



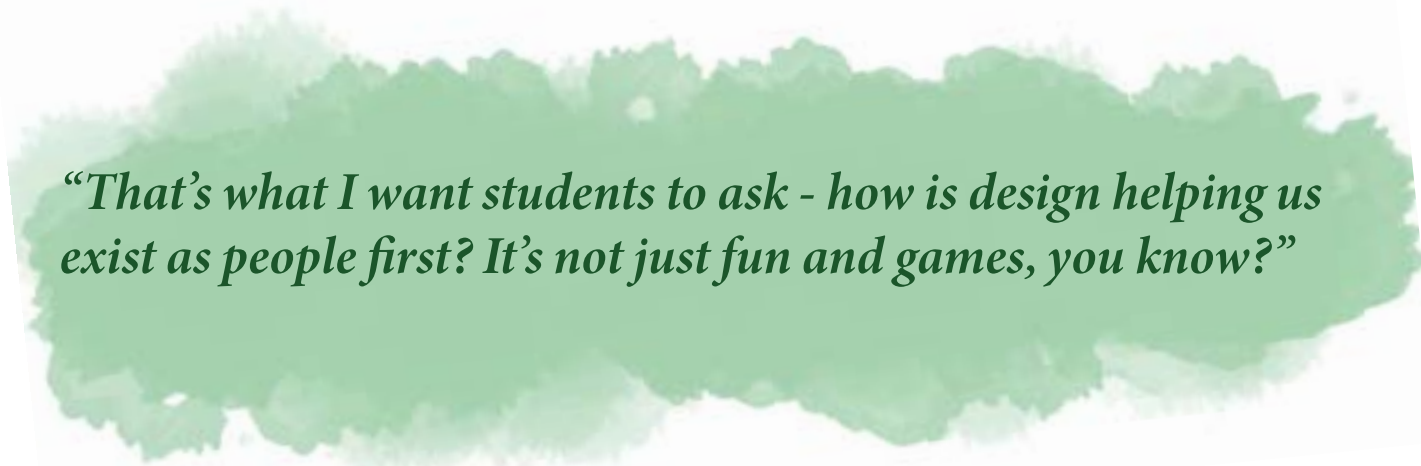
the comm-unity newsletter

Communication Department Contributing to the New Game Design Program in Fall 2023

by **Cal Lepkowski**

There will be a Game Design program coming to Manhattan College for the fall 2023 semester! The program will have both a major and minor that will venture across three separate departments and two separate schools.

“The three departments involved are Communication, Art History & Digital Media Art, and the Computer Science Department,” explained Dr. Michael Grabowski, the Chair of the Communication Department. “This is a really innovative program that bridges two different schools and three departments, and also offers elective courses in other departments.”



“That’s what I want students to ask - how is design helping us exist as people first? It’s not just fun and games, you know?”

“The way that we have all these students work together is that they all start off together. They take a course that we just approved called ART 134: The Culture of Games,” Grabowski said. “This is where all

the students meet one another, they learn about the context, the history of games.”

Following this introductory course, students will venture into one of three concentrations: narrative, design or coding. The courses for the narrative concentration will be within the Communication Department, Art History & Digital Media Art for design, and coding as a part of the Computer Science curriculum.

“We participated in a lot of discussions, a lot of meetings which were always very constructive, productive and we are glad to help and support,” said Dr. Igor Aizenberg, the Chair of the Computer Science Department.

The concluding Game Design courses will have students return and work together with students from the different concentrations to produce and then pitch a video game to a select audience. That final span of courses attempts to mimic the organization of gaming development companies and the gaming industry in its entirety.

“We’re going to treat this like an incubator - where the students will propose producing an original video game and they will head up different departments ... [It’s] just like real game development companies will structure their work,” Dr. Grabowski explained.

The hopes and visions for the future of the Game Design program at Manhattan are, of course, at an extreme high. For one, the program will gain the interest and attention of many students, and, two, openings and job positions within video game companies are arising from an abundance of pathways.

Patrick Bender, an adjunct professor of game design at the college, will be teaching some of the courses offered for the major.

“Game designers are, I think, in a really good position to understand the systems that we find ourselves in every day that can be very easily overlooked if you don’t think about how these systems play a role in our lives,” Bender said.

In the process of its creation, the defining emphasis of the Game Design program was, and is, the ability to be interdisciplinary. One of the primary goals of the Game Design program is to draw in as many Manhattan College students as possible, not even necessarily from the three founding departments.

“The skills that the students will learn in this program can be applied not just to video games and the video game industry, but to a whole host of other industries,” Dr. Grabowski said. ★