

Intro to Esports

What to Expect

By the end of the course, students will -

- Have gained a holistic view of the esports industry
- Understand various facets of what goes into making an esports event and be able to identify key decisions an organization has made when creating an event.
- Explore intro level concepts from various disciplines such as business, sociology and the arts
- Understand how vast the esports landscape is.

Areas of Study

- What is Esports?
- What is Sport?
- Esports Events/Tournaments
- Esports Marketing
- Esports Production and Broadcasting

Grading/Evaluation

- Quizzes - Based on course material and small outside readings on class topics
- Assignments - Short responses to questions from course material where you can give opinions
- Class Involvement - Class discussion of topics and current events in esports

Current Event Discussions

- Keep an eye on news within the esports industry and remember articles/headlines which you found interesting
- Be ready to discuss some in class
- Can be from anything and everything;
 - Tournament Announcement
 - Team/Player News
 - Sponsorship Announcement
 - New Game Titles
- Examples of good sources
 - <https://www.dexerto.com/esports/>
 - <https://www.hltv.org/>
 - <https://dotesports.com/>
 - <https://esportsinsider.com/>

Discussion

- The next page shows how vast esports industry careers are, are there any roles which surprise you or that you didn't think had a home within esports?



What is Esports?

Esports Assignment 1 - [LINK](#)

This assignment serves as an introduction of yourself. Answer each of the following questions using a few sentences, double spaced and 12pt Times New Roman font.

1. Which esports titles are you currently playing and why do you enjoy them? If you are not playing any titles right now, what have you played in the past and why did you play them?
2. Do you watch any esports events online? If so, what are they and where do you watch them? If not, do you watch any streamers or content creators online which are adjacent to esports and gaming?
3. Do you currently or have you in the past supported a specific esports team? Why or why not?

What is Esports?

- Electronic Sports
 - Video Games
 - Multi-Platform
 - Organized Competition
 - Global
 - Entertainment
-
- Esports is a rapidly growing industry that involves organized competitive video gaming, with professional players or teams competing in various games and tournaments, and has become a popular form of entertainment around the world.

Esports Titles

LEAGUE OF
LEGENDS



ROCKET
LEAGUE

FORTNITE



DOTA 2



VALORANT



FIFA

SUPER
SMASH BROS.TM
ULTIMATE

CLASH
ROYALE

Platforms

- PC - The majority of esports titles are played on computers
- Consoles - Predominantly sports titles
- Mobile - Arguably the largest platform based on number of users, extremely popular in China, India and other Asian nations

Genres

FPS First Person Shooter	MOBA Multiplayer Online Battle Arena	MMORPG Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game	Battle Royale	Fighting Games	Simulation Sport & Racing
					
					
					
					

How did we get here?

- Four major eras of development for esports
- 1970's - Inception
- 1980's - Arcades
- 1990's - LAN Parties
- 2000's - Expansion

1970's - Spacewar!

- “Spacewar!” was a two-player game developed at MIT in 1962
- In 1972 the Artificial Intelligence lab at Stanford hosted what is considered the first video game tournament titled “Intergalactic Spacewar Olympics”
- 24 players competed 1v1 and the winner took home a years subscription to Rolling Stone Magazine



1980's - Local Arcades

- Arcade games and cabinets spread throughout the world
- Titles like “Pac-Man” (1980), “Donkey Kong” (1981), and “Space Invaders” (1978) were first released as large arcade machines and later ported onto home consoles such as Atari’s
- Arcades across the globe would hold tournaments where players battle against each other to record high scores



1990's - Age of LAN

- With advances in computing technology and increased access, gamers would be able to meet in person for LAN (Local Area Network) parties
- Computers would be connected to form a network on which players could compete against each other
- Popular titles in this era included DOOM (1993), Quake (1996), and Warcraft II (1995)
- LAN allowed anyone to host events with their friends and created a social environment around competition

2000's - Game Titles

- New titles such as “Counter Strike 1.6” (1999), “Starcraft: Broodwar” (2000), and “Warcraft III” (2002)
- These titles would go on to shape the next two decades of competitions



2000's - Foundations

- The first esports organizations were formed leading to a more professional environment for teams and events
- Most organizations fielded teams initially in Counter Strike and/or Starcraft/Warcraft before adopting new titles
- OpTic was an outlier starting with Call of Duty



SK Gaming
1999, Germany



Team Liquid
2000, Netherlands



Complexity Gaming
2003, USA



Fnatic
2004, United Kingdom



OpTic Gaming
2006, USA

2000's - Television

- Events started to be televised as a way to gain mainstream traction

<u>Event</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Territories</u>	<u>Titles</u>
Cyberathlete Professional League (CPL)	2001	USA	Counter Strike, Quake III
World Cyber Games (WCG)	2003	South Korea, China, USA,	Broodwar, Warcraft III, Counter Strike, FIFA 03, Unreal Tournament
Electronic Sports World Cup (ESWC)	2003	France (2003), USA & Canada (2006)	Counter Strike, Warcraft III, FIFA, TrackMania, Quake, and more
Championship Gaming Series (CGS)	2007	USA, UK, Asia, Europe	Counter Strike: Source

2000's - Streaming

- Streaming revolutionized consumption of esports events and allowed organizers to broadcast directly to their audience without the need for contracts with TV networks
- Fans could watch their favourite games and teams without the need for expensive subscriptions or specific software
- JustinTV (2007) was considered as one of the first streaming platforms for esports to call home - it would launch Twitch.tv in 2011, a dedicated place for esports
- Own3D (2009) was the other major platform in the late 2000's and helped contribute to esports' popularity in the 2010's

Justin.tv

Twitch's
predecessors
layout in 2007

The screenshot shows the Justin.tv homepage from May 22, 2007. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for "Create an account" and "Log In". Below the header is a cartoon character logo. The main content area features a video player showing a young man named Justin Kan, wearing a cap and headphones, smiling. A "sponsor clip" watermark is visible on the video. The video player includes controls for volume, brightness, and a timestamp of "12:09:01 AM, May 22 07 PST". Below the video is an "Embed" section with an "Embed" button and a "Tip URL" input field containing "http://test.justin.tv/". To the right of the video is a scrollable chat log with messages from users like "bizzmom", "baldie", and "slappy". Further down the page is a "SPEAK!" input field and a bio for Justin Kan, which reads: "I am broadcasting live video of my life 24/7 to the internet. I started Justin.tv because I thought it would be awesome for people to see what it was like to be Justin. I convinced three of my friends (Emmett, Michael, and Kyle) to join me out in San Francisco. Now, we're starting a company to make broadcasting live video on the web easy. Thanks for watching Justin.tv. Let me know what you like and don't like about the show; I hope to hear from you soon!". Below the bio are links for "Facebook", "Myspace", and "Blog". At the bottom of the page are links for "Twitter" and "Todays Schedule". On the left side, there's a "Tips" section with a "Hot" tab, a "New" tab, and a list of tips posted by users like "smojo" and "justin".

11:33 **bizzmom:** fiannally
11:34 **baldie:** and the sound
11:34 **baldie:** though now we've lost the video!
11:35 **bizzmom:** they could be having some technical problems
11:35 **baldie:** nahh this happens a lot
11:35 **baldie:** something about the laptop heating up
11:36 **baldie:** or problems with the cell communication
11:36 **bizzmom:** oh
11:37 **baldie:** jeez they left the car open
11:38 **baldie:** more crappy music
11:51 **slappy:** he got carded?
11:52 **slappy:** "the" movie.
11:56 **ricksf:** who are the 2 guys with justin????

Justin Kan

I am broadcasting live video of my life 24/7 to the internet. I started Justin.tv because I thought it would be awesome for people to see what it was like to be Justin. I convinced three of my friends (Emmett, Michael, and Kyle) to join me out in San Francisco. Now, we're starting a company to make broadcasting live video on the web easy. Thanks for watching Justin.tv. Let me know what you like and don't like about the show; I hope to hear from you soon!

SPEAK!

Embed <OBJECT classid="clsid:D27CDB6E-AE64-11CB-BE52-000000000000">
Tip URL

Tips

Hot **New** Add

Vote for Smojo's TIP i want 10 fans
at 8:55 AM on 05/21
13 fans | posted by smojo_digg

love it so much
at 8:53 PM on 05/16
6 fans | posted by justin_digg

asdasdasdasdasdasdasdasdasdasdasdasdas
at 8:58 PM on 05/16
5 fans | posted by justin_digg

Facebook **Myspace** **Blog**

Twitter **justin says** Returning that boat of a uhaul... Finally posted 9 hours ago

Todays Schedule

May 22, 2007 yesterday | tomorrow

Own3D streaming platform in 2011, featuring former League of Legends pro and founder of CLG, HotshotGG

The screenshot shows the Own3D streaming platform's interface. At the top, there are tabs for "Games" and "Live!", a search bar, and a "Sign Up | Login" button. The main area features a large video player window titled "LIVE HD" showing a split-screen feed. The left side of the feed displays a black and white cat, while the right side shows a red heart icon and a plate of spaghetti with meat sauce. A large play button is overlaid in the center of the video player. Below the video player, the text "CLGaming.net - HotshotGG" and "League of Legends | cgame" is visible. To the right of the main video player, there is a sidebar listing other live streams:

- CLGaming.net - HotshotGG - League of Legends, 6,759 Viewers
- OceloteWorld - League of Legends, 6,007 Viewers
- FnaticMSI Shushei - League of Legends, 3,529 Viewers
- Saintvicious Jungle - Veigar THE NEW META!, League of Legends

Live!



CLGaming.net - HotshotGG



OceloteWorld

Popular Videos



SoloMid.net - Chaox vs

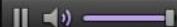


Twitch.tv homepage in 2012

[Browse](#)[SweetpatchTV](#)[Following](#)

i47 FIFA 13 2v2 £200 Casual Cup |...

on SweetpatchTV



SweetPatch.tv

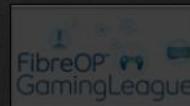


SweetpatchTV

playing [FIFA Soccer 13](#)

Follow the action from the Main Stage at Multiplay's Insomnia47 - UK's Largest Gaming Festival. Don't miss the 'World Famous Pub Quiz' to the biggest Esports events in the UK, including Starcraft 2, CS:GO, LoL, TF2 and ShootMania.

[Click here to watch and chat live!](#)



2010's - Expansion and Acceptance

- US recognizes esports competitors for P-1 athlete visas in 2013
- League Championship Series (LCS) is formed in 2013 for Europe and North America League of Legends - NALCS would become a franchise league in 2018 with a buy in of \$10m
- Overwatch League (OWL) is founded in 2018 with a franchise price tag of \$20m
- Overall increase in diversity, inclusion, viewership, prize money, revenue and opportunities

2020's - The COVID Years

- Immediate hit to live events which stopped players competing in person and on LAN, meaning potential big loss of revenue for tournament organizers
- Events had to be postponed, altered, or shift to online only
 - DOTA 2's The International was postponed for 2020 and rescheduled for late 2021 in Stockholm
 - League of Legends MSI 2020 was delayed 6 months and took place in Shanghai in a “bubble” environment
 - Call of Duty League (CDL) moved to a completely online format for all of 2020
- Esports did see record breaking viewership for many of the events during COVID with people spending more time inside and isolating

Levels of Competition

- Grassroots/Amateur
 - Entry level stage where teams participate in online leagues or community organized events.
 - Prize pools are often small or non-existent and serve as a platform for players to have fun competing.
- Semi-Professional
 - Teams and players often compete on a national or regional level whilst earning a small sum of money through prizeing, sponsorship and other revenue streams.
- Professional
 - The highest level of competition for players who earn a living wage through competing under team banners.
 - Players are tied to contracts and receive income through salaries, sponsorships and prize money to the point where esports is their only occupation.

What is Sport?

Define Sport

- Coakley, a prominent scholar in sport literature, defined sport as:

“Institutionalised competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by personal enjoyment and external rewards.”

Criteria

- Rigorous physical activity
- Relatively complex skills
- Personal enjoyment
- External rewards

Discussion:

- What traditional sports meet all of the criteria?
- Are there any traditional sports which do not meet all the criteria?
- How many of these boxes does esports tick? Can an argument be made that it ticks all four?

Esports x Traditional Sport

- In the past decade we have seen more and more overlap between esports and traditional sports:
 - Investment
 - Government Recognition
 - Governing Body Recognition
 - Traditional Franchise Leagues

Investment

- A lot of investment in recent years has come from traditional sports organizations and athletes
- Sports organizations invested in/owners of esports
 - Philadelphia 76ers acquired Team Dignitas in 2016
 - Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) formed PSG Esports in 2016
 - Florida Panthers' owner, the Viola family, own FlyQuest
- Athletes investing in esports
 - Shaquille O'Neal became a co-owner of NRG Esports in 2016
 - Rick Fox founded Echo Fox in 2015 before the organization ceased operations in 2019
 - David Beckham co-owns London's Guild Esports

Government Recognition

- USA P-1 Visas
 - P1 Visas allow athletes or athletic teams to enter and compete in the United States.
 - Danny “Shiptur” Le was the first esports player to be awarded a P1 visa in 2013 for League of Legends
- Germany commitment to esports
 - In 2018 Germany’s government agreed to officially recognize esports as a sport
 - Solutions were put in place to make it easier for esports-related visas to be acquired classifying esports as “event of a sporting nature”
- Danish Esports Strategy
 - Denmark was the first nation to officially launch a strategic plan focusing on esports
 - Esports is noted as a grassroots sport for tax purposes meaning they are exempt from paying VAT, similar to soccer and handball

Sport Assignment 2 - LINK

Utilizing Esports Insider's "Esports Around The World" series, and at least ONE extra source, choose ONE of the following countries and briefly write about how esports has developed in that country, noting any significant government interventions. Use the questions below as guidelines for talking points.

Countries: Brazil, China, South Korea, Malta

Talking Points

- What is the history of esports in your chosen country?
- Who are the major teams/organizations in your chosen country?
- Has there been any government involvement in the development of esports?
- Has esports been integrated into any educational efforts?

Esports Around The World: <https://esportsinsider.com/?s=esports+around+the+world>

Assignment should be 1-2 pages in length, double spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font.

Do not simply answer the questions one by one, instead focus on writing in paragraphs and covering all bases succinctly. Include your extra source as a link at the bottom of your assignment.

Governing Body Recognition

- IEM PyeongChang
 - Starcraft 2 esports event hosted by Intel and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the run up to the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea.
 - Aimed at showcasing esports to a wider audience and promote the crossover over sports and esports.
 - Although not an official event, it was hosted as an exhibition tournament with 18 players and a \$150,000 prize pool.
- Asian Games
 - 2022 Asian Games hosted in Hangzhou China added esports to the official list of medal events after esports was added to the 2018 games as a demonstration event.
 - Titles for medals include PUBG Mobile, DOTA 2, League of Legends, and more.

Sport Assignment 3

Read the following articles about esports being trialed by the IOC.

- What are your immediate thoughts after reading the announcement from the IOC?
- Do you think the games chosen are good choices? Why/Why not?
- Why do you think the IOC decided to add Fortnite sometime after the initial announcement?

Articles:

- IOC: <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/ioc-announces-olympic-esports-series-2023>
- VICE: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/4axkzb/the-list-of-official-olympics-esports-games-is-extremely-weird>
- PCGamer:
<https://www.pcgamer.com/olympic-esports-tournament-adds-fortnite-but-not-any-fortnite-mode-youve-seen-before/>

Assignment should be 1-2 pages in length, double spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font.

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Traditional Leagues

- A number of traditional sports leagues in the United States have started license esports competitions
 - NBA is the owned and operator of the NBA 2K League where traditional NBA teams field competitors who utilize the team name and branding. Eg. LA Lakers own the Lakers Gaming brand. NBA 2K league also holds a yearly draft where teams select players to represent them in the coming season.
 - The MLS collaborated with FIFA to establish the eMLS in 2018, an esports circuit where MLS teams field players to compete in FIFA esports. Large eMLS events are usually held in conjunction with MLS events such as the All-Star Game to integrate both brands natively.

