2024-2025
Introduction to Game Studies
ENGLIT 0702--3 Credits

Description: This course offers an introduction to the critical study of games and gaming. From a theoretical overview of the roles that games play in our cultures and lives to in-depth examinations of specific games, this course seeks to investigate the uses and potentials of gaming as a cultural form that combines elements of literature, cinema, and computation. While the course focuses primarily on video games, it also examines other forms of games such as board games, role-playing games, and literary games. Students will be urged to examine games as narratives and narratives as games, consider ethical and ideological conundrums inherent in virtual representations of bodies and environments, and analyze traditional elements of narrative, time, tropes, and simulations in games.

Prerequisites: None.

Grading: Grading is divided between class discussion participation, short writing assignments, a midterm examination, and a final creative project. Group projects, quizzes, group or individual presentations, blogs, or other evaluation methodologies are all optional assessment tools.

Textbook: No textbook purchases are required for this course. All readings are available to be distributed to students in .pdf form. The only exception to this case would be at the discretion of the individual teacher, should they decide that the final unit of the course requires it. Required readings cover a theoretical and historical range, and the instructor is free to choose from and excerpt works such as:
- *Works of Game,* John Sharp (MIT Press 2015)
- *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*, Espen Aarseth (Johns Hopkins, 1997)
- *A Theory of Fun for Game Design*, Raph Koster (O'Reilly Media, 2004)

Learning Objectives:
1. Develop a broad vocabulary of major influential video game works and an understanding of their relationship with other forms of media.
2. Place these games within historical, technological, generic and stylistic categories.
3. Understand games as designed experiences, as technological systems, and as social and cultural artifacts.
4. Develop a critical vocabulary that allows them to participate in productive, high level spoken and written conversations about games as aesthetic objects.
5. Analyze games and clearly articulate their formal, cultural, and expressive qualities

Academic Integrity: All College in High School teachers, students, and their parents/guardians are required to review and be familiar with the University of Pittsburgh's Academic Integrity Policy located online at https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code.

Grades: Grade criteria in the high school course may differ slightly from University of Pittsburgh standards. A CHS student could receive two course grades: one for high school and one for the University transcript. In most cases the grades are the same. These grading standards are explained at the beginning of each course.

Transfer Credit: University of Pittsburgh grades earned in CHS courses appear on an official University of Pittsburgh transcript, and the course credits are likely to be eligible for transfer to other colleges and universities. Students are encouraged to contact potential colleges and universities in advance to ensure their CHS credits would be accepted. If students decide to attend any University of Pittsburgh campuses, the University of Pittsburgh grade earned in the course will count toward the student grade point average at the University. At the University of Pittsburgh, the CHS course supersedes any equivalent AP credit.

Drops and Withdrawals: Students should monitor progress in a course. CHS teacher can obtain a Course Drop/Withdrawal Request form from the CHS office or Aspire. The form must be completed by the student, teacher and parent/guardian and returned to teacher by deadlines listed. Dropping and withdrawing from the CHS course has no effect on enrollment in the high school credits for the course.