

USER RESEARCH

EAE 6040

Instructor: Ashley ML Guajardo, PhD

Preferred contact: ashley@eae.utah.edu

Office: 213, Building 72

Class Time: 2:00-5:00PM, Mondays

Class Location:

Office Hours: Please reach out to make an appointment to chat.

Class Discord: Yes! We have a Discord! When you join the class I will make the link available.

Course Description

This course will give students experience with practical applications of user research methods in the study of games. The class works best when paired with a game in live development and with students who are driven and self-motivated.

Rather than have a lecture format, this class runs as a seminar. Each week students are assigned readings, see week-by-week for a breakdown, and will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss. The course has four practice based assessments which are also detailed below.

Required Texts

- None for purchase. All texts are available for free in the weekly modules.

Required Materials

- Voice recording software for either your phone or computer- depending which you plan to use. [Audacity](#) is a good choice, so is [OBS/Streamlabs](#).

Course Objectives:

- In this class we will use advanced user research techniques to improve the gameplay of one or more games in live development.
- We will learn the best practices of user researchers currently working in the games industry.
- We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of methods and models.

Learning Outcomes:

After taking this class, students will be able to:

- Recognize sound ethical procedures in human subjects research.
- Construct user tests using a range of established research methods.
- Select which method to use to address a research inquiry or a development problem.
- Synthesize data and formulate results into easy-to-read reports for development teams.