CSC 295 2012F *Algorithmic Arts*

Front Door

Introduction

Welcome to the Fall 2012 session of Grinnell College's CSC 295.01, a special topics course in *Algorithmic Arts*. In this course, we will read and discuss a wide variety of articles about the interaction between computing and the arts. You can read the offical blurb for more details.

The Web site for the course is `http://www.cs.grinnell.edu/~rebelsky/Courses/CSC295/2012F/`. You can find all sorts of interesting things on the course web, and I'd encourage you to look there.

This is an experimental course. Among other things, this means that I expect to be updating the syllabus as the semester goes on. I consider this course our joint property - if you want to suggest different directions in our readings or discussions, feel free to do so. I have planned that we will revisit the schedule in week 8, but you may also make suggestions earlier. I have a fairly large collection of books relating to computers and art, so feel free to stop by my office and browse.

This course also serves as this semester's "CS table", an informal gathering of folks on campus interested in issues related to computer science. Expect to have people participate who are not officially registered for the course. (Those folks do not have to lead discussion, but they are likely to contribute to discussions.)

Basics

Meets: Fri 12:05-1:05 p.m., JRC 224A (the first PDR at the top of the stairs in the Marketplace). *If you are not on a meal plan, or on a minimal meal plan, sign in at the front and the cost of your meal will be covered.*

Instructor: Samuel A. Rebelsky, Science 3824. 269-4410 (office). 236-7445 (home). Office hours: TBD. I tend to follow an open door policy: Feel free to stop by when my door is open or to make an appointment for another time. I have children, so please do not call my house before 7 a.m. or after 10 p.m.

Grading

This is a one-credit course, graded as S/D/F only. Since the focus of the course is on discussion of a variety of papers and works, your grade will depend on your contributions. Each week, a team of two or three students will lead discussion. Everyone else is expected to read the paper in advance and to contribute to the discussion.

To earn an S, you must

- satisfactorily serve on the leadership team for at least two discussions,
- meet with the instructor prior to leading discussions as described elsewhere, and
- participate in at least eleven of the thirteen class meetings.

You will earn a D if you fail to follow through on any of the above requirements.

You will earn an F if you fail to follow through on all of the above requirements.

Leading a Discussion

At the start of the semester, and again halfway through the semester, registered students will sign up in groups to lead discussions of particular papers on particular dates (see the schedule).

Since registered students should have had prior experience in discussion based courses, such students should know a bit about leading discussions. In particular, when you are leading a discussion, you should

- be ready to act as our "expert-for-a-day" on the discussion topic;
- plan to give a brief overview of key issues introduced in the paper (about five minutes); and
- develop several open-ended questions to start a discussion with the group.

Thus, to prepare for leading a discussion, you should do the following.

- Read the recommended readings.
- Reflect on any artworks that are part of the reading. Consider what issues in the work you might want to draw our attention to.
- Dig a bit deeper to try to address any points where you are confused or have questions (factual or otherwise).
- Meet with your partner(s) to sketch out your overview and brainstorm discussion questions.
- Meet with the instructor *before* the Friday you are presenting to get feedback on your plans. Email me to schedule your meeting.

In past sessions of CS Table, students have found interesting ways to vary discussions. I welcome such variation.

Textbook

There is no textbook for this course. I will be distributing readings each week. You can see a tentative list of readings on the course schedule.

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