

H/SS Elective Designing Serious Games

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor: Dr Mathew Evans
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Tel (Main Office): 28-6259-6919
Office Hours: Monday by appointment
Wednesday 9:30 to 12:30
Thursday 9:00 to 12:30 and 13:30 to 16:00

Room: South Campus
Room S106

Prerequisites: ENGCOMP 152

Required Text

All readings will be made available as PDF files in the class's Blackboard website (<https://pibb.scu.edu.cn>) under the "Content" tab.

Course Description

This course gives students a foundation in serious game design. Serious games are games that are created to teach, persuade, train, or accomplish other purposes that are not strictly limited to entertainment. Organizations, schools, designers, and industries use serious games to educate and/or reach real-world outcomes. In this course, students will learn the fundamentals of game design, research an issue that they would like to design a serious game for, and apply their knowledge of game design to address this issue. They will complete the game design process by creating a prototype, playtesting, and iterating their game through hands-on activities and workshops.

Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to perform the following:

- Explain the fundamentals of game design from concept to prototyping and playtesting
- Explain what a serious game is and how it differs from conventional games
- Demonstrate understanding of, and workflows and interpersonal communication, necessary for serious game design
- Use critical thinking to analyze and evaluate serious games for their purposes
- Identify ways to use AI tools to support the design process

Assignments and Evaluation

Below is a breakdown of the course's assignments and grading scale. There will be a detailed prompt for each unit's assignments and project with instructions about content, format, and submission procedures. Unless discussed with the instructor previously, late assignments will **not** be accepted, and the failure to complete your work will result in a failing grade.

Each **unexcused** absence will bear a penalty of half a letter grade (e.g., from a B to a B- or from a B- to a C+). For each part of a class period missed, a student will receive a deduction of half the point value of a full absence. More than three absences will result in a failing grade for the semester. If you are feeling unwell or need to miss a class, inform the instructor ahead of time by email.

The final grade will be greatly affected by students' attendance and participation. Participation will be assessed holistically throughout the semester. Late attendance, use of electronic devices and AI tools without the instructor's permission, non-participation in the online/in-class activities will all be negatively reflected in your grades.

In-class activities include group work, discussions, etc; Instructions will be provided in class	25%
Fundamentals of game design quizzes	20%
Designer profile presentation	5%
Game design project: a) proposal – 10% b) prototype – 10% c) playtesting/ iterating – 10% d) final version – 5%	35%
Final presentation/ reflection	10%
Attendance and participation	5%
Total	100%

Game design project

Students will complete a serious game design from proposal to prototype and then final version. At each step students will need to present a report, answer questions about their work, and present a physical design as appropriate. The serious game must be original and new.

Designer profile presentation

Students will choose a game designer they admire and will prepare and present a presentation to the class on what they discovered about the designer's history, design process, and works.

Grade Composition:

Class letter grade is given within the following score ranges:

90.00 – 100.00 A 85.00 – 89.99 A- 80.00 – 84.99 B+ 76.00 – 79.99 B 73.00 – 75.99 B-
70.00 – 72.99 C+ 66.00 – 69.99 C 63.00 – 65.99 C- 60.00 – 62.99 D 0.00 – 59.99 F

GPA grades will be further determined based on the given letter grades to show on your transcripts.

Schedule (subject to change according to the instructor's discretion)

Lesson/ Week	Topic	Due
1	Introductions - What is a serious game?	
2	Fundamentals of game design	
3	Fundamentals of game design (continued)	
4	Adapting games for serious purposes	
5	Games for learning and gamification	Quiz 1
6	Designing and measuring educational games	
7	Game design process (concept, design, playtest, iterate)	
8	Identifying your game's purpose, audience, and needs	Quiz 2
9	Present proposal and feedback	Proposal
10	Prototyping	
11	Playtesting	
12	Iterating	
13	Playtesting / Persuasive games	Rough draft of game
14	Twine and interactive fiction	
15	Final playtesting	
16	Final Presentations	Final version of prototype
17	Final Presentations	

Use of Machine Translation and Other Online Tools

While students are encouraged to use dictionaries and other language resources, they should not rely on machine translators or other AI tools to generate large sections of text. Papers must be written in English. Any paper that is written in Chinese and then processed through an online translator will be considered unacceptable.

A Note Concerning Plagiarism: The class adopts a zero-tolerance policy towards plagiarism. You should never copy the words of another and present those words as your own

work. All sources cited must be acknowledged. You must not get help from any outside sources to do your work without the teacher's permission. The penalty for plagiarism is failing the class.

If an instructor believes that a paper was written using machine translation or other AI tools, the instructor reserves the right to ask the student to re-write (potentially with a different topic) or give an alternative assignment, which may include a timed-writing essay assignment. Until the re-write is submitted the student will have an F for the assignment.

Student Use of Electronic Technology Policy:

Students must use electronic technology (including cell phones, laptops, tablets, and iPads) in appropriate ways during classes. Out of respect, cell phones should generally be turned off or on silent and stored out of sight. They should not be used during classroom activities unless the instructor has given permission. Electronic devices are forbidden during quizzes, tests or other in-class graded assignments, unless the instructor has given permission.

Technology use in this class is meant to improve the learning environment for all students. Please be respectful of your instructor and classmates and use the technology appropriately. If you have questions about what this means, please talk to your individual instructor.

Recording:

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may NOT record classroom lectures, discussions, and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly recorded in advance can be used solely for the student's own private study.

Make-up Policy for Missed Assignments and Tests:

Students are responsible for the assignments in their classes. Assignments include in-class activities, quizzes, tests, homework, and any other work related to classes.

- If you are absent from class, you should try to contact one of the students in your class to find out what work was missed.
- If you cannot find out from another student about what work you have missed, when you return to class you must talk to your instructors about the missed work and if/when you can make up the work. You are responsible for talking to your teacher; your teacher is not responsible for reminding you about missed work.
- If you are absent from class on the due date of an assignment, you must hand in the assignment and be prepared to make up tests the day that you return to class or on a date decided with your teacher.
- If you know you will be absent, talk to your teacher before you leave or email your teacher to find out about the work that you will miss while you are away.
- If you and your teacher arrange to meet so that you can make up an assignment and you miss that meeting, you may receive a "0" for that assignment.

SCUPI Honor Code:

Students in this course must follow the SCUPI Honor Code. This includes:

- must not get help from anyone to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.
- must not get help from any outside sources to do his/her work without the teacher's permission.
- must not copy the words of another and present those words as his/her own work.

Note: Using AI tools to generate an essay or large sections of text will result in an F.

Participating in these activities can result in an F and referral to university officials for academic integrity violations.

Participation:

Active participation is crucial for language learning. Participating in class makes you an engaged learner of English. In this class, participation means:

- arriving to class on time
- staying on task (including appropriate use of technology)
- actively listening to your classmates and teacher when they speak in class
- asking questions
- bringing all class materials
- attending class regularly
- completing all homework on time
- actively and constructively participating in class activities
- being prepared to answer questions
- using only English in class

Student Responsibility

For students, it is your responsibility to keep track of your assignments, the due dates as well as additional information announced by the instructor. It is also your responsibility to ask the instructor if you need clarification.

This syllabus is a contract between you and the instructor. It is the first place you should look for answers to your questions about course requirements, expectations, and policies. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to adhere to the requirements, expectations and policies outlined in this syllabus, including sections on the SCUPI Honor Code. Students who fail to submit their work on time or miss more than 3 classes could receive a failing grade and may not graduate.