

## **Overarching Learning Goals for the Games Toys and Play Program**

**It is the goal of the Games Toys and Play Concentration that graduates demonstrate the following:**

### **1. Knowledge of Materials and Processes and Core Study within the Concentration**

Students understand a variety of both physical and digital materials, tools and fabrication processes relevant to the creation of toys, table top games and video games. They understand mechanics, skins and dynamics and how narrative and design work together to create the user experience across many genres of toys and games. They understand taking an idea through the development process including prototyping, playtesting, revision and final mock-up. They are able to access resources and tutorials to learn new tools and techniques; to solve problems; to exhibit an understanding of research methods.

### **2. Communications Proficiency**

Students are able to develop and communicate ideas in prototype form and receive critique on their work during process, playtesting and final presentation. They are able to evaluate their own work and the work of others, in writing and in discussions. They are able to draft, playtest and revise written instructions and UI for toys and games. They are able to pitch and present their final product ideas in front of a diverse audience.

### **3. Historical and Contemporary Awareness of the Medium**

Students are aware of historical, contemporary and emerging trends, tools, materials, audiences and marketing strategies within the fields of toys, table top games and video games. They are aware of the racial, gender and other discriminatory biases within the disciplines, their own work, and the efforts to overcome these by individuals and groups. They are aware of the psychological and sociological aspects of play and how they can apply it to the toys and games they create.

### **4. Contextual Awareness, Analytical Proficiency**

Students are able to synthesize the use of drawing, design, fabrication, color, typography and code, and to apply visual organization and symbolic representation principles to the products they create. They understand the process of moving from concept to finished work. Students are aware of the concept of Gamification and how it can be applied to all types of learning environments. They are able to create distinctive gameplay derived from working theories, in addition to engineering novel solutions to challenges and prompts.

### **5. Professional Business Practice**

Students are knowledgeable of professional business practices, ethical and moral behavior and are able to successfully conduct themselves in multiple professional environments. They have an understanding of the planning processes, organizational skills, and management of working with teams and are able to collaborate within an interdisciplinary setting. They are able to package and present their work in a professional manner in person, on the web and through print and social media.

## **Specific Learning Outcomes for Games Toys Play Program**

### Sociology and Psychology of Play

- Explore **methods and theories of play**, how a toy or game becomes 'fun' from a creator's and user's perspective.
- Understand the **dynamics of individual and group play** in analog and digital form including virtual social communities.
- Explore **concepts in human-game interaction** such as agency, elicitation, input/output, signaling, reward schedule, immersion, game flow, progressive and emergent gameplay.
- Explore **current research into gaming** and its impact on individuals and society.
- Connect **psychological principles to design principles** in the creation of toys and games.

### Toy and Game Design Principles

- Understand the **basics of game design science**, including game design structures, methodologies, rationales, and processes.
- Identify the **core elements of toys and games**: components, mechanics, dynamics and aesthetics.
- Identify the **core elements of gameplay**: action, information, strategy, outcome and payoff/return.
- Understand and create **interactive narratives** with characters, settings, plots and other mechanical narrative features.

- Understand **toy and game genres and audiences** and how changing demographics shape what toys and games are played.
- Learn to **productively use playtesting and critique** to generate multiple revisions

#### Toy and Analog Game Fabrication

- Explore **methods of analog prototyping** to facilitate idea generation for analog and digital designs.
- Understand **design principles unique to analog**. I.e. using cards, counters, tokens, dice, pen and paper.
- Create **prototypes and bring prototypes to finished proofs** using a variety of media.
- Turn **finished proofs to products** with a variety of manufacturing and production processes, including how to design for a specific process.
- Explore the use of **printed graphics on media** to communicate form and function.
- Explore the use of **packaging and promotional accessories** in a finished product.

#### Digital Game Development

- Gain **familiarity in a game engine** and understand the common language shared between families of game engines.
- Gain **familiarity with coding** via script writing, researching documentation and gaining context of other computer languages.
- Develop **multiple methods for brainstorming digital games** and creating quick prototypes that convey mechanics.
- Understand the **game development lifecycle**, its exact phases and how the relationships between phases differ between teams.
- Bring a **game idea through all phases of the development cycle**: research, planning, prototyping, playtesting, production and pitch/presentation
- Practice creating **game assets for prototyping and finish** while understanding the importance of game aesthetics.

#### Communication

- Gain **competence in presenting concepts** through text, audio and video. This includes researching the best practices to give information to a team or audience.
- Gain **experience with public speaking and formal presentation**.
- Learn to **write professionally for proposals and pitch** while learning to revise according to your audience.
- Learn to **write and revise design toy and game instructionals**, as other printed accessories and materials.
- Develop an awareness and understanding of **soft skills vs hard skills**.

#### Team Work

- Explore the **dynamics of teamwork** including roles and responsibilities
- **Practice teamwork**. Build the soft skills for working in teams
- Take on **various team roles including leadership** to better understand team dynamics and your own role on teams
- Develop **strategies for resolving conflict** while working in teams
- Work in **creative teams to brainstorm** toy and game ideas, from initial concept all the way to finished product.
- Use **project management techniques and tools** to facilitate team communication or individual product productions

#### Industry Preparation: Safety, Ethics, Sustainability and Legal Issues

- Gain an **understanding of safety issues and regulations** in the toy and analog game industry.
- Consider **gender and racial bias** in toy and game development and marketing
- Consider the **ethics of toy and game development**, entertainment psychology and engineering.
- Consider the **sustainability of toy and game production** as well as the lifespan and disposal of toys and games.
- Understand **copyright, plagiarism and licensing issues** in the toy and game industry.

#### Industry Preparation: Marketing

- Gain a basic **understanding of target audience** and the marketing issues for each
- Develop **packaging, branding and identity** materials for toys and games
- Identify strategies for **advertising and promotional opportunities** across media.
- Understand the **various strategies for bringing products to market** including pitch fest, toy fairs, cons, investors, agents, licensing, and or independently selling toys and games.