Games: Design, Strategy, Philosophy, and Society
Fall 2016
Course Procedures

Professor: Josh Laison
Ford 215, x6689, jlaison@willamette.edu

Office Hours:
Monday and Wednesday 3:00-4:00, Tuesday and Thursday 10:00-11:00
and anytime by appointment or by catching me in my office.
My updated available times are on my webpage http://www.willamette.edu/~jlaison

Class Meetings: Ford 201, 12:40-1:40 Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Required Texts:
Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals, Katie Salen and Eric Zimmerman
A Pocket Style Manual, Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers

Course Web Page: http://www.willamette.edu/~jlaison/games.html
Course WISE Site: https://wise.willamette.edu/portal/site/IDS-101-18-16_FA

Student Learning Outcomes:
(All College Colloquium courses:)
1. To develop students’ abilities to read closely.
2. To develop students’ abilities to discuss reflectively.
3. To develop students’ abilities to write effectively.
4. To develop students’ abilities to think critically.

(Games course:)
5. To develop bonds of academic community and collaboration.
6. To gain experience reading, writing, speaking, and thinking in multiple academic modes of inquiry.

Graded Components of the Course

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<td>Play and game reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Written game reviews</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>• In-class oral game</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>reviews (1 opening days,</td>
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<td>2 additional)</td>
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<td>Reading and discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reading questions</td>
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<td>• Discussion leading</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<td>Game design and writing</td>
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<td>assignments</td>
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<td>• Game designs, designer</td>
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<td>statements, and redesigns</td>
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Game Reviews

You will play at least two hours of games per week outside of class, chosen from the list on the course syllabus and on WISE. Each game you play should be new to you. Most weeks, you will select one of these games to write a one to two page review of. We’ll talk in class about what makes a good game review. You will also present three of these reviews orally to the rest of the class, about once a month. These reviews will help you learn a wide variety of game design styles and player experiences. Please support your classmates by spending some of this time playing the games they have chosen to review.

Reading questions and discussions

We’ll read and discuss a wide variety of perspectives on games. For each reading assignment, you’ll write a one page response to a few questions. These reading questions will help us start thinking about the issues surrounding the readings ahead of time, and have more meaningful discussions.

Twice during the semester, in a team of two, you’ll lead a discussion in class. Your team will read the assignment ahead of time and meet with me to plan productive and interesting directions for discussion. Then in class, you’ll decide the form the discussion will take, and help it along when needed.

Game designs

You will design three games in this course. Each game will include a set of self-contained rules, all the components necessary to play, and an accompanying designer statement explaining your design choices in the context of the reading assignments. We will playtest and critique your game in class, and then you’ll submit a second draft fixing some of the issues you discovered in your game.

Course Policies

Workload

By Willamette University policy, for a 3 credit hour course such as this one you should spend 6–9 hours on coursework outside of class.

Course conduct

All persons in the class, the students and the professor, should treat one another with respect. This includes attending class, using technology only for class-related activities, avoiding offensive or insulting behavior, and acting honestly.

Plagiarism and academic honesty

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated severely, in accordance with Willamette University Standards of Conduct and the Willamette Ethic. The Willamette policy on plagiarism and cheating is located at http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/resources/policies/plagiarism_cheating.php. Plagiarism can take different forms, but its essence is presenting the words or work of another person as your own. When you are quoting from a source you must place that material in quotation marks and correctly cite the source of the quotation. If you are paraphrasing someone else you must provide the source from which you are paraphrasing.
Disability accommodations
Willamette University and this class welcome people of differing abilities. If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required, please contact me and the Bishop Wellness Center to discuss your needs.

Religious accommodations
(From the Office of the Chaplain) Willamette University recognizes the value of religious practice and strives to accommodate students’ commitment to their religious traditions whenever possible. If you anticipate missing class for religious reasons, please contact me to discuss your needs.