

COMM 5650-001
Game Culture & Theory
Summer 2024
GC 2575



Monday/Wednesday 11:00am-12:30pm

Course Information

Course Description

Together we will critically consider how “play” is understood in relation to games and game culture. We will think about play, consider different facets of play, and experience play. We will also consider how play fits within the theoretical communication frameworks with particular attention to how different aspects of game culture are understood, communicated, and communicated about.

Some questions we will consider this semester include: are games/gamers a subculture? Are violent video games to blame for societal violence? How do games, both narratively and mechanically, conform to (or resist) social expectations? How are communities constructed through practices of play? How do games, particularly video games, relate to ideology?

Course Learning Outcomes

The purpose of this course is to:

- Explore different theoretical frameworks in relation to the concept of “play”
- Enhance problem-solving skills by analyzing complex problems
- Foster critical thinking by encouraging discussions about ethical and societal implications of “play” and culture

Prerequisites

- You do not need to have completed any other courses prior to taking this course.

Course Format

- This course is an in-person, discussion-focused course. This means that you are responsible for regular attendance at the main campus.
- Discussions are a key component of engaging with and understanding theory, so it is crucial to your own and your peers’ learning that everyone consistently participate.
- This is a senior-level seminar with substantial reading and writing requirements.

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General Education Credit

This course does not fulfill any university general education requirements.

This course does qualify as an elective credit for Communication major students in all four emphases. Note that this course is primarily a culture studies-focused course.

Required Course Materials

Readings will be linked in modules on Canvas. Where possible, reading links will direct to the university library's online versions of the assigned readings. Some readings may be in .pdf format.

If you have issues accessing a reading, please inform me as soon as possible.

Some materials will be incorporated into class discussions.

I do expect you to access certain games.

Required Course Materials

The following games have free-to-play options:

- Depression Quest (available from <http://www.depressionquest.com/>)
- Doki Doki Literature Club (also has a paid version; available on Steam)
- Dungeons & Dragons Beyond (<https://www.dndbeyond.com/>)
- Duolingo (iOS/Android/<https://duolingo.com>)
- Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (available from <https://classicreload.com/the-hitchhikers-guide-to-the-galaxy.html>)
- Zork (available from <https://classicreload.com/zork-i.html#>)

The following games will be accessed in class (I do not expect you to purchase them):

- Call of Duty Modern Warfare II (2009) (available from multiple platforms)
- Grand Theft Auto (available from multiple platforms)
- Innovation (~\$20 from various board game retailers)
- Shadow of the Colossus (available on Playstation 2)
- Super Mario Bros. (available on Nintendo Switch; also available from <https://supermarioplay.com/>)

The following games require you to purchase them:

- Hundreds (\$2.99 iOS/Android)

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Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jeremy Freed

Email: jeremy.freed@utah.edu

Office: LNCO 2960

Office Hours: By appointment

(in-person or remote; email to discuss scheduling)

It is a FERPA violation for me to discuss your coursework or grades via outside electronic communication (e.g., Gmail). I will only respond to communication from your Umail or Canvas Inbox.

Please do not call or text my cell phone.

Of Tools and Toys...

Our classroom is a discussion seminar.

Electronic devices make finding information much easier. Laptops, in particular, also contribute to improved note taking (although not to improved memory retention - taking notes by hand using a tactile (pen/pencil) tool continues to be more effective).

That said, be cautious about the distracting nature of electronic devices.

Use your tools as tools to aid your learning. Off-topic device usage (i.e., texting friends, playing non-course-related games, scrolling social media, etc.) impedes learning, reduces memory retention, and leads to lower educational and grade outcomes.

See [Distraction, not the device.](#)

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Expectations

I expect you to...

Be self-motivated. You need to budget sufficient time to complete and understand the readings. You will need to budget nine (9) total hours per week for successful completion of this course. This includes 3 hours per week of in-class time, ~3 hours per week completing assigned readings, 1-2 hours per week working on assignments, and 1 hour per week engaging in play. Use your time effectively.

Carefully read. Attention to detail is a highly sought after skill in most fields. Carefully read this syllabus. Fully read assignment descriptions. Read assignment rubrics. Read the assigned readings.

Read assigned readings for understanding. Some of the texts we will read are difficult and not every concept will be immediately clear or obvious. Take notes as you read and ask yourself if you can explain the main idea (i.e., the gist). Note areas that remain unclear or confusing and raise those areas during out discussions.

Be willing to not be an expert. Ask questions. Don't be shy about bringing questions to class. The only dumb questions are questions that are not asked. Let's engage in dialogue.

Understand your rights and responsibilities as a student: [Student Handbook](#) and [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

You should expect me to...

Curate course content. I curate and create content that is intended to help you understand concepts with the intent of helping you achieve the course learning objectives.

Respond to your emails. I will do my best to respond to electronic communication (email) within 48 hours. This does not count holidays or weekends. If you have not received a response after 48 hours, then contact again until I respond.

Promptly evaluate your work. I will do my best to grade all assignments within seven (7) days. If an assignment is ungraded after fourteen (14) days, please contact me and hold me accountable. Foster a classroom experience that respects the dignity of each member.

Push your thinking. We are here to learn and part of learning is pushing past your comfort zone. We will apply theoretical frameworks to guide our analysis of cultural artifacts. Culture is a complex phenomenon so pushing from simplistic to complex thinking is crucial to understanding how cultures function.

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Expectations Discussion Guidelines

Culture studies is inherently suited to examining difficult and controversial topics. Language is a symbolic system with ambiguities, room for interpretation, and room for contestation. Good argumentation involves defending your position based on rational, warranted, and supported reasons. This does not mean that you should fear speaking or voicing an unpopular position.

To help our discussions remain focused on argumentation (and not merely arguing), please use the following guidelines:

- **Listen respectfully.** Don't just wait for your turn to talk. Actually listen to what others are saying. This is crucial for engaging in "steelman" argumentation.
- **Share responsibility for including others.** If you tend to have a lot to say, don't be afraid to speak, but leave space for others to also contribute. If you tend to be quiet, challenge yourself to contribute so others can hear your voice.
- **Opinions are opinions.** There is a difference between an opinion (everyone has one) and informed knowledge, which comes from sustained experience (i.e., living in the field), study, and practice. Good argumentation involves informed knowledge and not simply stating opinions.
- **Failure is a starting point.** We all make mistakes. Anyone learning new skills or attempting complex tasks will err. Use your own mistakes, and the mistakes of others (including your instructor), as ways to learn and improve.
- **Sticks and stones.** Words have impacts. Consider how you feel when someone is disrespectful or marginalizing to you. Consider how others feel when you are disrespectful or marginalizing to them. In argumentation, attacking others is a sign of poor argument (ad hominem fallacy).
- **We are all in this together.** Make an effort to get to know each other. Learn each others' names. Speak to each other and not just to the instructor. Take pair and group work seriously. Your peers' learning is partly dependent on your engagement (and vice versa).
- **Starting points.** A key component of argumentation is finding starting points, or places where we can agree. We all bring different life experiences and worldviews. Be open to hearing and learning from perspectives that are not the same as your own. Look for where you have common ground, not merely where you disagree.

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Course Policies

Attendance Policy

You control your learning. Being present with your questions and perspectives not only improves your own learning, but also contributes to improving the learning of your peers. We meet at total of 24 times. **If you have six (6) or more unexcused absences, you will receive an E grade for this course for not meeting university requirements for regular attendance.**

If you are ill and possibly contagious, please stay home.

If you miss class, email me to let me know the reason (i.e., illness, emergency, etc.). Absences for university-sanctioned activities, illness, and emergency will be excused.

As this is a senior-level seminar no late work will be accepted. Plan ahead.

If you are undergoing a serious life event, contact the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling Center, and/or the Office of Disability and Access for assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from the Office of Disability and Access that specifies additional time for assignments, you will need to discuss your needs with me before the assignment due dates.

Late Work

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Course Policies

Content Accommodations

I select course content as a vehicle for learning, to help illustrate core principles, and to promote critical thinking. You may be exposed to ideas or concepts you might find discomforting or offensive, including concepts grounded in critical and cultural studies and rhetoric. I will not make accommodations to course content, requirements, or expectations. I suggest you try and keep an open mind and be willing to face challenging intellectual arguments. I will not suggest that you change deeply held beliefs, but you may be exposed to arguments and viewpoints that differ from those beliefs. **If you believe that exposure to course content will place an undue burden on your sincerely-held core beliefs, drop the class.**

Other Accommodations

Contact me at the beginning of the semester if you need accommodations for:

- Religious Practice
- Active Duty Military
- University-Sanctioned Events
- Disability/Access

Contact me as soon as possible if an extreme personal circumstance (e.g., hospitalization, death of a close loved one, etc.) is interfering with your ability to complete work.

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Mutual Respect

Think of the classroom as a working environment. Respect both the facilities employees who have to clean the room and your peers by not making a mess. Be cautious with liquids since liquids are hazardous to electronics. If you need to leave the room, do so, but try to minimize disruption both when exiting and when returning. In general, be considerate of your peers and expect that they show consideration in return.

Generative AI (i.e., ChatGPT, Adobe Express/Firefly, etc.) is a new technology (LLM and machine learning) that has substantial potential for both benefit and harm. Generative AI has notable limitations and there are serious questions about plagiarism and credibility, since generative AI is designed to provide human-like responses and the models have largely been trained in surface-level (e.g., Reddit) sources of communication. Generative AI has also been demonstrated to “hallucinate” (lie/make stuff up) when the answer is not known. While generative AI is a useful tool for certain functions (i.e., quick overviews of popular topics), using generative AI to do work for you is not wise, unethical, and potentially illegal. Use the tools with caution.

Generative AI

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Drop
&
Withdrawal

This course may not suit your needs or expectations. You might also find an unexpected life event interfering with your ability to succeed this semester.

If you elect to drop or withdraw from the course, **you are solely responsible** for doing so by the appropriate deadline. The last day to drop the course is May 22nd. The last day to withdraw from the course is June 21st.

[Registrar's Drop Policy](#); [Registrar's Withdraw Policy](#)

You are responsible for submitting assignments with the required naming convention, correct file extension, and using the software type and version required for the assignment. All assignments are due at midnight (11:59pm Mountain Time) and will be submitted via Canvas.

Do not wait until the last second to submit your assignments.

Assignment
Submission

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Not a Contract

This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the course schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas under Announcements.

Evaluating Learning - Learning Objectives

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester you will be able to...

- Recall and describe key culture studies theories.
- Interpret and compare various culture studies theories in relation to play.
- Apply culture studies theories to real-world scenarios, with particular relation to play.

Demonstrating Meeting the Objectives

Completing these assignments will demonstrate progress towards meeting the student learning objectives.

Evaluation	Relevant Objective	Value (%)
Discussion Leader	Recall and describe key culture studies theories Interpret and compare various culture studies theories in relation to play	20
Discussion Participation	Recall and describe key culture studies theories	20
Comparative Analysis	Interpret and compare various culture studies theories in relation to play	20
Analytical Essay	Apply culture studies theories to real-world scenarios, with particular relation to play	40
Total		100

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Evaluating Learning - Assignment Descriptions

Discussion Leader

Everyone will sign up to lead at least one discussion. Discussion leaders are responsible for introducing the theorist/theory for that day's discussion, formulating at least three discussion prompts, and guiding the discussion for the day. **Missing the discussion you sign up to lead can only be made up if there are remaining discussions where no one has signed up to lead those discussions (or if a classmate is willing to share).**

Discussion Participation

Everyone will consistently participate in the class discussions. You can participate in one of three ways.

- Bring one (or more) questions to class and ask them to the group.
- Send a related news or academic article that directly touches on the specific theory/game that we are discussing that day. **[If you miss a class, send an article AND write a short (250-word) reflection connecting the article to the specific theory/game]**
- Express your understanding of the concept(s) and/or raise questions during the discussion.

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Evaluating Learning - Assignment Descriptions

Comparative Analysis

You will choose at least two culture studies theories from those we cover during this course. You will read in-depth (primary and secondary sources beyond the course-assigned readings) about those theories, think about how the theories are similar, different, compatible, incompatible, etc., then you will write a short essay where you elaborate on how you understand the connections between the theories you selected.

Analytical Essay

You will select a game (video, board, card, etc.) and analyze that game using one (or more) of the theoretical frameworks that we cover during the course. Your analysis should center on how the game functions as a cultural artifact. You may consider the game from a variety of perspectives, such as narrativity, ludology, societal issues, communication, etc. You will use the theor(ies) as a lens through which you will interpret one or more aspects of the game. This is a comprehensive experiential research essay, meaning, you will need to both play the game (or observe others playing the game) and research/read additional sources beyond the assigned course readings.

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Evaluating Learning Grading Scale

Minimum Points	Maximum Points	Letter Grade
94.0	100.0	A
90.0	93.9	A-
87.0	89.9	B+
84.0	86.9	B
80.0	83.9	B-
77.0	79.9	C+
74.0	76.9	C
70.0	73.9	C-
67.0	69.9	D+
64.0	66.9	D
60.0	63.9	D-
0	59.9	E

University Achievement & GPA Equivalence

Letter Grade	GPA Equivalence	University Performance & Achievement
A	4.0	Excellent performance, superior achievement
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	Good performance, substantial achievement
B	3.0	
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	Standard performance and achievement
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	Substandard performance, marginal achievement
D	1.0	
D-	0.7	
E	0.0	Unsatisfactory performance and achievement

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Semester Schedule

May 13

Topic	Course Introduction
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	N/A
Complete the following as soon as possible:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the course syllabus • Read all assignment instructions and grading rubrics on Canvas 	
NOTE: You are responsible for carefully reading and understanding all syllabus policies and assignment requirements. If something is unclear, ask for clarification.	

May 13

Topic	Humans Who Play
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Players' Choice
Complete the following as soon as possible:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Huizinga, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (homo ludens) 	

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Semester Schedule

May 20

Topic	Magic Circle?
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Players' Choice
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Castronova, "The almost-magic circle" (pp. 147-160) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (magic circles) 	

May 22

Topic	Play
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Doki Doki Literature Club
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Sicart, "Play is" (pp. 1-18) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (what is play?) • Discussion Leader signup 	

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Semester Schedule

May 27

Topic	NO CLASS TODAY
Location	N/A
Featured Game	N/A
MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No assignments today 	

May 29

Topic	Deep Play
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Doki Doki Literature Club
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Geertz, "Deep play" (pp. 56-86) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Participation (deep play) 	

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Semester Schedule

June 03

Topic	Not Playing Properly
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Zork
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Aarseth, "I fought the law" (pp. 180-188) • Read Consalvo, "Cheating" (pp. 83-105) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (gaining advantage) 	

June 05

Topic	Hard Mode
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Innovation
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Jagoda, "On difficulty in video games" (pp. 199-233) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (learning curves) 	

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Semester Schedule

June 10

Topic	Story Time
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Juul, "Games telling stories?" 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (narratives) 	

June 12

Topic	Narrative or Ludology?
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Wesp, "A too-coherent world" 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (how different is different enough?) 	

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Semester Schedule

June 17

Topic	NO CLASS TODAY
Location	N/A
Featured Game	N/A
JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No assignments today 	

June 19

Topic	Cultural Capital
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Hundreds (iOS/Android)
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Bordieu, “Cultural and social reproduction” (pp. 257-271) Read Bogost, “Haute couture of video games” (pp. 56-62) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Participation (cultural capital) 	

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Semester Schedule

June 24

Topic	Ideological Apparatuses
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Depression Quest
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Althusser, "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses" (pp. 85-106 [to "On ideology." heading]) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assignments today 	

June 26

Topic	Interpellation
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Duolingo
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Althusser (pp. 106-126) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (are games ideological apparatuses?) • Comparative Analysis due Sunday, June 30 before midnight (11:59pm Mountain Time) 	

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Semester Schedule

July 01

Topic	NO CLASS TODAY
Location	N/A
Featured Game	N/A
WORK DAY - FOCUS ON RESEARCH FOR YOUR ANALYTICAL ESSAY	
Graded Assignments Due: No assignments today	

July 03

Topic	NO CLASS TODAY
Location	N/A
Featured Game	N/A
INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY	
Graded Assignments Due: No assignments today	

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Semester Schedule

July 08
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Topic	Ideology
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Grand Theft Auto
Complete the following as soon as possible:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Hall, “The problem of ideology” (pp. 28-44) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (ideology) 	

July 10
 11
 12

Topic	Moral Panics
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Dungeons & Dragons
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Hall, et al., “Policing the crisis” (pp. 3-28) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (amplification of risk) 	

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July 15

Topic	Playing War
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Call of Duty
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Stahl, "Have you played the war on terror?" (pp. 112-130) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (risks and video games) 	

July 17

Topic	Media Violence
Location	In-Person (GC 2575)
Featured Game	Call of Duty
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Markey & Ferguson, "Teaching us to fear" (pp. 27-48) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (No Russian) 	

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July 22

Topic	Queer Play
Location	In-Person (LNCO 2950)
Featured Game	Super Mario Bros.
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chess, “The queer case of video game studies” (pp. 84-94) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (playful playing) 	

July 24

Topic	NO CLASS TODAY
Location	N/A
Featured Game	N/A
PIONEER DAY HOLIDAY	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assignments today 	

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July 29

Topic	Erhabenheit
Location	In-Person (LNCO 2950)
Featured Game	Shadow of the Colossus
Complete the following before class:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Kant, "Observations of the feeling..." (pp. 13-34) 	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Participation (the sublime) 	

July 31

Topic	End of Line
Location	In-Person (LNCO 2950)
Featured Game	Players' Choice
No readings for today - Debrief and Wrap-Up	
Graded Assignments Due:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Essay due Friday, August 2nd before midnight (11:59pm Mountain Time) 	

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University Policies

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism means passing off someone else's work as your own or not giving credit to someone when you use their ideas, including generative AI.

Academic misconduct includes submitting graded work for multiple classes, completing work for others, and making false claims.

You do not have any permission to use any graded assignments in this class for any other class (you also cannot use graded work from previous courses for this class).

I receive class rosters with your name as well as "Preferred first name" (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account, which managed can be managed at any time). While CIS refers to this as merely a preference, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class or on assignments. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun are respected. If you need any assistance or support, please reach out to the LGBT Resource Center



Names and Pronouns

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University Policies

Misconduct
Sexual Harassment



Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677 (COPS). **As an employee of the University of Utah, I am a mandatory reporter for all cases of sexual violence** (this includes reports of cases that happened out-of-state, occurred many years ago, or have already been prosecuted).

There are several resources on campus that will support you with your language development, including:

- [English Language Institute](#)
- [International Student & Scholar Resources](#)
- [English for Academic Success \(EAS\) Program](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Languages & Resources


COMM 5650-001
Game Culture & Theory
Summer 2024
GC 2575



Monday/Wednesday 11:00am-12:30pm

University Policies


Wellness & Success



Your personal health and wellness are essential to your success as a student. Personal concerns like stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, or cross-cultural differences can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive in this course and at the University of Utah. The University has many resources available to aid you in achieving success as a student. Resources can be accessed through the university's [Basic Needs Collective](#).

Campus Safety

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677) or Sandy Police (801-799-3000) if you are at the Sandy Center. You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.



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University Policies

Americans with Disabilities Act



The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives will be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class will be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally.



Individual Perspectives

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University Policies

Technical Support



If you have technical issues with the course Canvas site, contact [Digital Learning Technologies](#).



For help with other university-related technology (e.g., UConnect, Two-Factor Authentication), you can find help through the [University IT help desk](#).

Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact—those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific course activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed status families. To learn more please contact the Dream Center at 801-213-3697.

Undocumented Students



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University Policies

Veterans



If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm.

Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources.

Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

Grievances

If you have any concerns about the course, please contact me via email or in person to discuss your concerns as soon as possible. If we are not able to resolve your concerns, contact [Travis Ciaramella](#), the Director of Undergraduate Studies



Reading List

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- Aarseth, E. (2014). I fought the law: Transgressive play and the implied player. In *From literature to cultural literacy* (pp. 180-188). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Althusser, L. (2001). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (notes toward an investigation). In Brewster, B. (Trans.), *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (pp. 85-126). Monthly Review Press.
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- Castronova, E. (2005). The almost-magic circle. In *Synthetic worlds: The business and culture of online games* (pp. 147-160). University of Chicago Press.
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- Consalvo, M. (2007). *Cheating: Gaining advantage in videogames* (pp. 83-105). MIT Press.
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Reading List

References

Huizinga, J. (2016). *Homo ludens: A study of the play-element in culture* (pp. 1-27). Angelico Press (Original work published 1949).

Jagoda, P. (2018). On difficulty in video games. *Critical Inquiry*, 45(1), 199-233. <https://doi.org/10.1086/699585>

Juul, J. (2001). Games telling stories? A brief note on games and narratives. *Game Studies*, 1(1). <https://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/>

Kant, I. (2011). *Observations of the feeling of the beautiful and sublime and other writings* (pp. 13-34). (P. Frierson & P. Guyer, Eds.). University of Cambridge Press.

Markey, P. & Ferguson, C. J. (2017). *Moral combat: Why the war on violent video games is wrong* (pp. 27-48). BenBella Books.

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Stahl, R. (2006). Have you played the war on terror? *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 23(2), 112-130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393180600714489>

Wesp, E. (2014). A too-coherent world: Game studies and the myth of “narrative” media. *Game Studies*, 14(2).