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NYU Prague

MCC-UE_9008_G0P_P01

Video Game Economies

Summer 22

Course Format: Online

Time Zone: CET

Summer 22

You may be taking courses at multiple locations this semester. If you are enrolled in this course 100% **remotely** please **contact the site Academic Director (vanda.thorne@nyu.edu)** if you **need assistance** with this class.

Instructor Information

- Name: Tereza Fousek Krobová

Course Information

- Course Number: MCC-UE_9008_G0P_P01
- **Course Name: Video Game Economies**
- **Meeting times:** MO (9:00-11:00 CET), WED (9:00-12:00 CET), THU (9:00-11:00 CET)
- [NYU Prague Academic Calendar](#)

Course Overview and Goals

This course examines the emergence of video games as site of contemporary cultural production and practice. It pays special attention the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of video games, including their various narratives forms and sub-genres, and concentrates on their interactive dimensions. The course provides insight into the emerging trends in the interface between humans and media technologies. It also situates video games within the business practices of the entertainment industries.

The course combines various teaching methods: each session will start with a 15minute discussion of current events in digital games, followed by a short introductory lecture which introduces the context of the topic, which in turn leads into a discussion of the assigned readings and games. Starting in mid-term, sessions will include student presentations, which will be further developed into final essays.

Readings include academic articles and book excerpts by leading experts on digital games. A

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specific piece of reading is assigned for each session except for the introductory one. All readings are either accessible online or available in PDF copies. Additionally, specific computer games will be assigned for students to play. These are invariably short and free games which run on PC and/or Mac computers.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Understand the history and current developments of digital games
- Evaluate digital games as parts of culture and entertainment industry
- Discuss potential positive and negative effects of digital game use
- Understand the dynamics of digital game industries and communities
- Discuss ethical and political issues regarding digital games

Course Requirements

Class Participation

The students read assigned materials and play assigned games for each class and participate in discussions. Given the course's focus on timely topics, it necessary for the students to follow news sources that cover game studies, such as the websites Rock, Paper, Shotgun, Polygon or Kotaku.

Assignment 1: presentation

Each student prepares a 15minute presentation about a topic related to the content of the course. It should make a persuasive expert argument about a new media phenomenon. It may or may not use slides and/or other media.

Assignment 2: blog post

Each student writes a 500-word annotation of a historical game on the course's blog. The assignment is intended to familiarize the students with historical games and with the standard of ludographic references. The game must be published before 1995. The post will include a description of gameplay and the social, economic and cultural context in which the game was produced.

Final essay

A 2,000 word academic essay with full references, based on research of scholarly sources, as well as own factual or empirical research. It should engage with literature and critically engage with journalistic and lay discussions of the topic. The choice of topic must be consulted with the lecturer.

Midterm test – game analysis

Each students writes a game analysis (online) using the knowledge from previous "analysis trainings". The title of the game will be announced the day of the midterm test.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class participation/discussion/small tasks	15

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Presentation	20
Blog post	15
Midterm test (game analysis)	20
Final essay	30

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percent
A	90% and higher
B	80% - 89.99 %
C	70% - 79.99 %
D	60% - 69.99 %
E	50% - 59.99 %
F	49.99% and lower

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: Excellent work demonstrating a critical and observant approach to the subject, sound research, active participation in discussions, and an ability to express thoughts cogently and persuasively.

Grade B: Very good work.

Grade C: Satisfactory work.

Grade D: Passable work.

Grade F: Failure to achieve a passable standard.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 Monday, May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduction, class requirementsWhy and how to study video games, history of game studies?	x	
Session 2 Wednesday May 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">History of video games <p>ACTIVITY (GAME):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Game analysis – introductionGAME: <p>It is as if you were doing work</p>	x	

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<p>Session 3 Thursday May 26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atari: Game over (documentary movie) Game definition: what is a game? <p>ACTIVITY (GAME):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game analysis – first steps GAMES: <p>McDonalds game Phone Story</p>		
<p>Session 4 Monday May 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest lecture: Jaroslav Švelch (History of czech video game industry) <p>ACTIVITY (GAME):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game analysis – first steps <p>GAMES:</p> <p>The Adventures of Indiana Jones of Wenceslav Square https://primitivedesigns.github.io/remakes/89/indy/en/</p>	Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Understanding video games (pp. 32-44).	
<p>Session 5 Wednesday June 1</p>	<p>Game theory – rules, narrative and immersion</p> <p>ACTIVITY (GAME):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game analysis GAMES: <p>Thoughts and Prayers</p>	Calleja, G. 2011. In-Game: From Immersion to Incorporation. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (pp. 35-46)	
<p>Session 6 Thursday, June 2</p>	<p>What is avatar?</p> <p>ACTIVITY (GAME):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game analysis GAME: <p>Cart Life Self Care</p>	x	Blog post deadline
<p>Session 7 Monday, June 6</p>	<p>Game communities, players, subcultures</p> <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.4you2learn.com/bartle/ Game analysis GAMES: <p>Ancient Greek Punishment Doki Doki Literature Club</p>	x	
<p>Session 8 Wednesday June 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Midterm test (game analysis) Free to Play (documentary movie) 	x	
<p>Session 9 Thursday June 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representation – why does it matter? Representation – gender <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student presentation 	x	

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<p>Session 10, Monday, June 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest lecture: Jan Švelch (Game Production studies, streaming and streamers) <p>ACTIVITY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamers – presentations 		<p>Prepare the video of (your favourite) youtuber/streamer</p>
<p>Session 11, Wednesday June 15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation – gender • Gender and games - research <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student presentation ○ GAMES: <p>Digital: A Love story Terrible Whiteness of Apalanchian Nights</p>	<p>MacCallum Stewart. “Take That, Bitches!” Refiguring Lara Croft in Feminist Game Narratives</p>	
<p>Session 12 Thursday, June 16</p>	<p>Representation – ethnicity, identity, war</p> <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student presentation ○ GAMES: <p>September 12</p>	<p>Eerett, Anna. The Power of Play: The Portrayal and Performance of Race in Video Games, http://www.bendevan.com/VTA2012/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Everett-Watkins-Digital-Learning-and-Race.pdf</p>	
<p>Session 13 Monday June 20</p>	<p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual work – (documentary movie) – questions • Individual work – questions: <p>Ferguson, C. J. Much Ado About Nothing: The Misestimation and Overinterpretation of Violent Video Game Effects in Eastern and Western Nations. Psychological Bulletin, 2010. http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/bul/136/2/174.pdf</p>		
<p>Session 14 Wednesday June 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games and violence • Negative effects <p>ACTIVITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student presentation ○ GAMES: <p>Raid Gaza</p>	<p>Borgonjon, Jeroen, Vandermeersche Geert and Kris Ruuten: Perspectives on Video Games as Art, Comparative Literature and Culture CLCWeb</p>	
<p>Session 15 Thursday June 23</p>	<p>Video games – positive effects</p> <p>ACTIVITIES:</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Student presentation (2x)		
Session 16 Monday June 27	Video games and other media - interactivity ACTIVITIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Student presentation (2x)		
Session 17 Wednesday June 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Video games and/as art• Guest Lecture: Ondřej Moravec (Virtual reality – history, future and different modes of expression)		
Session 18 Thursday June 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future of gaming, video games• Closing remarks ACTIVITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• (movie) – analysis		Final Essay – deadline: June 30

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials:

The basic textbook for the course is:

Egenfeldt-Nielsen, S., Smith, J. H., & Tosca, S. P. (2013). [Understanding video games](http://www.tandfebooks.com/isbn/9780203116777): the essential introduction (2nd edition). New York: Routledge. ISBN: 9780203116777.
<http://www.tandfebooks.com/isbn/9780203116777>

This will be read in its entirety. Additional readings and games will be assigned for each session. If you encounter difficulties retrieving a game because the URL is not working, try searching for it using your Internet search engine of your choice. If this does not help, please contact the instructor.

Resources:

- **Access your course materials:** [Brightspace](#)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](#) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](#) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](#) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)
- **NYU Prague library:** [Tritius Catalog](https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN) (https://nyu.tritius.cz/?lang=EN)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students.

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And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers, or online through NYU Brightspaces if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to Academic Director Vanda Thorne (vt21@nyu.edu) to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academic Director Vanda Thorne (vt21@nyu.edu) by email immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). **Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies.** Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academic Director, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Late Submission of Work

1. Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU SITE Staff), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.
2. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.
3. Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.
4. Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

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5. Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Final Exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between final exams, please bring it to the attention of the site Academic Director as soon as this is known to facilitate alternate arrangements. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science's Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else's idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)

Classroom Etiquette

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary)
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.

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- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class. In online classes, consider using the chat function or “raise hand” function in order to add your voice to class discussions.

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU SITE's Academics Office in writing via email one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Prague.

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

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Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277