

AET335: Game Design Aesthetics
College of Fine Arts
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
FALL 2018

Instructor: Dr. Paul Toprac

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Office hours: Thursday, 3:30 – 5:00 pm and by appointment

Office: GDC 6.318

Course (Game) Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the design and aesthetics of games. Our discussions, assignments, and other course activities follow two main threads: (1) how are games designed, and (2) what are the aesthetics of play and games. Student activities include playing and analyzing games, reading articles on game aesthetics and design, and creating a tabletop game to further deepen understanding.

Objectives

- Apply critical thinking skills to clarify, address, and possibly even resolve issues concerning the design and aesthetics of games
- Identify and explain the major conceptual components that constitute a game
- Analyze and understand the different aesthetics of games: gameplay, visuals, story, and audio (sound and music)
- Deconstruct games as designed experiences
- Communicate effectively your rhetorical stance
- Create a tabletop game and report findings

You may be incidentally exposed to violence and violent related acts portrayed in video games in this course. If you are sensitive to these issues, then this course may not be a good fit for you.

Grades (Scoring) and Feedback on Performance

There is no curve.

• Professionalism:	20%
• Show and Tell:	21%
• Video Game Deconstruction Report:	5%
• Tabletop Game Reconstruction Guide:	10%
• Tabletop Playtesting Reports:	9%
• Tabletop Game Reconstruction Presentation:	10%
• Tabletop Game Reconstruction Paper & Game:	30%
• Course Reflection	5%

Materials

You are required to purchase materials for your tabletop game.

Book (Required)

Tabletop Game Design for Video Game Designers *by* Ethan Ham

Course Policies

Group Project Grading

- Project grade is on the product
- Individual grade is on the contribution and process

Grading Scale

Percent	Letter Grade	Description	Points per Term Credit Hour
94-100	A	Excellent scholarship	4.0
90-93	A-	Excellent scholarship	3.7
87-89	B+	Good scholarship	3.3
83-86	B	Good scholarship	3.0
80-82	B-	Good scholarship	2.7
77-79	C+	Fair scholarship	2.3
73-76	C	Fair scholarship	2.0
70-73	C-	Fair scholarship	1.7
60-69	D	Poor scholarship	1.0
0-60	F	Failure	0.0
	I	Incomplete	
	W	Withdrawal	

Professionalism

Attendance, completed assigned readings, participation in class discussions and activities, performing special assignments, and being actively involved in supporting the work of the classmates are part of this requirement. You must come ready to discuss each reading in class, and be prepared to ask critical-thinking questions about the readings, and engage in discourse on questions your fellow students may have. How your teammates view the quality and quantity of your work, as well as your team skills are important.

Attendance Policy

Days Absent	Consequence	Cumulative
1 - 3	Free	Free
4	-1 point	-1 point
5	-2 points	-3 points
6	-4 points	-7 points
7	-8 points	-15 points
8	-16 points	-31 points
(beyond this is an automatic failure)		

Late Work Policy

Hours Late	Consequence	Cumulative
2	-2 points	-2 points
4	-4 points	-6 points
8	-8 points	-14 points
24	-16 points	-30 points
48	-20 points	-50 points
72	-24 points	-74 points

(beyond this is automatically 0 points)

UT Policies

Critical Dates (see UT Calendar for details) <http://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars>

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic Dishonesty

The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For more information on scholastic dishonesty, please visit the Student Judicial services Web site at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>

Undergraduate Writing Center

The Undergraduate Writing Center, located in the FAC 211, phone 471-6222, <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc/> offers individualized assistance to students who want to improve their writing skills. There is no charge, and students may come in on a drop-in or appointment basis.

Services For Students With Disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471- 4641 TTY.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. The complete text of this policy for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>. In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements.

Campus Safety

Regarding emergency evacuation: 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety>. Evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Further information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>. For

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050.