

## **Course: DePaul University GAM 206**

### **History of Games**

**Instructor: Jonathan Hey**

**Winter Quarter 2018-2019**

### **Summary of Course**

**GAM 206-501 HISTORY OF GAMES (Lecture)**

**Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30PM - 3:00PM**

**Lewis Center Room 1509**

Jon Hey's Office Hours:

- Mondays and Wednesdays 10:00 am - 12:00 pm CDM 635
- Thursdays 3-5 pm CDM 635
- Or by appointment

Email (preferred): [jhey@depaul.edu](mailto:jhey@depaul.edu)

Also: [jhey.depaul@gmail.com](mailto:jhey.depaul@gmail.com)

**Jon Hey's mobile number - voice and text (773) 443-7877** - Feel free to contact me here via voice call or text, especially if some question or other situation arises that needs to be addressed quickly. For instance, when you need quick answers to questions. As an example: clarification of take-home Quizzes questions.

### **Description**

From "The Royal Game of Ur" (2500+ BCE) to "Mortal Kombat X" (2015) and beyond, games have been a constant in human history. The forms of games, their experiential qualities, and their cultural significance have varied enormously from era to era and place to place. This class will examine particular games and game genres in their historical context using a case study format. We will focus on "indoor" games, those of chance and skill, as opposed to physical games and sports [but will also touch on the nature of play including sports]. The examples will be chosen (i) to have global scope and historic diversity, (ii) to relate to games that students will find familiar, and (iii) to raise particular issues in historical interpretation, the use of primary sources and changing concepts of leisure activity.

### **Changes to Syllabus**

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

## **Textbooks and printed resources**

### **Course Readings and Supplies**

There is no textbook for the class. There will be a variety of readings made available on-line and/or distributed in class. Readings and Materials are subject to change, modification, additions and substitutions. D2L is the starting resource for all course material [see below].

### **Resources**

Students in the class will have access to the game library housed in the Computer Game Lab CDM 536 and Games at Richardson Library (LPC).

<http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/LabsAndResources/Lab536.aspx>

Students performing assignments have priority for the use of the games. You will be required to provide your student ID when checking out games. The Lincoln Park Campus' Richardson Library also has games to check out.

The D2L (Desire to Learn) web site will be an important resource for the course. All information, assignments, grading, readings, links will be on D2L. The D2L site will provide many resources and links to pursue via web search for researching games.

### **Prerequisites**

None

### **Grading**

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

- A) 4 Quizzes 100 points each possible  
(#1 in-class, #2, #3 and #4 are take-home)

**If you are late to turn in a Quiz, an automatic deduction of 5 points will be taken.**

**If you are more than a week late turning a Quiz, an automatic deduction of 10 points will be taken.**

- B) **Attendance: Missed classes will be deducted from your points total unless I am notified by DePaul University of an official absence or you are excused for Sports participation. Missed classes will get an automatic deduction of 5 points, and GAME PLAY Days absences will get an automatic deduction of 10 points.**

C) **Gameplay “reflection”** (one-page written summary) 15 points each, one for each game we play:

- Senet
- Royal Game of Ur
- Chess
- Faro
- Blackjack *or* Texas Hold 'Em Poker
- Gavitt's Stock Exchange

**Gameplay reflection papers that are submitted late will get an automatic deduction of 3 points. If more than a week late, automatic deduction of 5 points.**

D) **Research Final Paper 400 points possible:**

Step 1 (of Final Research Paper) Preliminary Topic - choice of game to research.

Step 2) Preliminary Bibliography - your first list of sources.

Step 3) Completed Final Paper - Due at the latest by midnight on the final day of Finals Week [Tuesday, November 20th, 2018]. Only the Final Completed Paper is issued a grade.

#### Grade Chart

100-91%	A
90%	A-
89%	B+
88-81%	B
80%	B-
79%	C+
78-71%	C
70%	D+

#### **Expectations:**

- Describe and explain knowledge of prehistoric or historical events, themes, and ideas.
- Examine and assess historical evidence and interpretations through analysis, evaluation, and/or synthesis of a range of primary and secondary source evidence.
- Recognize that there are different perspectives on the past, whether historical or methodological in nature.
- Compose written work that expresses knowledge.

- Reason effectively in writing.

### **Organization and Assessment / Schedule**

**GAM 206 is divided into Four Units.** In each unit, we will study a particular culture and a game (or games) associated with it. Each unit will consist of four classes: a lecture covering the era with an emphasis on cultural issues, a lecture on the game genre and its history, an in-class game play session in which we play the chosen game, and a game discussion session in which we discuss the game and its milieu.

There is no midterm or final exam, but there will be 4 quizzes covering assigned readings. A day-by-day calendar is posted on D2L. It is also included at the end of this syllabus.

Attendance at this class is extremely important. This is particularly true of the game play sessions. Please make every effort to attend class on these dates. I am required to take attendance at all class meetings.

There is a one-page written summary on EACH of the games we play in class - to be submitted via D2L. Each game has an associated rubric available on D2L to help guide your writing of your summary assignment.

### **Policies and School Policies**

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in in-class exercises. Class will start promptly. Students are individually responsible for material they may have missed due to absence or tardiness, including obtaining readings handed out in class. Students are responsible for reading assigned material before class.

All assignments and class material will be submitted and available at the D2L site. 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). Papers must conform to the course guidelines on references and documentation. Use of sources without attribution constitutes plagiarism, a serious violation of academic integrity. Consult the assignment handouts or the instructor if you have questions about how or what to document.

### **Online Instructor Evaluation**

Course and instructor evaluations are critical for maintaining and improving course quality. To make evaluations as meaningful as possible, we need 100% student participation. Therefore, participation in the School's web-based academic administration initiative during the eighth and ninth week of this course is a requirement of this course.

## **Email**

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

## **Plagiarism**

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows:

Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements, should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

## **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 Computer Science, Telecommunications and Information Systems. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

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

## **Final**

Each student will be required to complete a research project (a written paper) on a historic game other than one we consider together in class. The game must originate from 1945 or before. I encourage you to look for a game that has particular relevance to your cultural heritage: games your grandparents (or great-great grandparents) might have played. There will be intermediate milestones for this project due throughout the quarter. Full details will be available on the assignment handout.

The goal for the length of your final paper is 3000 words (or more). This generally translates to 10 typed double-spaced pages. The word count does not include your annotated bibliography.

## **All Weeks**

### **Introduction to the Class.** (Day 1)

Syllabus and requirements. Why study games? Why study the history of games? Aims of the class. Resources: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Sources of history. History and Games. Historical methods. Games as primary sources. Components of a game.

#### Readings:

Salen, K. and Zimmerman, E. Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals. MIT Press, 2004.

Chapter 3 Meaningful Play

Chapter 7 Defining Games

Parlett, D. Chapter 1 Welcome Aboard, in The Oxford History of Board Games.

### **Unit 1: Indus Valley [Harappan Civilization], Ur Valley [Mesopotamia] and Ancient Egypt [Nile Valley]**

History: Records, inscriptions, art, artifacts and other archaeological evidence from the Neolithic period and the Senet Game boards found in the burial site of King Tut.

#### Readings:

As on D2L including Piccione, Peter A. In Search of the Meaning of Senet.

Play: Senet and assess rules for a Senet game or a race game that could be invented. Play: Royal Game of Ur

### **Unit 2: Society in Medieval and Renaissance Europe**

History: Society and Culture in the Late Middle Ages. Social structure and hierarchy. Spain and England. Thomas Middleton- A Game at Chess / King James I / Benjamin Franklin and Chess.

Readings: As on D2L

History of Chess. Asian variants of chess. "The Turk"

Play: Chess Tournament (Double-Elimination) 2 1/2 class days

**Between Unit 2 and Unit 3 - Interjection:** Lewis Chess Pieces, The "Turk" (Chess Automaton), Blaise Pascal and Probability/Risk

### **Unit 3: America 1803-Reconstruction**

History: Risk and tradition in 19th Century America. Gambling Games. The history of gambling. Divination, probability and risk. Typologies of gambling games. The boundary issues between gambling and play. The rise of professional gambling.

Lincoln's "Lyceum Address". Civil War games. Native American Casino Gaming.

Readings:

As posted on D2L

Play: Faro, Texas Hold 'Em Poker, Blackjack (21)

**Between Unit 3 and Unit 4 - Interjection:** Meso-American Ball Game and Baseball & Gambling

**Unit 4: Global Decades - Technological Emergence**

Play: Gavitts Stock Exchange 1903 (Pit)

History: WWI, Gambling/Prohibition, WWII Enigma Machine / Alan Turing,  
Marshall McLuhan, Early Electronic Games, Arcade Games and Pinball, Video Games (console,  
mobile)

Readings: On D2L

Conclusion. The changing role of games and leisure.

Play: Invented Card Game: Saratoga Sabotage (Optional class during Finals Week)

Final Day of Finals Week: Final paper due.