GAM 226-701
Fundamentals of Game Design
AQ 2022-2023 Ver. 1.0

INSTRUCTOR

Ross A. Hersemann
Email: rhersema@depaul.edu
Virtual Office Hours: M-F 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
https://calendly.com/rosshersemann/gam-2226-701-office-hours

COURSE INFORMATION

GAM 208 – 701
Time: Tues 6:00pm – 9:15pm
Physical Classroom: Levan Center Room 304

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides students a practical foundation in game design with a focus on concept development, design decomposition, and prototyping. Using game design theory, analysis, physical prototyping, playtesting, and iteration, students learn how to translate game ideas, themes, and metaphors into gameplay, game pitches, and design documents. Students will analyze and recognize play that exists in important games, stories, and other media.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- develop the vocabulary and critical understanding to describe and analyze the components of games and gameplay experiences
- develop a game idea from concept to playable, analogue prototype through several cycles of the iterative game design process
- use common methods for documenting game design such as game design documents, playtesting reports, and post mortem
- communicate their game ideas through pitch, prototype, and presentation

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Macklin, C. and Sharp, J. Games, Design, and Play. Addison-Wesley Professional. 2016 ISBN 9780134392233
  o eBook available freely for DePaul students with institutional credentials through the library and O'Reilly for Higher Education: https://i-share-dpu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_DPU/1ihqd0q/alma9912834327305831
- Additional readings will be posted on D2L in the "Content" section. Students are expected to apply these to weekly discussions.
- A rapid prototyping kit that includes:
  o A box or pack to keep materials together
  o Scissors
  o 1 d6 (six-sided die)
  o index cards
  o tape
  o loose-leaf paper
  o markers/colored pencils
  o a pen or pencil
  o Standard deck of cards (54 with Jokers)
  o Game pieces (from existing games or coins could work)
- Assigned games will be made available to students to play at the Gameplay Lab at CDM/Loop campus.
  o Ability to print - with advanced notice - is ideal in order to play certain games.
- Games and Software
  o Desert Golfing game - $1.99 on iOS and $0.99 on Android

- o Reigns: Her Majesty game - available for iOS, Steam, Google Play for $2.99 https://reignsgame.com/rhm/
- o FlowFree - free on several platforms including iOS and Android https://www.bigduckgames.com/flowfree

OPTIONAL MATERIALS

- Upton, Brian. Situational Game Design. CRC Press. 2017 ISBN 9781138031814
  - o eBook available freely for DePaul students with institutional credentials through the library https://i-share-dpu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_DPU/1ihqd0q/alma9912847821305831
- Schell, Jesse. Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses (3rd edition). CRC Press. 2019 ISBN 9781138632097
  - o eBook available freely for DePaul students with institutional credentials through the library https://i-share-dpu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CARLI_DPU/8tvalj/cdi_safari_books_9781351803632

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

I will hold virtual office hours by appointment. You can schedule a time to connect with me using the Calendly link at the top of this page.

D2L

We are using D2L http://d2l.depaul.edu as the learning platform for this course. All course materials including weekly lecture slides and class info (syllabus, slides, assignments, etc) are available through D2L under "contents". Assignments are submitted to its dedicated folder on Dropbox on D2L. This is also where you will get written feedback to your assignments from me.

EVALUATION & GRADING

Attendance	5%
Game Design Activities	25%
Content Quizzes	12%
Discussion/In-Class Participation	15%
Major Game Design Project	38%
Game Design Post Mortem	5%

Class sessions will combine lectures on game design topics, with analysis of particular games and in-class activities designing and playing games. Students are expected to attend all classes and do the assigned reading, homework, and gameplay before class time.

Student progress will be assessed through a combination of homework assignments, game analysis papers on a game of student's choice, a group game design project, and class participation. Extra credit opportunities may be announced in class and via D2L.

Detailed descriptions of all assignments will be posted week by week in D2L

GRADING SCALE

Letter grades will be based on the minimum percentages of total points earned

A	91+%
A-	90%
B+	89%
B	88-81%
B-	80%
C+	79%
C	78-71%
C-	70%
D+	69%
D	68-61%
D-	60%
F	50% or lower

ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

All assignments are due on the indicated date, including assignments required to be prepared for synchronous class. Below is a brief summary of each assignment. More detailed instructions will be provided on assignment sheets on D2L. Assignments (except for designated group assignments) must represent a student's individual effort. While students are permitted to discuss assignments at the conceptual level, under no circumstances should students share specific answers (electronically or otherwise). You must credit/cite anything content, image, writing, or idea that is not your own.
*Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, assignments will usually be graded and returned within one week of the due date.

Content Quizzes
You will have online quizzes periodically assigned and based on the assigned readings and recorded videos/lectures.

Game Design Activities
Throughout the quarter, you will have game design assignments, each designed to help you think through different parts of designing. Several will be in-person in small groups during

class time. Some of them will be completed in groups or individually outside of class.

Major Game Design Project
In groups, students will go through the game design process to create a polished, public-facing game. Details for each phase will be posted to D2L.
- Each team will conceptualize a game concept and pitch that meets the assigned constraint(s).
- Each team will iteratively design playable game prototypes, including documented playtesting.
- Each team will work together on updating an evolving design document and a rules document and/or media asset.
- You will peer review your team members at the end of the project to determine if there were equitable contributions by all team members. Weak peer reviews may result in a reduction of your personal grade for this major game design project.
- Games consisting of mini-games are not allowed.

Game Design Post Mortem
- This is the final documentation on your major game design project including examining what went wrong and what went right and what next steps you might take. You should use an online site to 'publish' this (not a Word document). The total content needs to be 750+ words, plus media (image and video, etc.).
  - This is an individual submission.
  - You will submit a status update each week and then submit one final document, which can be the compilation of your weekly posts plus

your final week's summary.

- o Organize your progress and thoughts along the way. For example take notes re: conversations, ideas, and/or decisions made about the game. Any relevant diagrams or photos, including annotations/captions, that will help you recall the game design process when it comes time to write your post mortem. Throughout each game design project, document all playtests. You should record video and take photos of players playing the game. This will help you to write a thoroughly reflective post mortem.
- Summarize the evolution of your game pitch, game concept, and game rules.
  - o You may use some of the text as a group - meaning each member doesn't have to write their own concept and rules and can include what was agreed upon as a group in the individual submission.
- Describe what you attempted to do with each iteration. You should document at least 2 distinct iterations, supported by video evidence.
  - o Including any key feedback from playtesting and the related decisions made as a result of that playtest/feedback.
  - o This section should be written individually. Write from your perspective, which will be different from your group members.
  - o Embed (if possible) or include links to videos

(uploaded to YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) from playtests. You do not necessarily need to share the entire playtest. The video should confirm that you playtested by showing people playing the game and sharing their feedback (during the game or after they have finished playing).

COURSE POLICIES

In addition to CDM Academic Policies and DePaul University Policies, the following policies will apply to this course:

Email: Email is the primary means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. Students should verify that their email listed under "demographics information" at http://campusconnect.depaul.edu is correct.

Some guidelines for your emails:
- Be clear and concise in your subject line; ex: "GAM-228 – question about X"
- DO NOT reply to class-wide email unless it pertains specifically to the subject of that email
- Begin a new email thread for ANY NEW question, notification, etc.
- Expect a reply within 48 hours during the week. Expect a delayed (or no) response on weekends. If you do not get a response within 2 business days, please resend as there may be an email issue, or it was immediately buried under the crushing weight of all my other emails, and consequently overlooked.

Course Lectures / Reading Assignments: The assigned and recommended readings offer an opportunity for independent learning that supplements the lectures. Lectures will introduce material not available in the readings, and the readings will explore concepts not mentioned in class.

Late Assignments: In order to receive any credit for an assignment, you must communicate with me at least 24 hours before the due date/time regarding it being late. Unexcused late assignments will have points reduced. No assignment will be accepted more than 7 days late without proof of a medical excuse.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes and participate in class activities as scheduled. Do not underestimate the importance of attendance and participation in this class. Showing up, after all, is a core ingredient of communicating and presenting effectively.

An absence is defined as not showing up for class, arriving 30 minutes late or leaving 30 minutes early. All absences will result in a reduction of the attendance / participation grade. 3 absences, whether excused or not, may constitute failure for the course.

Should dire circumstances render you physically unable to be present in class, you must make every effort to contact me and explain your circumstances prior to the class. Examples of circumstances that would make you physically unable to present include a highly contagious illness, accidents, or deaths in the family.

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office.

Remote Learning: Select classes throughout the term may be offered remotely through pre-recorded lecture videos.

COVID-19 Policy: We are forging ahead with in-person learning during a worldwide pandemic. Conduct yourselves accordingly in compliance with DePaul, City, State, & Federal Law.

DePaul's Health & Safety Practices can be found at: https://bit.ly/3Eej2uH

COVID-19 Attendance Policy:
Notwithstanding the general principles regarding attendance described above, COVID-19 necessitates some leeway in our attendance policy. There will be times when absences will be necessary for public health, and excusable.
- DO NOT come to class if you are exhibiting symptoms of the COVID-19 virus.
- DO NOT come to class if you have recently been exposed to, or been in close contact with, someone who has COVID.
- Notify me of your absence BEFORE class, and schedule makeups for any in class work or activity.
- I promise to be fair in my application of our attendance policy and make reasonable accommodations for the foreseeable increase in absences.
- Students are still required to complete all coursework, absent or no.
- If a student's absence becomes a routine issue, they may be held to a higher standard of attendance which will be reflected in their grade.

Mask Policy: Students are not required to wear masks in class but may choose to do so. Students must provide their own masks. A limited number of masks may be available at the first-floor desk.

The policy may be amended at the instructor's discretion and in conformity with DePaul, City, State, & Federal Law.

Class Participation: Student participation is crucial to this class. Students are encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the class topics. Students are encouraged to offer answers, insights, and best guesses to questions posed in class. Being prepared, making the most of class time, and being fully present and engaged add towards the class experience and your participation points. Productive critiques of your own and everyone else's work is critical.

Civil Discourse & Professionalism: DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course.

A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Preferred Name and Gender Pronouns: Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will respect your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun if you advise me of this preference. Students who choose to identify within the University community with a preferred first name that differs from their legal name and update their gender. For more info and instructions on how to do so, please see the Student Preferred Name and Gender Policy.

Writing: All written work submitted in this class is expected to be clear, spell-checked, and demonstrate a high proficiency in written English. The Writing Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from published writers about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing and oral presentations. Go to http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/ for more information and to set up appointments.

Plagiarism: It is your professional responsibility to ensure that all submitted work is your own. Please read DePaul's policy on plagiarism and other academic integrity violations at: http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/Contribution Folder/Resources/Students/ViolationDefinitions. html#aiPlagarism

Student Rights: To learn about student rights please read DePaul's policies for students regarding student rights, located http://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/current/ undergraduate%20student%20handbook/pg51.ht ml

In-Class Note Taking: It is in your best interest to take comprehensive notes during class.
Incomplete: An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final and approved by the Dean of the School of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

Important Dates AQ 2022:

Sep. 7th	Begin AQ 2022
Sep. 20th	Last day to drop AQ 2022 classes with no penalty
Oct. 25th	Last day to withdraw from AQ 2022 classes
Nov. 15th	End AQ 2022 Day & Evening Classes
Dec. 15th	Grades Due

SCHEDULE

All assigned reading, games, videos, design assignments, and discussion submissions should be completed by Monday of the indicated date.
- o GDP = Games, Design, and Play (primary textbook)
- o Games in ****BOLD**** are analog games available through the Gameplay Lab

Week	Readings/Video, Design, & Play	Submit/Complete
Week 1 9/13/2022	Read: • GDP, Ch. 1 - Games, Design and Play • Art of Game Design, Ch. 1 (optional) Play: • Flow Free (digital) • **Blokus** • (Blokee version online or physical game in Gameplay Lab)	N/A
Week 2 9/20/2022	Read: • GDP, Ch. 2 - Basic Game Design Tools • GDP, Ch. 3 - The Kinds of Play Play: • Pit (in-class) Design: • Game States activity (Checkers using playingcards.io)	**Quiz 1** **Start Design Assignment #1: Card Wars (brainstorm rules)** **Print manual for Keep Talking… (KTANE)**
Week 3 9/27/2022	Read: • GDP, Ch 4 - The Player Experience • GDP, Ch 5 - Iterative Game Design Process Play: • Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes (in-class) • Sloppy Forgeries Design: • Card Wars activity	**Quiz 2+3** **Play your Card Wars variants in groups**
Week 4 10/4/2022	Read: • GDP, Ch. 8 - Collaboration and Team Work • GDP, Ch. 9 - Conceptualizing Your Game Play: • **High Society** • Reigns Design: • Game ideation / brainstorm • What If activity (Jenga, Icehouse)	**Quiz 4** **Design Activity: Card Wars** **Form Major Project groups of 4 people * (due TBD)** *** groups of 3 may also be allowed depending on total number of students in class**
Week 5 10/11/2022	Read: • GDP, Ch 6 - Design Values	**Quiz 5**

	• GDP p. 232-237 (Case Study in Queers in Love at the End of the World) • GDP, Ch. 7 - Game Design Documentation Play: • Queers in Love at the End of the World • Desert Golfing • **Once Upon a Time** Design • Paper prototyping in IRLab • Brainstorm/conceptualize game pitch	**In class review - Major Group Project Pitches** **Submit:** **Updated pitch** **Team agreement**
Week 6 10/18/2022	Read: • Mignano, "Using Paper Prototyping to Design Your Games" • GDP, Ch. 10 - Prototyping Your Game Watch: • GDC Talk on designing Reigns Play • **Flash Point: Fire Rescue** Design: • Major group game project	**Quiz 6** **Major Group Project Design Documents:** • **Complete draft for peer review: TBD** • **Final drafts due TBD** **Submit Design Assignment: Rules Analysis (group presentation)**

Week 7
10/25/2022
	Read:
	• GDP, Ch. 11 - Playtesting Your Game
	• GDP, Ch. 12 - Evaluating Your Game
	Design:
	• Major group game project
	    o Playtest plan
	    o Writing rules
	• Playtest #1 in IRLab (TBD/Daley 3rd floor)
		Quiz 7
		
		First 'playable' prototype of Major Group Project due

Week 8
11/1/2022
	Read:
	• GDP, Ch. 13 - Moving From Design to Production
	• MDA: A Formal Approach…
	Play:
	• TBA
	Design:
	• Work on major group project
	    o Evaluate and iterate
	    o Playtest plan
	• Playtest #2 in IRLab (TBD/Daley 3rd floor)
		Quiz 8

Week 9 11/8/2022	Read: • Situational Game Design, Intro Play: • TBD	**Quiz 9**

	Design:
	• Work on major group project
	    o Evaluate and iterate
	    o Playtest plan
	• Playtest #3 in IRLab (TBD/Daley 3rd floor)	

Week 10
11/15/2022
	Design:
	• Work on major group project
	    o Evaluate and iterate
	    o Playtest plan
	• Playtest #4 in IRLab (TBD/Daley 3rd floor)
		Iterated prototypes of Major projects for Playtesting

Week 11 11/22/2022	**There is no final exam in this course.** **Scheduled 'final exam' time slots will be used to complete final project requirements (playtesting, evaluation, rules review) and course debrief/discussion TBD**	**All assignments must be turned in for grading consideration no later than this date.** • **Game Design Document (team)** • **Rules Doc (team)** • **Postmortem (individual)** • **Peer/Team Review (individual)**

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

Online Course Evaluations: Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

Academic Policies: All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found under Enrollment Policies.

Students with Disabilities: Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

csd@depaul.edu. Lewis Center 1420,
25 East Jackson Blvd.
Phone number: (312)362-8002
Fax: (312)362-6544
TTY: (773)325.7296

The University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL): The UCWbL works with everyone in the DePaul University community to support writers and to promote the use of writing in teaching and learning. You can schedule an appointment to improve your writing and learn more about the craft at https://condor.depaul.edu/writing/

Idea Realization Lab (IRL)
The Idea Realization Lab is a resource available to the entire DePaul University community, from students to alumni, faculty, and staff. They provide machines, tools, and materials at no cost, and offer workshops to teach visitors how to use the equipment safely. Their goal is to foster a spirit of collaboration and to promote creativity across the campus and throughout the city of Chicago.
I encourage you to make use of the IRL, including prototyping your design and getting a consultation from the staff there. This space is a great resource for all levels of the design and development process. Visit http://irl.depaul.edu/ for more information.

Contact Info:
Email: idearealizationlabdpu@gmail.com
Phone: (312) 362-1451 Location:
Room 310
14 E Jackson Blvd