equipment, etc.) available

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Additional Information for AR

All A+/A/A- grade assignment should comply with the highest performance of Discovery-oriented learning.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Story. Discourse. Meta-narratives. Inter-textuality.
Human visual perception. Cinematic vision.
Fiction. Documentary form. Classical Hollywood narrative. Modernism. Realism. Experimental form.
Narrator. Time and space in cinema. Focalization. Parametric narration. Micro-narratives
Moving image mise-en-scene. Cinematography. Strategies and styles of editing. Montage. Continuity
Sound design and aesthetics.
Animation. Deconstructing the cartoon. Experimental animation. Non-objective and non-linear animation. Early comic strip cartoon concepts. The problem of realism. Metamorphosis, condensation, synecdoche, symbolism and metaphor, fabrication and associative relations, choreography and penetration as narrative strategies in animation.
Game and interactive art. The 'string of pearl' form, open forms, and modulated forms in game. Game narratives and interactive books.
Beyond narrative. Hypertextual theory of narrative. Interactive storytelling. Combinatorial. Permutation. Serialism

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

	Title
1	H. Porter Abbott, 2011: The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative (2nd edition). Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
2	Mieke Bal, 2009: Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative (3rd edition). University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, Toronto.
3	_____, 2009: Film History (3rd edition). McGraw-Hill, New York.
4	_____, 2011: Minding Movies: Observations on the Art, Craft, and Business of Filmmaking. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
5	Sheila Curran Bernard, 2010: Documentary Storytelling, Third Edition: Creative Nonfiction on Screen. Focal Press, Burlington (USA) and Oxford (UK).
6	W. John Hill and Pamela Gibson (eds.), 1998: The Oxford Guide to Film Studies. OUP, New York.
7	Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (ed.), 1999: The Oxford History of World Cinema. OUP, New York.
8	Louise Spence and Vinicius Navarro, 2011: Crafting Truth: Documentary Form and Meaning. Rutgers University Press
9	John Canemaker, 1988: Storytelling in Animation: the Art of the Animated Images. Samuel French Trade.
10	Donald Crafton, 1982: Before Mickey. MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA.
11	Lois Rostow Kuznets, 1994: When Toys Come Alive: Narratives of Animation, Metamorphosis, and Development. Yale University Press.
12	Scott McCloud, 1993: Understanding Comics: the Invisible Art. HarperCollins, New York.
13	Jayne Pilling (ed.), 1997: A Reader in Animation Studies. John Libbey & Company

14	_____, 2001: Animation: 2D and Beyond (Rotovision, New York)
15	Charles Solomon, 1994: The History of Animation: Enchanted Drawings. Random House
16	Paul Wells, 1998: Understanding Animation. Routledge.
17	Raymond Queneau: Exercises On Style
18	Douglas Grant and Jim Bizzocchi, "How Story Can Tell Games: Narrative and Micronarrative as Components of Game Experiencee"; http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4/papers/grant%20bizzocchi.pdf
19	The International Journal of Computer Game Research (2001-2007)
20	Ben Mcintosh, Randi Cohn and Lindsay Grace, 2010: "Nonlinear Narrative in Games: Theory and Practice" (uploaded August 17, 2010: http://www.gamecareerguide.com/features/882/nonlinear_narrative_in_games_.php?page=1
21	Martin Rieser and Andrea Zapp (eds.), 2002: New Screen Media: Cinema/Art/Narrative. BFI, London.
22	Story Structure: Patterns in Narrative Structure for Interactive Media:http://staff.jccc.net/mfitzpat/storystructures/index.htm /
23	Storytelling Alice:http://www.alice.org/kelleher/storytelling/#
24	Simon Egenfeldt- Nielsen et al - Understanding Video Games: the Essential Introduction (2008)
25	Jesper Juul: Half Real (2006)
26	Alexander R. Galloway: Gaming: Essays On Algorithmic Culture (University of Minnesota Press, 2006)

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Lastowka E. Gregory & Dan Hunter, "The Laws of the Virtual Worlds," California Law Review volume 92, Issue 1 (January 2004)