Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2017-2018

Interactive Media and Entertainment (K001180)

Course

Lecturers in academic year 2018-2019
Van Looy, Jan PS01 lecturer-in-charge

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2018-2019
A (semester 2) English

- guided self-study 2.5 h
- lecture 37.5 h

Offered in the following programmes in 2018-2019
crds offering
Bachelor of Science in Communication Science 5 A
Linking Course Master of Science in Communication Science (main subject New Media and Society) 5 A
Preparatory Course Master of Science in Communication Science (main subject New Media and Society) 5 A

Teaching languages
English

Keywords
interactive media, digital entertainment, human-computer interaction, digital games, user experience, usability

Position of the course
The course is part of the curriculum ‘New Media & Society’

Contents
The first part of the course deals with interactive media in general and starts by introducing different theoretical perspectives and definitions of interactivity and by laying out a number of influential theories for understanding its workings such as the Theory of Affordances and Flow Theory. Next, after a brief discussion of pre-digital interactive media, students are introduced to the history of human-computer interaction (HCI), its origins and its paradigm shifts since the second world war. In the following sessions, students will be introduced to the principles governing HCI and how to assess and study them in relation to use context. Topics discussed will include human abilities, usability, assessing user requirements, and user experience and validation research. This part will conclude by looking forward at new and upcoming paradigms of interactive media and human-computer interaction such as virtual reality, augmented reality, artificial intelligence and ubiquitous computing.

The second part of the course will zoom in on interactive entertainment, one of the major uses of interactive media. Again, first, a number of definitions and theoretical perspectives on entertainment, play, and enjoyment will be presented. Next, a brief overview of the history of interactive entertainment and digital games will be presented starting from their humble origins in the early 1950s over their introduction to a large audience in the 1980s to their mass media status today. The rest of the course will aim to provide an understanding of a number of different aspects determining our perceptions and usage of interactive entertainment and its societal impact. Topics under discussion will include the role of the industry in shaping the medium, the psychology of play, its social ramifications, digital game culture, and applied uses of digital games in the context of learning or training.

Initial competences

(Approved)
Basic knowledge of "media history", "media, technology and innovation" and "methodology of the social sciences"

Final competences
1. Explain specific developments of interactive media based on current theory.
2. Provide historical background and motivation in relation to the current state of how we use and relate to computers.
3. Explain the role of human factors in the development and current forms of interactive media.
4. Explain the role of technology in the development and current forms of interactive media.
5. Explain the role of social and cultural context in the development and current forms of interactive media.
6. Propose a plan for identifying user requirements for an interactive media application.
7. Propose a strategy for assessing usability and user experience of an interactive media application.
8. Propose a strategy for conducting a validation study of an interactive media application.

Conditions for credit contract
Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract
This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods
Guided self-study, group work, lecture

Learning materials and price
Syllabus + slides made available electronically
Estimated total price: €40

References

Course content-related study coaching
By appointment

Evaluation methods
end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period
Written examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period
Written examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation
Assignment, peer assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation
examination during the second examination period is not possible

Extra information on the examination methods
The course evaluation will consist of two parts: examination (80%) and group paper (20%). The examination will consist of open questions and will assess both knowledge and understanding of the material offered to the student. The group work will be assessed based on the quality of (1) the analysis of the state of the art, (2) the proposed research protocol, (3) the execution of the research and the presentation of results, (4) discussion and conclusion and (5) peer assessment whereby every group member is invited to assess the contribution of every other

Calculation of the examination mark
Combination of work during the year (group paper, 20%) and examination (80%). The group paper is compulsory.

(Approved)