

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department: Communications & The Arts

Programme: MA Film: Science Fiction and Fantasy

FHEQ Level: 7

Course Title: Digital Storytelling

Course Code: FLM 7101

Total Hours: 200

Timetabled Hours: 39

Guided Learning Hours: 21

Independent Learning Hours: 140

Credits: 20 UK CATS credits

10 ECTS credits

4 US credits

Course Description:

This course explores the way digital technology is now evolving our understanding of what storytelling is and in how the fundamental impetus behind creating and engaging with narratives is profoundly changing. Case studies will include 'vfx-spectacle' film, television and games (science fiction and fantasy genres, action-adventure, horror, etc.) and the transmedial platforms that expand these dynamic 'fictional universes'. The course will uncover the way stories are not only projected within a single screen in a theatre, nor even on a single device, but venture across a multi-faceted terrain of narrative practices that incorporate existing and new media items, objects and platforms.

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: MA Film: Science Fiction and Fantasy students, and MA Digital Futures students only

Aims and Objectives:

- To introduce key concepts of digital visual effects and technology in film, media and production pertaining to storytelling methods and devices.
- To examine the relationship between visual digital visual effects and technology within film texts and across the wider external contexts surrounding these texts.
- To develop key close textual analysis skills of vfx and plotting in film and media, working with key case studies of popular fantasy genres to enable a knowledge and understanding into the abilities and skillsets of visual effects artistry.

- To examine evolving trends in current kinds of digitally-enhanced narratives (i.e. immersive screening experiences, interactive possibilities and participatory dimensions, profile branding, etc.).

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of the course the student will have achieved the following programme outcomes:

A1, A3, B2, B4, B6

A detailed list of the Programme Outcomes is found in the programme Specification.

This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive and systematic knowledge of theories and methods required for examining film, media and digital technology in an international setting, drawing on fantasy film analysis and industry
- Demonstrate a critical knowledge of digital technology in narratives with fantasy film genres forming key case studies
- Show systematic, critical engagement with texts and objects
- Show excellent writing skills including logical and structured narratives and arguments supported by relevant primary and secondary evidence
- Understand the skills and experience required to work in creative industries pertaining to digital storytelling areas (vfx work, marketing, etc.)

Indicative Content:

- Narratology and digital visual effects technology
- Beneficial social aspects vs 'alienating repercussions' of digital narratives
- Popular Science Fiction and Fantasy film/media case studies
- Immersive Screening Experiences
- Interactive and Participatory Storytelling
- Convergence Cultures and Spreadable Media
- Prosumers and Brand Communities
- Consumer-Driven Transmedial Storytelling
- Online Influencing of Gen Z and Millennials

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and are located at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

The course will consist of weekly postgraduate seminars, which will follow the structure set out within the course syllabus and will serve a number of functions: seminars provide a framework of the course; address critically the relevant literature in specific areas, examine concepts, theories and case studies, and enable students to engage in group discussion and dialogue, and autonomous learning. Seminars rely on upon active student participation, mediated by the course instructor. By examining and discussing issues and problems in the seminar setting, students as junior research colleagues will be able to learn from each other and resolve questions that arise in the course of the lectures and readings. Seminars will only be useful to the extent that they are prepared for and participation in discussions and debates is an essential aspect of this. All students will be required to participate. Tutorial opportunities will also be available for research supervision and other academic support.

Indicative Text(s):

- Booker, C. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. (Continuum 2010)
- Holliday, C. *Alexander Sergeant. Fantasy/Animation: Connections Between Media, Mediums and Genres*. (Routledge 2018)
- Freeman, M., Proctor, W. *Global Convergence Cultures: Transmedia Earth (Routledge Advances in Internationalizing Media Studies)*. (Routledge 2018)
- Jenkins, H. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide* (NYU Press 2008)
- Jenkins, H., Ford, S. Green J. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture (Postmillennial Pop)* (NYU Press 2018)
- McClean, Shilo T. *Digital Storytelling: The Narrative Power of Visual Effects in Film* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2007)
- Purse, L. *Digital Imaging in Popular Cinema* (Edinburgh University Press 2013)
- Whissel, K. *Spectacular Digital Effects: CGI and Contemporary Cinema* (Duke University Press 2014)

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total hours updated	April 2024	

