

ATCM 3366.501 – Game Studies 1

Semester	Spring 2019
Class meeting	Tuesdays 7:00pm-9:45pm
Class location	ATC 1.305

Professor	Cenk Köknar
Email	cenk.koknar@utdallas.edu
Office location	N/A
Office hours	By appointment

Prerequisite	ATCM 2365 – Game Design Fundamentals
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Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to critical game studies, including analysis of digital and analog games as cultural artifacts, material technologies, and social practices. This course presents the fundamentals of academic writing and research practices in game studies.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Gain an overview of the concepts of and arguments in the field of game studies by investigating games from a variety of thematic approaches
- Practice constructing and validating arguments about your own gameplay experiences using approaches and key concepts articulated by other game studies scholars
- Develop research and writing skills, including academic and multimedia writing, for participating in the scholarly study of games and play

Required Textbook and Materials

All the readings will be available on eLearning.

Grading	
Class participation and discussion	30%
Weekly responses (due 1:00PM same day before class)	20%
Research paper	50%
Pitches (5%)	
Annotated bibliography and outline (10%)	
Presentation (15%)	
Final version (20%)	

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted, unless the student asks for an extension before the deadline. Let me know if you have any issues in advance, so we can make arrangements

Accommodation

Students with disabilities are encouraged to utilize the on-campus resources at the Office of Student Accessibility. You can contact the office at 972-883-6104 or by email: studentaccessibility@utdallas.edu. Their office is located in the Student Service Building (SSB), suite 3.200. They can provide documentation and details for accommodations to address your individual needs. If you need any special accommodations to complete this course successfully, please provide me with this information as soon as possible, so we can make appropriate arrangements

Academic Integrity

I value your academic integrity, and academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade. Please review and abide by the academic integrity guidelines set forth by the University of Texas at Dallas here <https://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/>.

Assignments and Academic Calendar

Week 1
15 January 2019

Introduction to game studies

Syllabus
Groups for in-class activities

Week 2
22 January 2019

Play

Johan Huizinga – “Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon”
In *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*
Miguel Sicart – “Play Is” In *Play Matters*
Thomas S. Henricks, “Cultural Play,” In *Play and the Human Condition*

Week 3
29 January 2019

Rules

Mia Consalvo – *There is No Magic Circle*
Espen Aarseth – *Against Procedurality*
Edmond Chang – *Cards against Humanity Is ___: Playing With & Playing Up*
Difference in Games

Week 4
5 February 2019

Representation and inclusion

Adrienne Shaw – *Diversity without Defense: Reframing Arguments for Diversity in Games*
Bo Ruberg – *Straight-washing Undertale: Video Games and the Limits of LGBTQ Representation*
Stephanie Boluk and Patrick LeMieux – “Breaking the Metagame: Feminist Spoilsports and Magic Circle Jerks” In *Metagaming: playing, competing, spectating, cheating, trading, making, and breaking videogames*

Week 5
12 February 2019

Playgrounds

Clifford Geertz – *Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight*
Bonnie Nardi – “Culture: WoW in China... and North America,” In *My Life as a Night Elf Priest: An Anthropological Account of World of Warcraft*
Kym Stewart and Hyewon Park Choi – *PC-Bang (Room) Culture: A Study of Korean College Students’ Private and Public Use of Computers and the Internet*

Week 6
19 February 2019

Game commodities

Holin Lin and Chuen-Tsai Sun – *Cash trade in free-to-play online games*
Katherine Cross – *How the legal battle around loot boxes will change video games forever*

Week 7
26 February 2019

Metagaming and transgressive play

Stephanie Boluk and Patrick LeMieux – “About, Within, Around, Without: A Survey of Six Metagames” In *Metagaming: playing, competing, spectating, cheating, trading, making, and breaking videogames*
Espen Aarseth – *I Fought the Law: Transgressive Play and the Implied Player*
James Newman – “Superplay, Sequence Breaking, and Speedrunning” In *Playing with Videogames*

Week 8
5 March 2019

Gaming Labor

Nick Dyer-Witford and Greig de Peuter – “Immaterial labor: A workers’ history of Videogaming” In *Games of empire: Global Capitalism and video games*
Patricia Hernandez – *Skyrim and Fallout fans are skeptical of Bethesda's new modding plans*

Week 9
12 March 2019

Research paper pitches

Bring three research paper ideas

Week 10
19 March 2019

NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 11
26 March 2019

Professional play

T. L. Taylor – “Professionalizing players” In *Raising the stakes: E-sports and the professionalization of computer gaming*
Andrew Webster – *Why competitive gaming is starting to look a lot like professional sports*
Sarah Needleman – *Ready, Aim, Hire a ‘Fortnite’ Coach: Parents Enlist Videogame Tutors for Their Children*

Week 12
2 April 2019

Research paper workshop

Bring annotated bibliography and outline of your research paper

Week 13
9 April 2019

Player motivations

Richard Bartle - *Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players who suit MUDs*

Mark Chen et al. - *Modeling but NOT measuring engagement in computer games*

Nick Yee - *Motivations of Play in MMORPGs*

Week 14
16 April 2019

Educational play

David Williamson Shaffer et al. - *Video Games and the Future of Learning*

Constance Steinkuehler and Sean Duncan - *Scientific Habits of Mind in Virtual Worlds*

Colin Milburn - "Massively Multiplayer Laboratories" In *Mondo nano: fun and games in the world of digital matter*

Week 15
23 April 2019

PRESENTATIONS

Week 16
30 April 2019

PRESENTATIONS

Final
10 May 2019

Final version of Think Piece due by 11.59 PM (end of the day)

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