

ATCM 2375: History of Games

Online Course, Spring 2022

Contact Information

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<i>Online Office Hours</i>	By appointment only (phone or MS Teams)	
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<i>Online Office Hours</i>	By appointment only	By appointment only

Course Modality and Expectations

Instructional Mode: Online

Course Platforms: eLearning: elearning.utdallas.edu
Box: utdallas.app.box.com
MS Teams:
Web Version:
www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software
Desktop and Mobile App:
www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/download-app

Expectations: Each week, students will complete the provided readings, take part in guided online discussion, and submit a short writing assignment or essay by the deadline.

Asynchronous Guidelines: This course is delivered online and asynchronously and will remain so for the duration of the semester. Course materials will be provided weekly. University policies and frequently asked questions for asynchronous access during the pandemic can be found here: covid.utdallas.edu/response/faq/#asynchronous

COVID-19 Guidelines and Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's COVID-19 resources for students and instructors of record: <https://www.utdallas.edu/covid/>

Class Participation

Regular class participation is expected regardless of course modality. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures. Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Recordings

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

The instructor may record meetings of this course. Any recordings will be available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Materials

The Instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Course Description

This undergraduate course examines the history of digital games and the gaming industry, beginning with the arcades and early home consoles of the seventies and ending in the current decade. The course focuses both on the chronology of development and design as well as the origins and evolution of the mechanics, genres, technologies, and hardware that inform and influence modern game design philosophy.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Students will understand the history of the digital game industry
- Students will examine and apply the impacts of past design and production decisions on modern game design and industry structures
- Students will develop critical analysis skills and techniques for evaluating historical and modern digital games

Required Textbooks and Materials

- *Replay: The History of Video Games*, Tristan Donovan (2010)
- Additional readings and course materials will be provided online in eLearning and/or Box.com by the instructor.

Textbooks and some other bookstore materials can be ordered online or purchased at the UT Dallas Bookstore.

Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements on the Getting Started with eLearning webpage.

Course Access and Navigation

This course can be accessed using your UT Dallas NetID account on the eLearning website.

Please see the course access and navigation section of the Getting Started with eLearning webpage for more information.

To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the Student eLearning Tutorials webpage.

UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The eLearning Support Center includes a toll-free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

Communication

This course utilizes online tools for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used

during the semester. For more details, please visit the Student eLearning Tutorials webpage for video demonstrations on eLearning tools.

Student emails and discussion board messages will be answered within 3 working days under normal circumstances.

Distance Learning Student Resources

Online students have access to resources including the McDermott Library, Academic Advising, The Office of Student AccessAbility, and many others. Please see the eLearning Current Students webpage for more information.

Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online eLearning Help Desk. The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Academic Calendar

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READINGS	WRITING ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
1 Jan. 18 – Jan. 21	Introduction to Game History; <i>Spacewar!</i> ‘62	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 2: Avoid Missing Ball for High Score (in eLearning)	Discussion Board Assignment: Historically Important Games Part I	Jan. 21
2 Jan. 24 – Jan. 28	The Rise and Fall of Atari: ‘78-‘82	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 7: Pac-Man Fever; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 8: Devilish Contraptions	Discussion Board Assignment: Historically Important Games Part II	Jan. 28
3 Jan. 31 – Feb. 4	Nintendo Conquers Japan, Then America: ‘83-‘88	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 12: A Tool To Sell Software; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 13: I Could Have Sworn It Was 1983	Discussion Board Assignment	Feb. 4

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READINGS	WRITING ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
4 Feb. 7 – Feb. 11	Early PC Gaming, '78-'86; Sims and Interactive Movies, '82-'91	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 11: Macintoshization; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 14 Interactive Movies; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 15 Ah! You Must Be A God	Paper One: Analysis of 1980s Era Game	Feb. 11
5 Feb. 14 – Feb. 18	The <i>Tetris</i> Story, '84- '88; Sega vs. the SNES, '89-'91	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 16: A Plane to Moscow; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 17: Sega Does What Nintendon't	Discussion Board Assignment	Feb. 18
6 Feb. 21 – Feb. 25	Games Get Serious: <i>Myst</i> and <i>DOOM</i> , '93- '96	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 19 A Library in a Fish's Mouth; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 20 The Ultimate Display	Discussion Board Assignment	Feb. 25
7 Feb. 28 – Mar. 4	Violence and <i>Mortal Kombat</i> , '94; The Playstation Arrives '97-'98	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 18 <i>Mortal Kombat</i> ; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 21 We Take Pride in Ripping Them to Shreds	Paper Two: Analysis of 1990s Era Game	Mar. 4
8 Mar. 7 – Mar. 11	Postmortem Break One: Games of the 1990s	Optional Reading: Postmortems of <i>Age of Empires</i> , <i>Thief: The Dark Project</i> , <i>Diablo II</i> , and <i>Deus Ex</i> (in eLearning)	<i>No assignments</i>	Mar. 11
9 Mar. 14 – Mar. 18	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>No readings</i>	<i>No assignments</i>	Mar. 18

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READINGS	WRITING ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
10 Mar. 21 – Mar. 25	MMORPGs, Mod Culture, Machinima, and <i>The SIMs</i>	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 23 You Haven't Lived Til You've Died in MUD; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 25, Little Computer People	Discussion Board Assignment	Mar. 25
11 Mar. 28 – Apr. 1	The Dreamcast and the Wii; Games Get Serious Again: <i>Pokemon</i> , <i>GTA III</i> , <i>ICO</i> , and <i>Bioshock</i>	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 26: All-Access Gaming; <i>Replay</i> Ch. 27 The Grooviest Era of Crime; <i>All Your Base... Ch. 12</i> Bioshock: Art for Game's Sake (online)	Discussion Board Assignment	Apr. 1
12 Apr. 4 – Apr. 8	Rise of the Indie Games; Games as Art	<i>Replay</i> Ch. 28: Magic Shooting Out Of People's Fingers; <i>Rise of the Videogame Zinesters</i> Ch. 7 By Your Boostraps (online)	Paper Three: Tracing a Mechanic's Historical Development	Apr. 8
13 Apr. 11 – Apr. 15	Postmortem Break Two: Games of the Modern Era	Optional Reading: Postmortems of <i>Stardew Valley</i> , <i>Halo Wars</i> , <i>Diablo III</i> , and <i>The Witcher III</i> (online)	<i>No assignments</i>	Apr. 15
14 Apr. 18 – Apr. 22	Analog Games	<i>It's All A Game</i> Ch. 13: Rise of the Machines (online); <i>It's All A Game</i> Ch. 16: Made in Germany (online)	Discussion Board Assignment	Apr. 22

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READINGS	WRITING ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
15 Apr. 25 – Apr. 29	Tabletop Games and <i>Dungeons & Dragons</i>	<i>Of Dice and Men</i> Ch. 6: Temple of the Frog (online); <i>Of Dice and Men</i> Ch. 9 Arneson vs. Gygax (online)	Discussion Board Assignment	Apr. 29
16 May 2 – May 6	The Future of Games; course wrap-up	<i>No readings</i>	Paper Four: Analysis of Modern Historical Event in Gaming	Monday, May 9

Grading Policy

Discussion board assignments	15%
Paper One: 1980s Game Analysis	15%
Paper Two: 1990s Game Analysis	15%
Paper Three: Mechanic's Development	20%
Paper Four: Historical Event Analysis	25%
Participation and professionalism	10%

Course Policies

Late Work

All course work can be submitted up to a week past the posted deadline for full credit, with the understanding that late work will not receive feedback from the instructor. Make-up or extra credit assignments may be assigned at the professor's discretion.

Class Participation

Students are expected to take part in online discussions and collaborate with online peer groups once they are assigned.

Digital Game Assignments

Students in this course are expected to have a basic level of computer literacy such that they can download, install, and play games without assistance from the instructor. Students are expected to maintain a level of maturity when participating in semi-anonymous online spaces, including handling potential encounters with griefers and trolls.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University’s academic support resources for all students: <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

Please go to Academic Support Resources webpage for these policies.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus: <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

Please go to UT Dallas Syllabus Policies webpage for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.