CORE 100 | Explorations in Non-linear Storytelling

Christian Sheehy

Instructor Information

Instructor	Christian Sheehy
	Digital Initiatives Librarian
	Xavier University
Email	sheehyc@xavier.edu
Office Hours	15 minutes before class or by appointment

Email is the best way to contact your instructor directly. To ensure a prompt and accurate response, include your class name in the subject line (e.g. CORE 100 - Storytelling). Your instructor will only send and accept email messages from a Xavier email address. Email is checked periodically Monday – Friday during normal business hours. Email is not checked on weekends (or holidays the University is closed) so it is the responsibility of the student to ask questions about assignments early in the week. Expect under a 24 hour turnaround on all emails during the business week. Emails received during weekends will be answered the next business day.

Course Information

Term: Spring 2019
Time: TR 4:00pm – 5:15pm
Location: TBD
Description: From Choose Your Own Adventure style books to text adventures/interactive fiction to visual novels, this seminar explores the art, methods, and history of non-linear storytelling. We will explore works where your choices have consequences and introduce the tools (Twine, Inform7, etc.) used to write your own.

Required Textbooks

- Ford, Melissa. *Writing Interactive Fiction with Twine.* Que, 2016.
  (eBook at Library https://xplore.xavier.edu/record=b3327328)

- North, Ryan. *To Be or Not To Be: A Chooseable-Path Adventure.* Reissue edition, Riverhead Books, 2016. (From Bookstore)

- Potter, D. M. *Writing Interactive Fiction.* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016. (From Bookstore)

- Reed, Aaron. *Creating Interactive Fiction with Inform 7.* Course Technology, Cengage Learning, 2011. (eBook at Library https://xplore.xavier.edu/record=b1674177)

Structure

This course is a seminar as opposed to a lecture class. It focuses on student-led discussions and interactions rather than the more traditional format of the professor lecturing while the students take notes.

Grades

You are responsible for your own grade in this course. All assignments are due prior to the noted class period in this syllabus. All assignments must be submitted through Canvas unless your instructor

says otherwise. Email attachments will not be accepted. Unless arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the due date, late assignments will receive a 10% penalty for each day late. Grades for submitted assignments will generally be available with instructor comments within 5 days of submission.

Assignment	Point Value
Final Project	250
Midterm Research Paper	250
Annotated Bibliography	100
Weekly Reflection (12)	300
Flame Participation	100
Twine Assignment	100
Inform7 Assignment	100
Ren'Py Assignment	100
TOTAL	1300

Attendance

You are expected to be in class every day, on time, and ready to participate. Life happens and sometimes students need to miss class. Each student is allowed 3 absences, after which each absence will reduce the final grade by 5% each additional absence.

Discussion Boards

Since this is a seminar course, a majority of discussions will take place during class time. Consequently, online discussion is not required – however, a research project/homework help discussion thread will be available.

The discussion board is a public forum and everything posted can be seen by everyone in the course, including the instructor. You are encouraged to provide your honest viewpoint, but be respectful of the views of your classmates. Objectionable, sexist, or racist language will not be tolerated.

Flame and E/RS

Participation in Flame is required. Participation at E/RS lectures is strongly encouraged, but will not impact your final grade.

Technology Policy

Since this is a tech-heavy course, students are encouraged to bring and use their own devices for class-related activities only. Phone calls, texts, personal messages or emails, or other online activities not directly related to class are not permitted.

Technical and Software Requirements

A computer with internet access, administrative rights to install and operate free software (Linux, Windows, or OSX), ability to stream video and audio.

- Twine https://twinery.org

- Inform7 http://inform7.com

- Ren'py https://www.renpy.org

Tentative Course Outline

- Week 01 (Jan 15, 17) Introduction, What is a text?, Role of reader vs. author

- Week 02 (Jan 22, 24) IF history and conventions, introduction of research project

- Week 03 and 04 (Jan 29, 31, Feb 5, 7) Library and research instruction

- Week 05 (Feb 12, 14) Twine

- Week 06 (Feb 19, 21) Inform7

- Week 07 (Feb 26, 28) Ren'Py

- Week 08 (Mar 5, 7) Paper peer reviews, preparation for presentations, paper due

- Week 09 (Mar 12, 14) Spring Break - No classes

- Week 10 (Mar 19, 21) Presentations

- Week 11 (Mar 26, 28) Environmental and emergent storytelling

- Week 12 (Apr 2, 4) Walking sims

- Week 13 (Apr 9, 11) Role playing games

- Week 14 (Apr 16, 18) Catch up and Easter Break

- Week 15 (Apr 23, 25) Peer review of final projects

- Week 16 (Apr 30, May 2) Finals due, morality of choice, future of interactive narratives

Student Resources

- FYS Outcomes and Learning Objectives (https://www.xavier.edu/core)

- Xavier University Library (https://www.xavier.edu/library)

- Writing Center (http://www.xavier.edu/writingcenter)

- Office of Academic Support (https://www.xavier.edu/academic-support)

- Office of Disability Services (https://www.xavier.edu/disability-services)

- McGrath Counseling Services (https://www.xavier.edu/health-wellness)

University Policies

Students must adhere to all Xavier University polices which can be found in the
Student Handbook (https://www.xavier.edu/handbook). Questions about University Policies should be
directed to the Dean of Students.