University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Historical Game Design, PG_00215463						
Field of study	Historical Games and Digital Heritage						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2027		Academic year of realisation of subject	2027/2028			
Education level	Master's studies		Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Subject group related to scientific research in the field of study			
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery	at the university			
Year of study	1		Language of instruction	English			
Semester of study	1		ECTS credits	6.0			
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form	credit			
Conducting unit							
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr hab. Michał Mochocki				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	0.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	40
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours	Self-study	SUM	
	Number of study hours	40		40.0	70.0	150	
Subject objectives	The module aims to develop students' skills in designing and prototyping historical games through a team-based role-playing game project. Students learn to translate historical material into game rules, interactions and narrative, create characters, storylines and scenes, and adapt their writing to the chosen historical setting. The module also develops skills in teamwork, task allocation and creative project management.						

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[GHDCMU2_K02] Proposes and co-organizes initiatives aimed at the responsible interpretation of history, as well as the protection and popularization of heritage, while taking into account a diversity of perspectives and accessibility for audiences.	Presents concepts for creating and using games as tools for responsible interpretation of history and/or as a means of sharing cultural heritage with the public, with attention to diverse perspectives and accessibility for audiences.	[SK5] implementation of a problem task
[GHDCMU2_U03] Effectively participates in the process of designing games focused on history and heritage, taking on various roles at different stages—from concept, prototyping, playtesting, and iteration, all the way to dissemination to audiences.	Participates effectively in the historical game design process, carrying out tasks in three integrated areas: 1. creating, testing and modifying functional prototypes to achieve intended player experiences; 2. designing gameplay by selecting and combining mechanics, dynamics and interaction structures; 3. designing and writing the narrative layer (world, characters, scenes and dialogue).	[SU5] implementation of a problem task [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
[GHDCMU2_U08] Organizes and coordinates the work of an interdisciplinary research and development team, defining objectives, methods, resources, a schedule, the division of responsibilities, communication protocols, and criteria for evaluating results.	Organises teamwork through collaborative planning (agreeing on objectives, scope, schedule, task dependencies and the time and resources required for prototyping) and ongoing coordination (delegating tasks, running meetings, monitoring progress and risks, and communicating errors and excessive workloads).	[SU5] implementation of a problem task [SU8] observation of student's independent or team work
[GHDCMU2_U05] Independently develops the results of research or creative work in the form of a scholarly text or project documentation, based on source material and a clear line of reasoning.	Produces comprehensive project documentation, including illustrative material, covering all stages of the creative process and the use of historical and cultural sources.	[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[GHDCMU2_W02] Presents, in detail, concepts from historical and cultural game studies concerning the relationship between game content, mechanics, and technology, and the player’s agency and cultural context in the production of knowledge about the past.	Comprehensively analyses selected historical games, examining how they represent the past and culture through game mechanics, aesthetics, technology, content and interaction systems.	[SW2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[GHDCMU2_W03] Explains advanced principles of iterative game design and prototyping—specifically regarding historical games as interactive models of the past, and cultural games as forms of engagement with heritage.	Explains advanced principles of the iterative game design and prototyping process, including through examples from their own projects, with attention to the specific challenges of working with historical and cultural material.	[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion
[GHDCMU2_U07] Uses English in oral and written academic and professional communication at a level of at least B2+ (CEFR), incorporating specialized terminology related to history, game studies, and digital heritage.	Communicates in English in speech and writing at B2+ level or higher.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU3] text preparation/written work

Subject contents

Learning to design and prototype historical games through team projects. Adapting historical material into an interactive role-playing game. Creating characters, storylines and scenes. Creative writing for a chosen historical setting. Practice in teamwork and creative project management.

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
Instructor's observation of student work	51.0%	0.0%
Postmortem self-assessment	51.0%	100.0%

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Recommended reading</td><td>Basic literature</td><td>McCall, Jeremiah. 2026. Designing Historical Games for Classrooms: A Practical Guide for Educators. Routledge.

Suckling, Maurice. 2025. Paper time machines: Critical game design and historical board games. Taylor and Francis.

Smith Nicholls, Florence., & Cook, Michael. 2025. Archaeological Gameworld Affordances: A Grounded Theory of How Players Interpret Environmental Storytelling. Proceedings of the 2025 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1145/3706598.3714036.

Fullerton, Tracy. 2024. Game Design Workshop: A Playcentric Approach to Creating Innovative Games. Fifth edition. CRC Press.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Supplementary literature</td><td>Wright, Esther, Iain Donald, and Nick Webber, eds. 2026. Writing Game Histories. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Digital Culture & Society, Vol. 11, Issue 1/2025 – Digital Games through Muddled Pasts and Modded Histories.

Cook, Kate, Robert Houghton, and Chris Kempshall, eds. 2027. The Routledge Companion to Video Games and History. Routledge.

Tremblay, Kaitlin. 2023. Collaborative Worldbuilding for Video Games. Taylor and Francis.

Engelstein, Geoffrey. 2027. Building Blocks of Tabletop Game Design: An Encyclopedia of Mechanisms. CRC Press.</td></tr>
<tr><td>eResources addresses</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed</td><td colspan="2">Adapting historical material: Which aspects of the selected historical material can be translated into game rules, player choices and their consequences?

Characters and story: Develop characters with distinct goals and write a scene in which player choices shape what happens next.

Team project: Agree on the project scope, allocate tasks and set a schedule. Build a role-playing game prototype, run a playtest and revise the prototype based on your observations and player feedback.

Creative writing: Write dialogue or a scene description set in a chosen historical context. Explain your choice of language and details.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Work placement</td><td colspan="2">Not applicable</td></tr>
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