

# Game Studies

(Winter 2018)

FILMSTUD 259/459: Game Studies

Tue: 10:30am-1:20pm Professor: Shane Denson

Room: McMurtry 360

games (including but not limited to digital games) are, why we play them, and what the functions of this activity might be. The have been played, and the discourses and practices that have determined their place in social and cultural life. In addition, we both games in the same sense, or do digital media redefine games? What are the relations between storytelling and the interdisciplinary field of game studies. We will investigate what which we will approach from a variety of perspectives: from and formal (narratological/ludological) perspectives, among others. Thus, we will seek to understand the contexts in which video games emerged and evolved, the settings in which they will ask difficult questions about the mediality of digital games: What is the relation of digital to non-digital games? Are they activity of gameplaying in them? What is the relation between as embodied in hardware and software? What is the role of the human body, and how are our experiences of gameplay inflected by our social, gendered, and other identifications (and bulk of the course will be devoted specifically to digital games, This course aims to introduce students to the emerging, historical, cultural, industrial/commercial, media-theoretical, what games are or can be? What does it feel like to play digital these aspects and the underlying mechanics of digital games,

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Office Hours: TBD

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This course aims to introduce students to the emerging, interdisciplinary field of game studies. We will investigate what games (including but not limited to digital games) are, why we play them, and what the functions of this activity might be. The bulk of the course will be devoted specifically to digital games, which we will approach from a variety of perspectives: from historical, cultural, industrial/commercial, media-theoretical, and formal (narratological/ludological) perspectives, among others. Thus, we will seek to understand the contexts in which video games emerged and evolved, the settings in which they have been played, and the discourses and practices that have determined their place in social and cultural life. In addition, we will ask difficult guestions about the mediality of digital games: What is the relation of digital to non-digital games? Are they both games in the same sense, or do digital media redefine what games are or can be? How do digital games relate to other (digital as well as non-digital) non-game media, such as film, television, print fiction, or non-game computer applications? Of course, to engage meaningfully with these questions at all will require us to investigate theories of mediality (including inter- and transmediality) more generally. Finally, though, we will be interested in the formal and experiential parameters that define (different types of) digital games in particular. What does it feel like to play (various) digital games? What are the relations between storytelling and the activity of gameplaying in them? What is the relation between these aspects and the underlying mechanics of digital games, as embodied in hardware and software? What is the role of the human body, and how are our experiences of gameplay inflected by our social, gendered, and other identifications (and vice versa)?

Please make sure you are registered for the class on Canvas. Handouts and additional course material will be posted there.

### Recommended Textbooks:

Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Simon, Jonas Heide Smith, and Susana Pajares Tosca. *Understanding Video Games: The Essential Introduction*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Mäyrä, Frans. An Introduction to Game Studies: Games in Culture. London: SAGE, 2008.

# Course Learning Goals:

- Students will develop the ability to think critically about games, especially digital games, from a variety
  of angles: historical, cultural, industrial, formal, ideological, and media-theoretical, among others.
  Students will demonstrate this ability by articulating and setting these perspectives in relation to one
  another in class discussions, presentations, and final projects.
- Students will learn to conduct archival research related to games and game cultures and to synthesize
  and communicate their findings to an audience of their peers. Research will be facilitated through
  Special Collections and Media-Microtext at Green Library, and findings will be the subject of group
  presentations.

- 3. Students will learn to read, evaluate, and apply key perspectives in game studies and related fields. Students will demonstrate these skills by effectively summarizing, criticizing, defending, comparing and contrasting approaches in class discussions and final projects.
- 4. Students will develop the ability to work collaboratively with peers (as demonstrated in group presentations).

# Course Requirements:

- 1. Regular attendance and active participation in class
- 2. Group presentation and moderation of discussion sessions 30 min presentation + 50 min discussion (see details below).
- 3. Final assignment (term paper or critical media project)
- 4. Students taking the seminar for graduate course credit will be required to attend additional discussion sections and prepare a longer research paper.

# Grading:

Your final grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

25% Class participation and preparation

35% Presentations + Moderation of Discussions

40% Final project

# A Note on Class Sessions, Readings, and Presentations:

Each week's class meeting (after the first week) will be split into two sessions (10:30am – 11:50am and 12:00pm – 1:20pm), each of which will start off with a group presentation of about 30 minutes. It will be the responsibility of the group, in consultation with Prof. Denson, to determine and assign the readings for their own sessions. The course schedule below lists a number of articles and books for each session, but the precise selections will be determined by the presenting group (except for week 1, when everyone will be responsible for reading all of the texts listed on the schedule, and week 2, where the two main texts have been determined in advance). Reading assignments must be announced by email to the class one week before the class session. The presenting group will be responsible for reading more than the rest of the class on their subject, and their presentation should reflect this broader scope and contextualize the assigned readings. In addition, presentations should supplement these readings with relevant video clips, games, and other media (see below under "Finders of Things").

Following their presentation, the group should be prepared to field questions from the class and to take a lead in moderating discussion for the rest of the session (approximately 50 minutes). In preparation for the discussion, the group is responsible for circulating a set of discussion questions at least 24 hours in advance of the class session (see below under "Inquisitors").

It is up to the group to ensure that all of their responsibilities are collectively met and that work is divided fairly amongst individual group members. Effective coordination will be key to a successful presentation and discussion; group members will submit a self-evaluation of group work following their session. You should make sure that the following three roles (stolen adapted from Jonathan Sterne) are covered (please note

that depending on enrollment and other factors, you may be required to perform these roles more than once in the quarter):

- 1. Inquisitors will bring in discussion questions and topics, and lead the discussion. When you are in this role, email to the class list no later than 24 hours before your assigned class meeting, with a list of questions and topics to discuss. You should aim to get at the most important issues in the readings, which will also mean prioritizing them, since we won't be able to discuss every aspect of every reading every week. Questions can be oriented around anything from really basic content questions (like "what does the passage on p. 25 mean?") all the way up to "big picture" issues that connect the week's readings with other discussions we've had in the course. During the moderation session, each member of the group should be capable of assuming the role of Inquisitor, but you should decide in advance on a "Grand Inquisitor" who will assume responsibility for keeping the discussion on track.
- 2. Finders of Objects will bring in objects for us to discuss in relation to the readings. Your objects may be images, sound recordings, devices, or anything else you see fit to bring in. Games and game-related media (such as machinima and Let's Play videos) or objects (such as advertising materials, packaging, controllers, etc.) will be obvious choices in this class, and Finders of Objects will do well to search for these not only online but also in the extensive archival holdings of games and game-related materials in Green Library. Depending on your topic, the size of your group, and other factors related to the organization of your presentation and discussion session, there may be several people in this role. Objects may play an integral role in the presentation portion of the session, or they may be introduced in an ad hoc manner during discussion. It is your responsibility to make sure that these objects enable fruitful discussion rather than replace it. Please be mindful of the time devoted to these objects. While there is no hard and fast rule, the actual presentation of a given object should probably not take more than 5 minutes, though discussion of it (and its relation to the topic and readings at hand) can of course take considerably longer. Careful planning (especially for objects used in the presentation portion) and a good deal of flexibility (for objects introduced during discussion) will be key.

Inquisitors and Finders of Objects, please note that class dynamics will vary from week to week and will follow people's particular interests and energies. DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED if you prepared something wonderful and the class went in another direction. This happens to us all the time and is part of the teaching process. It is better to have a good class session than to stick to a plan.

3. The Cleaner will take notes of any readings, authors, texts, games, devices, or other objects mentioned in class – especially but not only for items that are not already on the syllabus. Essentially, the Cleaner will be compiling a bibliography or list of works cited for the session. This should include anything introduced by Inquisitors, Finders of Objects, and other group members (so that careful coordination with the group prior to the session will be important), but it should also include things mentioned by other students in the class, beyond the group itself. Within 24 hours of the end of class, the Cleaner will email (or otherwise communicate with) the people who mentioned these things and ask for a full reference. If the reference doesn't appear in a day or two, the cleaner should send a reminder. If a classmate still doesn't respond, the Cleaner should do his or her best to track down the errant source. Once he or she has collected all of the relevant citations, the Cleaner will make a single post on Canvas with all of the information from the previous week's class neatly compiled.

# Final Assignment:

Option 1: Term paper. If you opt for a traditional, individually authored assignment, your term paper (10-12 pages) is to be submitted by March 31, 2018 (no later than 3:15pm). As a prerequisite for the final paper,

- a 1-2 page proposal will be due in class on March 6, 2018. In your proposal, you should outline the focus or object of your analysis, explain the specific method(s) of analysis, state your reasons for choosing this approach to the topic, and formulate a tentative thesis statement. The final paper should be written in a scholarly format, with a complete bibliography, and should consist of the following:
  - 1. A brief introduction outlining your topic and stating as clearly and precisely as possible the thesis of your paper. This section should usually be no more than one paragraph long.
  - 2. A short description of the game(s) or other object(s) of your analysis. Here you should provide any essential background that might be needed for the reader to understand your analysis. You should assume an educated reader, who is familiar with film and media studies but perhaps has not played the games or seen the films (or other media) being discussed in your paper. If it is not relevant to your argument, do not engage in lengthy plot summaries. On the other hand, make sure that the reader has enough context (narrative or otherwise) to understand the more detailed analysis that follows. Overall, in this section you must find the right balance, which you can do by considering whether each detail is truly relevant and informative with respect to your argument. Anthropologist and cybernetician Gregory Bateson defined information as "a difference which makes a difference," and you can use this formula as a test for determining which details truly belong in this section. If, for example, providing a plot summary or details about production costs and box-office revenues will make a difference with respect to your thesis (i.e. if a reader needs to know these things in order to process your argument), then this is clearly relevant and belongs in this section; on the other hand, if it doesn't make a difference to your argument, then it probably doesn't belong here. This section should usually be no more than 2-3 paragraphs long.
  - 3. An in-depth analysis of the game(s) or other media object(s) under consideration. Your analysis should be interpretive and argumentative in nature. In other words, it is not enough simply to describe what you see on screen; you need also to persuade the reader that this is important, and that it has certain implications that may not be obvious at first glance. (If something is overly obvious, then it's probably not very informative and certainly not worth arguing.) You are not just describing things but providing a "reading" of them. Keep in mind that the analysis you provide in this section constitutes the main support for your thesis statement. Your analysis is the argumentation that you offer to back up your thesis, while the thesis statement should be seen as the logical conclusion of your argument/analysis. In other words, while you have already told the reader what your thesis statement is (in the introduction), it is through your analysis that you must now prove that your thesis is correct or plausible. Ideally, after reading the analysis in this section, the reader should see your thesis statement as the logical outcome. Keeping this in mind as the test of success, you again need to ensure that your analysis is relevant and informative with respect to your thesis statement (if it doesn't make a difference with regard to your thesis, then it can hardly prove it). In addition, you need to make sure that your analysis/argument proves your thesis sufficiently. This is a question of the scope of your thesis, and of your ability to prove it through your interpretive analysis. Have you claimed too much in your thesis? Not enough? Ideally, there should be a perfect match between what you claim in your thesis and what your analysis actually demonstrates. When writing this section, you may find that you have to adjust your thesis (and re-write your introduction accordingly) or look for stronger arguments to support it. This should be the longest section of your paper.
  - 4. A brief conclusion. Try not to be too mechanical in summarizing and repeating what you've written, but do make sure that the conclusion demonstrates the paper's overall relevance and coherence. For example, you might return to a detail mentioned in the introduction and use it to highlight the significance of your argument: maybe the detail seemed rather unimportant before but has a very different meaning in the light of your analysis or interpretation. Foregrounding the transformative

effect of your argument (i.e. the fact that it makes us see things differently) is a good way to demonstrate the overall importance of your paper, and the device of returning in the end to something mentioned at the beginning is an effective way of giving your paper closure. Obviously, though, it is not the only way to approach the conclusion. You might also demonstrate the relevance of your argument by opening up the scope even farther and considering the questions that your thesis raises for other areas of inquiry. Does your analysis suggest alternative readings for other films or media objects? Does it suggest the need to re-think various assumptions about cinema, about a given genre, or about some other aspect of media inquiry? However you decide to approach it, the point of the conclusion, generally speaking, is to take a step back from arguing for your thesis (you are supposed to be finished doing that by now) and to reflect, on a quasi meta-level, about the overall significance of your argument/thesis. This section should normally be one paragraph in length.

5. A full list of works cited, according to MLA style.

Option 2: Critical Media Project. You may alternatively choose to create a critical media project (machinima, videographic work, digital game, website, app, etc.) that has a clear scholarly relevance to game studies. The project, which must be proposed in detail (1-2 page proposal due in class on March 6, 2018) and approved in advance by Prof. Denson, must be accompanied by a textual description of process and critical relevance. These projects can be either individually authored or collaborative in nature, and they can focus either on research conducted independently (out of class), or they can build upon a group presentation. Details will be determined on a case by case basis. As with term papers, critical media projects are to be submitted by March 31, 2018 (no later than 3:15pm).

## Students with Documented Disabilities:

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723–1066, URL: http://oae.stanford.edu).

# Course Schedule:

# 01.09. Introduction: How and Why Should We Study Games?

Frans Mäyrä, "Introduction: What is Game Studies?" and "Game Culture: Meaning in Games," Chapters 1 and 2 of *An Introduction to Game Studies*, 1–29.

Patrick Jagoda, "Videogame Criticism and Games in the Twenty-First Century."

Eric Zimmerman, "Manifesto for a Ludic Century."

Heather Chaplin, "Will the 21- Century be Defined by Games?"

# 01.16. Defining Games/Games of Definition & The Birth of Game Studies

Jesper Juul, "The Game, the Player, and the World: Looking for a Heart of Gameness"

<a href="http://www.jesperjuul.net/text/gameplayerworld/">http://www.jesperjuul.net/text/gameplayerworld/</a>>. (Main reading for Group 1 – Topic: "Defining Games")

Jesper Juul, "Games Telling Stories?" *Game Studies* 1.1 (July 2001): <a href="http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/">http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/juul-gts/</a>>. (Main reading for Group 2 – Topic: "Narratology/Ludology Debate")

Frans Mäyrä, "Play and Games in History," Chapter 3 of *An Introduction to Game Studies*, 30-51.

Selections from: Game Studies 1.1 (July 2001)

Gonzalo Frasca, "Ludology Meets Narratology: Similitude and Differences between (Video)Games and Narrative." *Game Studies* 1.1 (July 2011)

Marie-Laure Ryan, "Computer Games as Narrative," Chapter 8 of Avatars of Story, 181-204.

Excerpts from: Janet Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck*; Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*; Espen Aarseth, *Cybertext*.

Recommended:

Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences."

Excerpts from: Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*; Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*.

# 01.23. Games, Culture, and History

Frans Mäyrä, "Dual Structure and the Action Games of the 1970s" and "Adventures and Other Fiction in the 1980s' Games," Chapters 4 and 5 of *An Introduction to Game Studies*, 52–89.

Excerpts from: Carly A. Kocurek, *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade.* 

Excerpts from: Mia Consalvo, Atari to Zelda: Japan's Videogames in Global Contexts.

Recommended:

Michael Z. Newman, Atari Age: The Emergence of Video Games in America.

# 01.30. Platform Studies

Nick Montfort, "Combat in Context," *Game Studies* 6.1 (December 2006): <a href="http://gamestudies.org/0601/articles/montfort">http://gamestudies.org/0601/articles/montfort</a>.

Excerpts from: Nick Montfort and Ian Bogost, *Racing the Beam: The Atari Video Computer System*.

Excerpts from: Nathan Altice, I Am Error: The Nintendo Family Computer/Entertainment System Platform.

Excerpts from: Steven E. Jones and George K. Thiruvathukal, *Codename Revolution: The Nintendo Wii Platform*.

Recommended:

Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination.

Dominic Arsenault, Super Power, Spoony Bards, and Silverware: The Super Nintendo System.

# 02.06. Games, Gender, and Queer Game Studies

Shira Chess and Adrienne Shaw. "A Conspiracy of Fishes, or, How We Learned to Stop Worrying About #GamerGate and Embrace Hegemonic Masculinity."

Massanari, Adrienne. "#gamergate and the Fappening: How Reddit's Algorithm, Governance, and Culture Support Toxic Technocultures."

Selected videos from Feminist Frequency.

Carly A. Kocurek, "Gamers vs. Tropes vs. Women in Video Games." (video) [archived at https://vimeo.com/114564466]

Excerpts from: Adrienne Shaw, Gaming at the Edge.

Helen W. Kennedy, "Lara Croft: Feminist Icon or Cyberbimbo? On the Limits of Textual Analysis," *Game Studies* 2.2 (December 2002): <a href="http://www.gamestudies.org/0202/kennedy/">http://www.gamestudies.org/0202/kennedy/</a>.

Selections from: Bonnie Ruberg and Adrienne Shaw, eds., Queer Game Studies.

Recommended:

Jennifer Jenson and Suzanne de Castell, "Theorizing Gender and Digital Gameplay: Oversights, Accidents, and Surprises," *eludamos* 2.1 (2008): 15–25. <a href="http://www.eludamos.org/index.php/eludamos/article/view/vol2no1-4">http://www.eludamos.org/index.php/eludamos/article/view/vol2no1-4</a>.

Amanda Cote, "Our Princess is in Another Castle"

"Perspectives" section of *Eludamos* 2.1

Astrid Deuber-Mankowsky, Lara Croft: Cyber Heroine

# 02.13. Games as Performative Systems

Excerpts from: Karen Schrier, Knowledge Games: How Playing Games Can Solve Problems, Create Insights, and Make Change.

Selections from: Ian Bogost, How to Do Things with Videogames.

Selections from: Ian Bogost, Persuasive Games.

# 02.20. Games and/as Art

John Sharp, Works of Game: On the Aesthetics of Games and Art.

Selections from: Andy Clarke and Grethe Mitchell, Videogames and Art.

Excerpts from: Grant Tavinor, The Art of Videogames.

Patrick LeMieux, "Everything But the Clouds." (video) <a href="https://vimeo.com/241966869">https://vimeo.com/241966869</a>>.

Recommended:

Maizels, Michael, and Patrick Jagoda. *The Game Worlds of Jason Rohrer.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016.

# 02.27. Games and Theory

McKenzie Wark, Gamer Theory.

Excerpts from: Alexander Galloway, Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture.

Excerpts from: Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greig de Peuter, Games of Empire.

# 03.06. Practices: Making Games/Writing about Games

Anna Anthropy, Rise of the Videogame Zinesters.

Selections from: Ian Bogost, How to Talk about Games.

[Please note: there will only be one presentation/discussion section on this day; the other half of the class will be devoted to discussion of final projects. Proposals are due in class!]

# 03.13. Games about Games: Metagaming & Digital Seriality

Excerpts from: Stephanie Boluk and Patrick LeMieux, Metagaming.

Shane Denson and Andreas Jahn-Sudmann, "Digital Seriality: On the Serial Aesthetics and Practice of Digital Games."

Shane Denson, "Visualizing Digital Seriality, Or: All Your Mods Are Belong to Us!"

Selections from: *Digital Seriality*, eds. Shane Denson and Andreas Jahn-Sudmann. Special issue of *Eludamos* 8.1 (2014).

# Bibliography:

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Anthropy, Anna. Rise of the Videogame Zinesters: How Freaks, Normals, Amateurs, Artists, Dreamers, Drop-Outs, Queers, Housewives, and People Like You Are Taking Back an Art Form. New York: Seven Stories Press. 2012.

Arsenault, Dominic. Super Power, Spoony Bards, and Silverware: The Super Nintendo Entertainment System. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017.

Atkins, Barry. More than a Game: The Computer Game as Fictional Form. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003.

Atkins, Barry, and Tanya Krzywinska. Videogame, Player, Text. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2008.

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Bogost, Ian. How to Talk about Videogames. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2015.

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Carr, Diane, David Buckingham, Andrew Burn, and Gareth Schott. *Computer Games: Text, Narrative and Play.* Cambridge: Polity, 2006.

Castranova, Edward. *Synthetic Worlds: The Business and Culture of Online Games*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2005.

Chaplin, Heather. "Will the 21 Century be Defined by Games?" *Kotaku* 11 September 2013: <a href="https://kotaku.com/will-the-21st-century-be-defined-by-games-1293867009">https://kotaku.com/will-the-21st-century-be-defined-by-games-1293867009</a>>.

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- Denson, Shane. "Visualizing Digital Seriality, or: All Your Mods Are Belong to Us!" *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* 22.1 (Fall 2017): <a href="http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/22.1/index.html">http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/22.1/index.html</a>.
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Shane Denson, Game Studies: Rubric for Group Presentations

Criteria	Lev	Levels of Achievement	
	Sophisticated (3 points each)	Competent (2 points each)	Not Yet Competent (1 point each)
Research			
Quality (e.g. breadth of reading and/or archival research, use of varied sources and materials, accurate and relevant information)	Information is accurate and contextualized; resources are relevant; resources are varied when appropriate; value and relevance of resources is clear	Information is mostly accurate with only a few minor errors; one resource may be questionable in accuracy or relevance; resources good but not varied enough	Information is unreliable, inaccurate, or irrelevant; lack of necessary context
Broad spectrum of information (e.g. on historical, cultural, industrial, formal, ideological/political, and media-theoretical dimensions)	Includes all relevant dimensions (clearly, not all research topics/presentations will necessarily cover all dimensions)	Covers most relevant dimensions, but could develop them more	Omits significant dimensions
Content of Presentation			
Substantive use of information (e.g. explanations on historical, cultural, industrial, formal, ideological/political, and media-theoretical dimensions are complete and helpful; resources are critically evaluated and contextualized; connections and inferences are made, conclusions drawn, convergence and divergence among resources noted)	Explanations of dimensions are complete and helpful and indicate how the dimensions interact with each other; compelling conclusions are drawn, interesting connections and inferences are made; evidence of critical reflection on the relation of resources and materials to theories and readings	Explanations are complete and helpful but include little or no interaction among dimensions or explanations aren't quite as complete or helpful but there is an indication of interaction among dimensions; some conclusions drawn and some inferences made but obvious ones missed; limited critical reflection on relation of theories and materials to theories and readings	Incomplete and/or not helpful explanations with little or no indication of interaction among dimensions; presents others' information without analysis (e.g. drawing conclusions, making comparisons, connections and inferences); little evidence of independent critical thinking or ability to relate materials to theories and readings

Shane Denson, Game Studies: Rubric for Group Presentations

Documentation of materials (e.g. effective use of photo and video documentation of objects, documents, gameplay, etc.)	Materials are clearly and effectively documented, with high quality photos, videos, etc. and full bibliographical/archival documentation that would allow others to track down the materials with ease	Documentation is complete but in need of technical improvement (poor photo or video quality, for example), or quality is good but bibliographical/archival documentation is incomplete	Documentation is insufficient
Effective slides and visual materials (e.g. coherent, logical progression, well organized, include main points not details, "tell a story")	Slides and other materials clearly aid the speaker/group in telling a coherent story	For the most part slides and materials are helpful in telling the story with only a few significant problems	Slides and materials interfere with/distract from the story
Communication			
Clarity (e.g. group explains ideas well, integrates with slides and materials, clear introduction and conclusion, obvious transitions, doesn't use jargon, demonstrates knowledge of key points, responds well to questions)	Presentation is coherent, with clear introduction, transitions, language use, and conclusion; speakers demonstrate intimate knowledge of the subject	Presentation is coherent for the most part, but missing 1 or 2 important elements	Presentation lacks coherence
Style (e.g. speaks in sentences, clear enunciation, fluent delivery, well paced, maintains eye contact, fits time requirement, clearly practiced, flexible and responsive to audience)	Presentation is polished, speakers use sentences, enunciate well, fluent in the delivery, maintain an effective pace and eye contact, don't run over allotted time, are flexible and responsive to audience interest and feedback	Presentation is polished, for the most part, but missing 1 or 2 important elements	Presentation is not polished

Shane Denson, Game Studies: Rubric for Group Presentations

Group Organization			
Reading selection	Group consulted with Prof. Denson and determined reading selection in a timely manner; reading selection is appropriate for the class and the topic at hand;	Group consulted with instructor and determined reading selection; selection could be communicated more effectively to the class, or selection could be more appropriate for the class or topic at hand	Group failed to consult with instructor on the reading; failed to determine or communicate the reading selection in a timely manner
Inquisition/moderation	Formulated meaningful questions on the reading; circulated them to students in a timely manner; moderated the discussion effectively, so that ample time was devoted to important topics, time not wasted on irrelevant issues; capably animated discussion and demonstrated flexibility	Good questions formulated for the reading but could have been improved (more to the point etc.); questions circulated at the last minute; good moderation of discussion with room for improvement (in terms of regulating the flow, keeping focus, being flexible, etc.)	Poor reading questions (irrelevant points highlighted, for example); questions circulated late; poor moderation of discussion (inflexible or unresponsive to discussants, unfocused, lots of dead time, lack of direction)
Finders of Objects	Exciting objects found; demonstrated in an interesting manner; inspired interest in learning and discovering more	Good choice of objects, but could have gone further, looked for more	Boring choice of objects, lack of effort in searching for materials
Cleaner	Quickly and completely documented all references to texts, games, devices, etc.; list of references circulated within one week of session	Complete documentation but formatting could be improved; circulated to class between 1 and 2 weeks after session	Incomplete or sloppy documentation; slow to circulate to class (2+ weeks)

Shane Denson, Game Studies: Rubric for Group Presentations

Division of labor	Clear division and organization of labor; frictionless cooperation in execution of research and presentation	Division and/or organization of labor is largely efficient but some friction or room for improvement is apparent; problems in executing research or presentation	Significant problems in division and organization of labor or in execution of research or presentation
Self-Evaluation			
Analysis of group process and individual role within it	Clearly articulates what worked well and why, what did not work well and why, and ways to increase effectiveness and efficiency of group process in the future, considering self as well as others	Discusses only two of the three; discusses group without discussing self; discusses self without discussing group	Does not articulate any of the three – what worked well and why, what didn't work well and why, how to improve