

**DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: :**

**HSS 2217 Game On: Game Design and Social Interactions**

Honors Seminar  
Spring 2015

US Credits: 3/0/3

**PREREQUISITES:**

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing  
WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing and Ethics

**CATALOG  
DESCRIPTION:**

An interdisciplinary course that introduces students to principles of gaming which inform a broad spectrum of human behaviors and practices. By uncovering the analogies between games and social interactions and practices, the course provides a conceptual toolkit that can be applied towards navigating our increasingly gamified world.

**RATIONALE:**

Game analysis provides a powerful lens through which to view a broad range of social interactions and practices. By introducing students to principles of gaming through an interdisciplinary perspective, the course aims to sensitize students to the ways in which gaming intersects with problem solving, strategic negotiations, self-motivated action, and design thinking. The vibrant insights of gaming allow for a novel reading of contemporary practices encountered in business, politics, technological applications, and psychology, thus enabling a more sophisticated understanding today's social and cultural landscape.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of theoretical concepts related to gaming;
- Show critical awareness of the ubiquitous character of games in politics, business, technological applications, and psychology;
- Apply game design concepts and strategies in daily interactions;
- Examine principles of gaming through critical analysis as well as reflective practical application.

**METHOD OF TEACHING AND  
LEARNING:**

In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

- Textual analysis, class discussion, workshop-style pair work and group work during class meetings;
- Active student-centered teaching approach in the presentation of course material to engage learners;
- Critical-thinking exercises and learning activities designed to help students acquire confidence and benefit from independent study;
- Student presentations of learning material to encourage involvement in the learning process; Extensive instructor feedback on assignments and activities;
- Individualized assistance during office hours for further discussion of lecture material, additional reading, and assignments;
- Additional print and audiovisual educational material posted on the

Blackboard course template.

**ASSESSMENT:**

**Critical essay 40%**

A 1,500-2,000-word critical essay dealing with one or more aspects of gaming in the contemporary world. The essay needs to display a firm grasp of the topic at hand, of the issues discussed in the course as a whole, as well as of the relevant critical bibliography.

**Creative project 40%**

Students will deploy a creative medium of their choice to apply their insights on concepts and ideas explored in the course. There will be a presentation of the creative project.

**Participation 20%**

Each student will be evaluated according to his/her contribution in the class, the preparation of the material and his/her critical ability. Furthermore, each student will be assessed in regards to his/her participation in group activities and discussions that will arise throughout the course.

**INDICATIVE READING:**

**REQUIRED READING:**

Selections from the following:

Ariely, D., *Predictably Irrational, The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers 2008

Berne, E. *Games People Play - The Basic Hand Book of Transactional Analysis*. New York: Ballantine Books 1964.

Brams, Steven. *Rational Politics: Decisions, Games, and Strategy*. Boston: Academic Press, 1996.

DeKoven, B., *The Well-Played Game: A Player's Philosophy*, MIT Press (MA) 2013

Dixit A., and Nalebuff B.. *Thinking Strategically*. Norton 1991.

Dutta P.K., *Strategies and Games: Theory And Practice*, MIT 1999.

Huizinga, Johan, *Homo Ludens*, Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink & zoon N.V. 1938

Salen K., Zimmerman E., *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*, MIT Press, 2005

Schelling, T., *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge Harvard University Press, 1980.

Trefry, G., *Casual Game Design: Designing Play for the Gamer in All of Us*, Morgan Kaufmann, 2010

**RECOMMENDED READING:**

Aarseth, Espen, "Computer Game Studies, Year One". *Game Studies* <http://gamestudies.org/0101/editorial.html> 2001

Bateman, C. Boon, R., *21st Century Game Design*, Hingham, Mass: Charles River Media 2006

Brandenberger, A. and Nalebuff, B. *Co-opetition*. New York; Doubleday, 1996.

Crawford, G., *Video Gamers*, London: Routledge 2012

Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Simon, *Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction*, Routledge 2013

David Freeman, *Creating Emotion in Games*, New Riders, 2004

Raph Koster, *A Theory of Fun for Game Design*, Paraglyph, 2014

Galloway, Alexander R., *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*. University of Minnesota Press 2006

McGonigal, Jane, *Reality is broken: Why games make us better and how they can change the world*, New York: Penguin Press 2011

McMillan, J. *Games, Strategies, and Managers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Otterspeer, Willem, *Reading Huizinga*, Amsterdam University Press, 2010

Rouse, Richard, Steve Ogden, and Mark Louis Rybczyk *Game Design: Theory and Practice*, Wordware Publishing 2001

Schell, Jesse, *The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses*, Morgan Kaufmann, 2008

**COMMUNICATION  
REQUIREMENTS:**

All written and submitted work (with the exception of in-class work) must be word-processed and adhere to the Harvard Reference Style

**SOFTWARE  
REQUIREMENTS:**

Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint

**WWW RESOURCES:**

The course will use a number of on-line materials available to the students on Blackboard. Online sources are used in relation to the topics discussed in the course:

<http://www.thefuntheory.com/>

<http://gamecenter.nyu.edu/>

<http://www.digra.org/digital-library/>

<http://www.gameology.org/>

<http://www.game-research.com/>

<http://www.jesperjuul.net/ludologist/>

<http://www.henryjenkins.org/>

<http://www.ludology.net/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20121116151408/>

<http://kuznets.fas.harvard.edu/~aroth/alroth.html#gameclass>

<http://dklevine.com/>

<http://oyc.yale.edu/economics/econ-159>

<http://www.digra.org/digital-library/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20121116151408/>

**INDICATIVE CONTENT:**

**What are Games?** Historical origins, key thinkers, evolution, scope.

**Basic Concepts of Gaming:** game types, strategies, levels, narrative, score.

**Elements of Game Design:** incentives, game mechanics, rules, Battle of the Sexes, Prisoner's Dilemma, The Chicken Game, the arms race, the ultimatum game.

**Games in Business:** loyalty schemes, price wars, co-opetition, tit-for-tat strategies.

**Games in Politics:** commitments, burning bridges, mixed strategies

**Games in Psychology:** roles, fairness, ethics

**Games in Daily Life:** interpersonal interactions, career, social media.