English 294: Game Studies – Fall 2019 - Syllabus

Instructor: Professor Neil Randall
Contact: nrandall@uwaterloo.ca or via Learn.
Class times: Tuesdays 6:30-9:20, ECH 1205 – code 228111
Office hours: T 1:30-3:30, EC1 1327 – or by appointment, or by email

Required Readings

Game Studies (www.gamestudies.org).
Loading … (http://journals.sfu.ca/loading/index.php/loading/index).
Eludamos (eludamos.org)
Journal of Games Criticism (http://gamescriticism.org)
First Person Scholar (www.firstpersonschorlar.com)
GameStudies101 (www.gamestudies101.com)

Required Playing/Experiencing

Darfur is Dying - http://www.y8.com/games/darfur_is_dying - playable online
Shepherd of Light – free-to-play via Steam.
Hearthstone – (playherthstone.com) – free-to-play
Diplomacy, Scrabble, Werewolf, Ticket to Ride - boardgames
The Lord of the Rings Online (lotro.com) – Free-to-play for a considerable portion – must reach level 15. Access via your own PC/Mac or on the ECH 1205 Macs – username lotrouser – pw book8%TGIF
Boardgames – Dungeons and Dragons, Diplomacy, Scrabble, Monopoly, Spirit Island, Werewolf

Assignments

Note: All assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate dropbox on Learn, unless otherwise specified in the assignment details.

Assignment A (20% of final grade): Class reports – 3 minutes each max – on games you’ve played and your game studies interpretation of them. 7 reports per student over the term.

Assignment B (20% of final grade): A 1500-word essay on role-playing games. Assignment to be distributed September 24. Due October 22, 11:59pm Eastern.

Assignment C (35% of final grade): A 2000-word (max) comparison of the games on the Required Playing/Experiencing list above. You must cover all of the games. Assignment to be distributed October 1. Due November 19, 11:59 pm Eastern.

Assignment D (25% of final grade): Do whatever you want, as long as it’s about game studies. Assignment to be distributed Oct 1. Due Dec 5, 11:59pm Eastern. Note: One possible topic is an “external partner” project from the list below.
Possible Project Partners

Loomtopia.com
Supportshealth.com
ICCC – Interdisciplinary Centre on Climate Change

Schedule

- **Sep 10** – Introductions; Discussion of syllabus and assignments; Loomtopia visit
- **Sep 17** – RPG class #1 – *Dungeons and Dragons*. Instructor at conference and meetings in Ottawa; class covered by Toben Racicot, PhD student in English at Waterloo
- **Sep 24** – RPG class #1 – Game genres; *Computer/console RPGs*: character creation (Toben Racicot assisting)
- **Oct 01** – RPG class #3 – Mechanics, narrative, narrative arcs, cultural studies (Toben Racicot assisting)
- **Oct 08** – Game mechanics and procedural rhetoric
- **Oct 15** – **No class** – Fall Reading Week
- **Oct 22** – Game/interactive narratives
- **Oct 29** – Game culture, diversity, inclusivity, gender
- **Nov 05** – Simulations and serious games #1 – Diplomacy / Darfur is Dying / Mission US
- **Nov 12** – Simulations and serious games #2 – *The Lord of the Rings Online, Ticket to Ride*
- **Nov 19** – Boardgames #1 – *Scrabble, Monopoly, Werewolf*
- **Nov 26** – Boardgames #2 - Diplomacy
- **Dec 03** – Short presentations of Assignment D
Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Academic Integrity

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](https://arts.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](https://www.uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

**Note for students with disabilities:** The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.