

VIDEO GAME STUDIES (VGS)

VGS 100 Introduction to Videogames: A Comparative Perspective (Units: 3)

Interdisciplinary examination of videogames as creative and aesthetic objects, psychological and social experiences, cultural expressions, economic commodities, forums of interaction, platforms for storytelling and communication, opportunities for ethical inquiry, sites of identity construction, and instances of collaboration. Explores issues of genre, design, aesthetics, representation, storytelling, social justice, and more. Includes team-taught lessons from scholars of Design, Cinema, Music, History, Philosophy, Communication Studies, and Comparative and World Literature.

(This course is offered as VGS 100 and CWL 180. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

Course Attributes:

- 3B: Humanities
- C2: Humanities
- Global Perspectives

VGS 270 Fantasy and Fiction: Exploring Parallel Worlds (Units: 3)

Prerequisite: GE Area 1A/A2.

Exploration of dreams, parallel worlds, and alternate realities in fiction and media from a variety of traditions and cultures. Development of critical reading skills to examine the intersection of fantasy and reality in literary representation and video games. [Formerly CWL 270]

Course Attributes:

- 3B: Humanities
- C2: Humanities
- C3 or C2: Humanities/Lit.

VGS 275 Reading Video Games (Units: 3)

Prerequisite: GE Area 1A/A2 or permission of the instructor.

Examine video games as texts whose meaning is produced through the complex interplay of narrative, rules, and cultural context. Read and write about video games using critical perspectives and methods of literary analysis.

(This course is offered as ENG 275, CWL 275, and VGS 275. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

VGS 300 Comparative Analysis of Video Games (Units: 3)

Prerequisites: GE Areas 1A/A2*, 1B/A3*, 1C/A1*, and 2/B4* all with grades of C- or better or permission of the instructor.

Introduction to interdisciplinary methods of analyzing video games by comparing three major approaches: design principles, interpretive and theoretical analysis, and social/societal impact. Learn how games are made, what they mean, and how they matter—exploring intersections between game mechanics, narrative structure, aesthetics, culture, identity, and community. Emphasis is placed on flexible, comparative thinking across methodological frameworks.

Course Attributes:

- 3UD: Arts or Humanities
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities

VGS 380 Thinking with Video Games (Units: 3)

Prerequisites: GE Areas 1A/A2*, 1B/A3*, 1C/A1*, and 2/B4* all with grades of C- or better or permission of the instructor.

Consideration of video games in their social, aesthetic, cross-cultural, theoretical, literary, and historical contexts, to include non-representational relations to gaming.

(This course is offered as VGS 380 and CWL 380. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

VGS 440 Video Games and the Archaeology of the Ancient Mediterranean (Units: 3)

Prerequisites: GE Areas 1A/A2, 1B/A3, 1C/A1, and 2/B4 all with grades of C- or better; or permission of the instructor.

Explore the reciprocal relationship between video games and archaeological research on the ancient Mediterranean, from material culture, history, art, and architecture in games to the use of video games in primary archaeological research.

(This course is offered as CLAR 440, HUM 461, and VGS 440. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

VGS 450 The Ancient World and Video Games (Units: 3)

Prerequisites: GE Areas 1A/A2, 1B/A3, 1C/A1, and 2/B4 all with grades of C- or better; or permission of the instructor.

Explore the reception of the ancient world in video games. Analysis of modern cultural impact and consideration and comparison to original sources. Examination of ancient sources of history, text, and material culture as well as modern theory and gaming environments to explore the role in modern thought, identity, practice, and entertainment.

(This course is offered as CLAS 450, HUM 460, and VGS 450. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

VGS 600 Senior Seminar: Research Projects in Video Game Studies (Units: 3)

Prerequisites: Restricted to upper-division standing Video Game Studies majors; VGS 100 and VGS 300.

Culmination of the Video Game Studies program including preparation, research for, and revision of, a substantial piece of work. Learn advanced research techniques during the process of brainstorming, proposing, pursuing, and revising research questions that integrate diverse points of view on video games. (Plus-minus letter grade only)