Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
PEOPLES' FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA
RUDN University

Faculty of Philology

educational division (faculty/institute/academy) as higher education programme developer

COURSE SYLLABUS

Screen-based game communications

course title

Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of:

42.03.02 Journalism

field of studies / speciality code and title

The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme of higher education:

Multimedia Journalism

higher education programme profile/specialisation title

2025

1. OBJECTIVE OF THE DISCIPLINE

The course Screen-based Game Communications aims to explore how communication operates within and around digital games. It focuses on narrative design, player interaction, game-based storytelling, and the socio-cultural impact of games as a form of screen media.

The main objectives are:
1. To examine key concepts and theories of communication in game environments.
2. To analyze how games construct meaning through visuals, mechanics, dialogue, and player agency.
3. To develop students' ability to critically assess screen-based games as complex media texts.
4. To explore the role of games in transmedia storytelling, branding, education, and social interaction.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ON FINISHING THE COURSE

Students are expected to master the following competencies:

Table 2.1. The list of competencies formed in the mastering of the discipline (the results of the discipline)

Code	Competence	Indicators of competence achievement (within the discipline)
GPC-1	Able to create media texts and (or) media products demanded by society and industry, and (or) communication products in accordance with the norms of Russian and foreign languages, and the peculiarities of other sign systems.	GPC-1.2 Prepares journalistic texts and (or) products of various genres and formats in accordance with Russian and foreign language norms and other sign systems
GPC-3.	Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.GPC-3. Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and	GPC-3.2 - Applies the means of artistic expression in journalistic texts and (or) products

Code	Competence	Indicators of competence achievement (within the discipline)
	(or) media products, and (or) communication products.	
GPC-8.	Able to understand the principles of modern information technologies and use them to meet the challenges of professional activity.	GPC-8.3 - Knows how to use digital technologies, methods and techniques of technical processing and placement of information resources and materials in classical and digital resources and media; knows how to create and maintain information databases; knows how to place information in the digital space

3. THE DISCIPLINE (MODULE) IN THE STRUCTURE OF EP HE

The discipline "Writing and Essential Editing" belongs to the Compulsory Module of Block 1 of the curriculum. Table 1 shows preceding and subsequent subjects aimed at forming competence discipline by the matrix of competencies.

Table 3.1. The list of components of the EP HE, contributing to the achievement of the planned results of the discipline

Code	Competence	Previous discipline	Subsequent disciplines
GPC-1	Able to create media texts and (or) media products demanded by society and industry, and (or) communication products in accordance with the norms of Russian and foreign languages, and the peculiarities of other sign systems.	Radio Broadcasting / Основы радиовещания Writing and Essential Editing / Литературное редактирование Russian language and culture of speech / Русский язык и культура речи Media production / Организация информационного производства Basics of academic writing / Основы академического письма	-

Code	Competence	Previous discipline	Subsequent disciplines
GPC-3.	Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.GPC-3. Able to use the diversity of achievements of national and world culture in the process of creating media texts and (or) media products, and (or) communication products.	Fundamentals of Journalism Theory / Основы теории журналистики Fundamentals of Mass Communication / Основы теории коммуникации Media system / Система СМИ Межкультурная коммуникация / Intercultural communication History of Journalism / История журналистики Russian and Foreign Literature / Русская и зарубежная литература International Journalism / Международная журналистика	-
GPC-8.	Able to understand the principles of modern information technologies and use them to meet the challenges of professional activity.	TV Journalism / Тележурналист ика DATA Journalism / Журналистика данных Media Visualizaton / Медиавизуализ ация	-

4. THE SCOPE OF THE DISCIPLINE AND TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

The overall workload of the discipline is **3** credits.

Types of activities	Total hours	Semesters							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Classroom activities (total)									
Lectures	30							30	
Practical lessons/Seminars	30							30	
Laboratory activities									
Control	15							15	
Independent work (total)	33							33	
Overall workload hours	**108**							**108**	
Credits	**3**							**3**	

5. CONTENT OF THE DISCIPLINE

Table 5.1 Content of the discipline (module) by type of activity

Name of the Unit	Content of the Units (topics)	Type of activity
Lecture 1: Games as Communication Systems	Games as multimodal texts: image, sound, mechanics, narrative Theories of play and interaction Ludology vs. narratology debates	Lecture
Seminar 1: Analyzing Communication in a Game World	Group analysis of in-game communication (e.g. The Last of Us, Journey, Papers, Please) What is said through design? What is "played" vs. "told"? Discussion: How do games communicate without words?	Seminar
Lecture 2: Narrative and Player Agency	Story structures in games: linear, branching, emergent Player choice, interactivity, and immersion Dialogue systems and environmental storytelling	Lecture
Seminar 2: Mapping Story and Choice in Games	Case study: story architecture in Life is Strange or Detroit: Become Human Small group task: visualize branching narrative paths Discussion: When does agency matter most?	Seminar
Lecture 3: Games and Cultural Communication	Games as tools of ideology, identity, and social critique Representation of gender, race, and politics in games Games in journalism, education, and activism	Lecture
Seminar 3: Critiquing a Game's Message	Select and present a game with a strong cultural or political message Analyze mechanics, visuals, and dialogue as tools of persuasion Debate: Can games be journalism?	Seminar
Seminar 4: Designing a Game-Based Communication Concept	Brainstorming session: develop a concept for a short game with a clear communicative goal Teams present draft ideas (e.g. for awareness campaigns, branded content, or digital storytelling) Peer feedback and discussion of ethical implications	Seminar

6. MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT OF THE DISCIPLINE

The discipline is implemented using e-learning and distance learning technologies

Table 6.1. Material and technical support of the discipline

Type of classroom	Classroom equipment	Specialized educational/laboratory equipment, software and materials for the mastering the discipline (if necessary)
Digital Classroom	Computer, TV VCR and a transparency projector; CD players and DVD players.	
Lecture room	Computer, internet, TV VCR and a transparency projector	
Home for independent work	Computer, internet,	
Library for independent work	Computer, internet	

** The classroom for students' independent work **MUST be indicated**!*

7. EDUCATIONAL AND METHODICAL AND INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT OF THE DISCIPLINE

Main readings
1. Salen, K., & Zimmerman, E. (2022). Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals. MIT Press.
2. Mäyrä, F. (2021). An Introduction to Game Studies: Games and Culture. SAGE Publications.
3. SBizzocchi, J., & Tanenbaum, J. (2020). Narrative Design for Interactive Media: A Guide for Writers, Designers, and Developers. Routledge.

Other recommended readings
1. Bogost, I. (2021). Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames. MIT Press.
2. Flanagan, M., & Nissenbaum, H. (2020). Values at Play in Digital Games. MIT Press.
3. Sarkeesian, A., & Petit, C. (2020). Tropes vs Women in Video Games (video essays + transcripts). Feminist Frequency.

Web-sites and online resources
1. ЭБС РУДН и сторонние ЭБС, к которым студенты университета имеют доступ на основании заключенных договоров:
- htpp://www.rad.pfu.edu.ru/
- www.libfl.ru

- www.portalus.ru
- www.project.phil.pu.ru
- www.lib.fl.ru
- www.gutenberg.net
- www.ipl.org
- www.theeuropeanlibrary.org; www.epoch-net.org
- http://gabro.ge/biblio/0707/3066/filosof.historic.ru/books/item/f00/s00/z00358/st000/htm/

2. Databases and search systems:
− web search engine google.com
− online encyclopedia wikipedia.org
− news aggregation website drudgereport.com
− Googlescholar.com

Teaching materials for students' independent work while mastering the discipline/module*:
1. A course of lectures on the discipline.
2. Practical assignments and their brief contents;
3. Questions for self-check, and test assignments.
   * - all educational and methodical materials for students' independent work are published in the current order on the page of the discipline in TUIS!

8. GRADING MATERIALS AND GRADING-RATING SYSTEM FOR ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCE FORMED IN THE DISCIPLINE

The grading materials and grading-rating system* for assessing the level of competence (part of competencies) for the discipline are presented in the Appendix to this Working program of the discipline.
* - are formed based on the requirements of the corresponding local normative act of RUDN University.