

## Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2017

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area English  
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org English - D0537  
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences  
Level/Career Undergraduate  
Course Number/Catalog 2463  
Course Title Introduction to Video Games Analysis  
Transcript Abbreviation VideoGameAnalysis  
Course Description An introduction to humanities-based methods of analyzing and interpreting video games in terms of form, genre, style, and theory. No background in video game play is necessary. All students will have regular opportunities for hands-on experience with different game types and genres in both the computer-based classroom and the English Department Video Game Lab.  
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 12 Week, 8 Week, 7 Week, 6 Week, 4 Week  
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never  
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No  
Grading Basis Letter Grade  
Repeatable No  
Course Components Lecture  
Grade Roster Component Lecture  
Credit Available by Exam No  
Admission Condition Course No  
Off Campus Never  
Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites English 1110  
Exclusions

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 23.0101  
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course  
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

## Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:

Visual and Performing Arts

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## Course Details

### **Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes**

- By analyzing varied examples of video games and reflecting on the experience, student will develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment and skill in the interpretation and evaluation of games as significant works of art.

### **Content Topic List**

- Personal Gaming Literacies
- Old-school/Arcade games
- Classic console games
- Casual games and Microgames
- Social message games
- Educational games
- Gender representations in various games
- Art games, mobile games
- Independent games/ Flash games

## Attachments

- Curriculum Committee Video Games.doc: Cover Letter  
*(Cover Letter. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Video Games Analysis Course Proposal.docx: Course Proposal  
*(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Introduction to Video Game Analysis, GE Rationale.docx: GE Rationale and Assessment Plan  
*(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- VideoGames concurrence.docx: Concurrences  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Curriculum Map Updated 5-13-16.docx: Curriulum Map  
*(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Sample Syllabus, Intro to Video Games Analysis, Revised 9-27-16.docx: Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Concurrence for English 2463 from Art.docx: Concurrence  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*
- Concurrence for English 2463 from Design.docx: Concurrence  
*(Concurrence. Owner: Lowry,Debra Susan)*

## Comments

- See 9-27-16 e-mail to C. Simmons and D. Lowry. *(by Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal on 09/27/2016 02:22 PM)*

**COURSE REQUEST**  
2463 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Heysel,Garett Robert  
10/19/2016

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Lowry,Debra Susan	05/13/2016 12:21 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Lowry,Debra Susan	05/13/2016 12:21 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	05/13/2016 12:26 PM	College Approval
Revision Requested	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	09/27/2016 02:23 PM	ASCCAO Approval
Submitted	Lowry,Debra Susan	10/18/2016 03:31 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Lowry,Debra Susan	10/18/2016 03:31 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	10/19/2016 12:01 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle,Danielle Nicole	10/19/2016 12:01 PM	ASCCAO Approval



**Department of English**

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Fax (614) 292-7806

May 9, 2016

Bernadette Vankeerbergen  
ASC Curriculum Committee  
CAMPUS

Dear Bernadette,

The Department of English is seeking approval for a new course proposal, English 2463, Introduction to Video Games Analysis. We are simultaneously seeking approval for General Education Visual and Performing Arts credit.

This course was developed in response to undergraduate interest both in video games and in popular culture. We have taught video games related courses under our Popular Culture number and also in English 2367, and these courses were strongly enrolled. Our hope is that a course in video games analysis will attract enrollments not only from Arts and Sciences but also from other colleges such as Engineering, and that if students enjoy the experience they might be encouraged to take other English courses. We plan to offer the course not only in Columbus but also on some of the regional campuses, which also have gaming laboratories; the syllabus included here is based on a version developed by Professor Ben McCorkle on the Marion campus.

Our course focuses on analyzing video games as aesthetic objects and as forms of narrative. We see this approach as complementary to existing courses on video games offered by the School of Communication (whose course focuses on the cultural effects of video games); and ACCAD, which offers graduate-level courses in video game design. Both units have expressed preliminary interest in the creation of a Video Games minor. I am attaching notes of concurrence from Communication, ACCAD, and Film Studies. At the same time, we feel it will be a complement to our Digital Media offerings and moreover a significant addition to available course offerings for the well-enrolled Popular Culture minor. Jared Gardner, who oversees the minor, has been extraordinarily helpful in the development of this course.

We are attaching a rationale, a syllabus, a GE rationale and assessment plan, and notes on concurrences. Should you require any further information, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Clare A. Simmons  
Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of English  
The Ohio State University  
[Simmons.9@osu.edu](mailto:Simmons.9@osu.edu)

# English 2463: Introduction to Video Games Analysis

## contact & class information:

**Instructor:**  
**Class Time/Room:**  
**Office Hours:**  
**Office Phone:**  
**Skype:**

## course description:

Far from being frivolous distractions, games (in whatever form or medium) have been an essential part of our cultural DNA for as long as we have been social creatures. Games create communal bonds, they allow us to think in the abstract, and they help us to learn surprisingly complex lessons about rulesets, patterns, and symbol systems. And perhaps most important of all, they offer us sanctioned occasions that tell us when it is okay to escape the harsh realities of our world to just *play*. In particular, video games are arguably *the* cultural art form of the 21st century: a recent *Consumerist* article stated that the video game industry as a whole generated \$21 billion in 2013, far outpacing the film industry; moreover, the vast majority of gamers are adults.

This course offers an introductory exploration of video games primarily from the perspective of the humanities: we will consider the history, their impact on the broader culture; formal/structural/technological innovations, and more. We'll look at how games represent our notions of gender, violence, ethics, and the like. Throughout the term, we will discuss, read about, and write about video games. Additionally, you'll have the opportunity to create multimodal content in conjunction with your exploration of the subject. And lastly: yes, you'll have the opportunity to play some games as well.

This class fulfills GE credit under the Arts & Humanities/Visual & Performing Arts category.

## visual and performing arts GE:

**Goals: Students evaluate significant works of art in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.**

## Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.
2. Students engage in informed observation and/or active participation in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.

As with all GE courses in Arts & Humanities, this class will develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience. Further, as a Visual & Performing Arts GE course, students in the class will develop abilities to analyze, appreciate, and interpret an important visual form of human thought and expression, as well as engage in informed observation and active participation in a discipline within a visual mode of communication and meaning making.

## texts:

- All texts for this course (PDFs, links to web articles, videos, etc.) will be included in a **DIGITAL COURSE PACKET**, available via Carmen.

Readings include selections from:

Bogost, Ian. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* (MIT Press, 2010).

Bogost, Ian. *How to Talk about Videogames* (Electronic Mediation, 2015).

McGonigal, Jane. *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make us Better and How they can Change the World* (2011)

Wark, McKenzie. *Gamer Theory* (Harvard University Press, 2007).

Wolf, Mark J.P., and Bernard Perron, *The Video Game Theory Reader* (2003).

- A **USB THUMB DRIVE** or other reliable storage solution for saving and backing up your work (i.e., a portable hard drive or online file storage service). Whichever solution you use, please ensure that it is compatible with our classroom assets.
- **RECOMMENDED:** Hacker, Diana and Nancy Sommers. *A Writer's Reference*. 7th edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

## class requirements:

This course will include a collection of academic and popular **READINGS** on the topic of video games that you'll be expected to complete outside of class. Since this is a discussion-driven course, and pre-writing is an effective way of honing your thoughts in relation to the texts you'll read, I have set up discussion forum threads in Carmen for us to post **READING RESPONSES** ahead of our in-class discussions. Additionally, you'll be asked to complete three **WALKTHROUGH VIDEOS**, narrated screencaptures of games of your choosing, that focus on various aspects of gameplay, narrative, artistic design, representations of gender/race/class, and other elements that we'll cover throughout the class. One of your main writing assignments will be to craft your own **GAME REVIEW**, done in the style of the reviews found in the popular gaming press

(*IGN, PC Gamer, Metacritic*, etc.). Also, your **FINAL PROJECT** will be an 8-10 page research paper (or an alternative format that incorporates additional media--we'll talk about these different options in class) that lets you explore a relevant topic of your choosing more deeply. For example, you might observe gaming in a public forum; research part of the history or cultural dynamics of gaming; or develop a narrative and visual outline for a game showing your understanding of a specific genre. Finally, your active **PARTICIPATION** both inside and outside of the classroom is not only appreciated, of course, but is also a necessary component of a successful class experience.

## evaluation:

<b>Reading Responses</b>	20%
<b>Walkthrough Videos</b>	20%
<b>Game Review</b>	20%
<b>Final Paper</b>	30%
<b>Participation</b>	10%
<hr/>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%

## policies:

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT/PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own. This definition includes not only the unacknowledged verbatim use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, but also the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

You can avoid this by being extra-careful when you cite your sources. For further information on plagiarism, refer to the Council of Writing Program Administrators' statement on "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism" online at <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>

### **ATTENDANCE**

You are both expected and encouraged to come to each class meeting. In the event that you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining notes and reviewing material that we may have covered. Be prepared to turn in assignments and actively participate in the next

class session. Program policy will not allow more than four unexcused absences. This means, simply, that you must fail the course. Additionally, after three unexcused absences, I will lower your final grade by 1/2 (from a B+ to a B-, for example). Tardiness of more than 15 minutes is considered an unexcused absence, and persistent tardiness (i.e., more than three) of less than 15 minutes will count as one unexcused absence. For an absence to be excused, it must be documented, for instance a doctor's note. For more information about departmental and university policy on attendance and related issues, refer to the following URL: <<http://english.osu.edu/administration/policies.cfm>>.

### **CLASS CANCELLATION**

In the unlikely event of class cancellation due to emergency, I will contact you via Carmen or e-mail and request that a notice be placed on the classroom door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

## **additional resources:**

Again, I stress that I am available to you as a resource outside of the classroom; we should also expect to look to one another for help throughout the quarter, especially given our small class size. However, there are a number of other resources that may prove useful to you this quarter. Among these are:

## **office of disability studies (ODS) statement**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

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## **schedule:**

**NOTE:** Readings (and corresponding reading responses) are to be completed *before* the class meeting to which they are assigned.

### **WEEK 1**

Monday - Review syllabus; Introductions  
Wednesday - PREWRITING / DISCUSSION → Personal Gaming Literacies

### **WEEK 2**



Monday - READING → *High Score! The Illustrated History of Electronic Games* (excerpts)

[History of Video Games Timeline](#)

Wednesday - PLAY → Old-school/Arcade games (e.g. *Pacman*): demo + discussion

### WEEK 3

Monday - READING → Wark, [Gamer Theory](#) (excerpts)

[Game Studies](#) (online journal): selection TBD

Wednesday discussion - PLAY → Classic console games (e.g. *Donkey Kong*; *Zelda*): demo +

**Game Review: prompt assigned + discussed**

### WEEK 4

Monday - READING → Bogost, *Persuasive Games* (excerpts); Tanz, "[The Curse of Cow Clicker: How a Cheeky Satire Became an Internet Hit](#)"

Wednesday discussion - PLAY → Casual games and Microgames (e.g. *Angry Birds*): demos +

**Walkthrough #1 due by Friday**

### WEEK 5

Monday (excerpts) - READING → Wolf and Perron, *The Video Game Theory Reader*

Wednesday - PLAY → Fighters and FPS (e.g. *Bioshock*): demo + discussion

### WEEK 6

Monday - READING → McGonigal, *Reality Is Broken* (excerpts)

Wednesday discussion - PLAY → Social message games (e.g. *Minecraft*); *Get Water*): demo +

**Game Review due by Friday**

### WEEK 7

Monday - READING → Gee, *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* (excerpts); McCorkle & Bono, "[Ludic Literacies](#)"

Wednesday - PLAY → Educational games (e.g. *Portal*): demo + discussion

**Final Project: prompt assigned + discussed**

### WEEK 8

Monday - VIEWING → *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters*

Wednesday - VIEWING → *The King of Kong* (cont.); follow-up discussion

**Walkthrough # 2 due by Friday**

### WEEK 9

Monday - READING → Quinn, *Crash Override: How to Save the Internet from itself* (excerpts); Dewey, "[The Only Guide to GamerGate You'll Ever Need](#)"

Wednesday - PLAY → Gender representations in various games (e.g. *Tomb Raider*; *Grand Theft Auto*): demo + discussion

## WEEK 10

Monday - READING → Cline, *Ready Player One* (excerpts); McCorkle and Howard, "[A Rhetoric of Bees](#)"

Wednesday - PLAY → MMOs (e.g. *The Last of Us*) and MMORPGs (e.g. *World of Warcraft*): demos + discussion

**Final Project: brainstorming + overview of research tools-**

## WEEK 11

Monday - READING → Auerbach, "[Gaming Journalism is Over](#)"; Shanna & Compton,

*Gamers: Writers, Artists, and Programmers on the Pleasures of Pixels* (excerpts)

Wednesday - PLAY → Art games, mobile games (e.g. *Temple Run*), and other generic oddities: demo + discussion

**Final Project: preliminary proposals due**

## WEEK 12

Monday - READING → Lastowka, "*Minecraft* as Web 2.0"; Bogost, *How to Talk About Video Games* (excerpts)

Wednesday - PLAY → *Minecraft*: demo + discussion

**Walkthrough # 3 due by Friday**

## WEEK 13

Monday - VIEWING → *Indie Game: The Movie*

Wednesday - VIEWING → *Indie Game: The Movie* (cont.); Follow-up Discussion

## WEEK 14

Monday - PLAY → Independent games/ Flash games: demos + discussion

Wednesday - **Final Projects: pitch sessions and individual conferences**

## WEEK 15

Monday - **Final Projects: pitch sessions and individual conferences (cont.)**

Wednesday - Concluding discussion; course evaluations

**FINALS WEEK** - Final projects are due in Carmen by 5 p.m. on **XXXXX**.

**NOTE: Syllabus is subject to change as needed.**

## **Appendix 2: Notes on Video Games mentioned in the syllabus**

*The Last of Us* (2013): A recent Playstation 3 game in the “survival horror” genre that is critically acclaimed for its powerful narrative, which centers around a man and a teen girl who travel through a post-apocalyptic setting avoiding mutant cannibals.

*Bioshock* (2007): A multi-platform alternative history game that takes place in an underwater city in 1960. The game is a first-person shooter, and the player/main character must make morally ambiguous decisions about how to interact with other characters in the game (kill, befriend, flee, etc.). The game's narrative alludes heavily to Orwell, as well as Ayn Rand's Objectivist philosophy.

*Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* (2000): One of the later (and shorter) games in Nintendo's Legend of Zelda series, this game features the main character Link as he goes on a series of hero's quests involving swordplay, music, disguise, etc. in order to find his lost fairy friend Navi.

*Portal* (2007): A multi-platform first-person puzzle game that features a gun that opens a mini-wormhole, allowing the player to reach out-of-the-way spaces throughout the game. In this game, the protagonist (Chell) is placed in increasingly hostile situations by a demented AI (GLaDOS), from which she must escape in order to survive... and possibly get cake.

*Limbo* (2010): A puzzle platform mini-game with a unique cartoonish noir visual style. In this game, the protagonist is a young boy who must navigate through Limbo (and a series of traps, obstacles, and giant spiders) in order to locate his younger sister.

*World of Warcraft* (2004): This MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) PC-based adventure game allows players to take a first-person or third-person role among the contending forces in a fantasy realm in the “Dungeons and Dragons” tradition. Players can create new characters, and characters can develop skills through play.

*Myst* (1993): The ground-breaking Macintosh-based CD-ROM puzzle game starts out with the player deposited on a mysterious island; s/he must solve a series of interactive puzzles (some involving books) in order to access different worlds and solve a mystery that concerns two son's attempts to imprison and overthrow their father, the king of the island.

*Donkey Kong* (1981): This classic platform arcade game from Nintendo centers around the player-character Jumpman's (in later games, Mario) never-ending attempts to rescue Pauline from the barrel-tossing gorilla Donkey Kong. Although light in terms of narrative structure, it does incorporate many formal elements (e.g., cutscenes in between levels that advance the storyline) that would end up becoming commonplaces of game-based narratives.

## COURSE PROPOSAL

English 2463:

### **Introduction to Video Games Analysis**

#### Bulletin Description:

An introduction to methods of analyzing and interpreting video games in terms of form, genre, style, and theory.

GE Visual and Performing Arts class

Prerequisites: English 1110

Non-repeatable

#### *A. Course Objectives*

This course will introduce students to a variety of humanities-based approaches to the study of video games, including aesthetic, historical, cultural, formal, and theoretical. In addition to considering the applicability of methodologies that have long been deployed in English studies to the analysis of texts (for example, close reading, genre studies, historicism, ideological critique, etc.), the course may also challenge these traditional approaches and discuss the development of new methodologies and humanities-centered frameworks for the study of video games. Students will develop a sophisticated vocabulary for the analysis of video games from a wide variety of critical approaches. No background in video game study or play is necessary for students entering the course, and all students will have regular opportunities for hands-on experience with a variety of different game types and genres in both the computer-based classroom and the English Department Video Game Lab.

#### *B. Course Rationale*

This course will support and intersect with the English Department's curriculum in a number of ways. As the departmental home of the Digital Media Project and the Popular Culture Studies minor, video games are already being addressed in smaller units in a several classes, including digital media studies courses and the Introduction to Popular Culture Studies. As the department at the university with the most film studies faculty, we also have seen growing interest in both our faculty and undergraduates in exploring the intersections between film and gaming studies. Further, our historic strengths in narrative theory intersect in productive ways with many of the central conversations and debates in video game studies. More recently, a video game-centered version of our second-year writing class (2367) was developed by instructors with ongoing research commitments in the field, and the class has proved both popular and extremely effective. For all these reasons, we believe this course is a natural fit for our department.

We have a core of faculty in the department interested in teaching the class on a regular basis, including on some of the regional campuses, and we have a deep pool of talented

graduate instructors preparing for research and teaching careers in this field. Undergraduate student interest is also extremely strong as we know from our current enrollments in classes on this topic. The class will serve as an elective in the popular culture studies minor, and we are in preliminary conversations with other academic units about the potential development of an interdisciplinary program in video game studies.

### *C. Concurrences*

This course is designed as a complement to already existing video-games related courses in other academic units. We requested and received concurrences from Film Studies, ACCAD, and Communication (notes attached).

### *D. Assessment Plan for Course*

In addition to the GE assessment plan (see attachment), this course will be assessed during its first five years by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the English Department Course Director for Film & Popular Culture Studies, as follows:

- a. **course evaluations** (SEI and Discursive) will be evaluated to determine how well the class is fulfilling its goals in the eyes of the students. We will require a question on the Discursive Evaluation of every section of the course for the first five years, specifically asking students to consider how the course meets its goals of providing tools, methods and theory for focused study of video game studies.
- b. At year 3 and 5 of the assessment, we will conduct a sample **follow-up survey** of 25 randomly selected students who had taken English 2463 earlier in their careers to assess the long-term benefits of and satisfaction with the class.

### *E. Additional Details*

- Prereq: English 1110
- GE: Visual and Performing Arts
- The course will be non-repeatable.
- The number of sections offered yearly will depend upon student demand, instructor availability, and available space, but we anticipate offering at least one section a term on Columbus campus, and occasionally on some of the regional campuses.
- Because the course is designed to make regular use of the Video Game lab space, it should be capped at 24.
- We do not anticipate major additional costs for this proposal. The Video Games lab is currently well equipped with equipment and games, and we are investigating means of funding future game purchases.
- Scheduling on Columbus campus will be coordinated with Digital Media Project Manager.

*F. Appendices*

- 1) Sample syllabus
- 2) Information on video games
- 3) GE rationale and assessment plan
- 4) Notes on concurrences

### **Appendix 3: GE Rationale and Assessment Plan**

#### **Introduction to Video Game Analysis: GE Rationale**

##### **ELO 1: Students analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.**

- (1) Video games are arguably *the* cultural art form of the 21st century: a recent *Consumerist* article stated that the video game industry as a whole generated \$21 billion in 2013, far outpacing the film industry. By analyzing significant examples of the video game, this class will develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.
- (2) Primary texts will include video games ranging from Nintendo arcade games and early console games (The “Kong” series) to recent complex narrative games (*Minecraft*) .  
Examples of games:

*The Last of Us* (2013): A recent Playstation 3 game in the “survival horror” genre that is critically acclaimed for its powerful narrative, which centers around a man and a teen girl who travel through a post-apocalyptic setting avoiding mutant cannibals.

*Bioshock* (2007): A multi-platform alternative history game that takes place in an underwater city in 1960. The game is a first-person shooter, and the player/main character must make morally ambiguous decisions about how to interact with other characters in the game (kill, befriend, flee, etc.). The game's narrative alludes heavily to Orwell, as well as Ayn Rand's Objectivist philosophy.

*Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* (2000): One of the later (and shorter) games in Nintendo's Legend of Zelda series, this game features the main character Link as he goes on a series of hero's quests involving swordplay, music, disguise, etc. in order to find his lost fairy friend Navi.

*Portal* (2007): A multi-platform first-person puzzle game that features a gun that opens a mini-wormhole, allowing the player to reach out-of-the-way spaces throughout the game. In this game, the protagonist (Chell) is placed in increasingly hostile situations by a demented AI (GLaDOS), from which she must escape in order to survive... and possibly get cake.

*Limbo* (2010): A puzzle platform mini-game with a unique cartoonish noir visual style. In this game, the protagonist is a young boy who must navigate through Limbo (and a series of traps, obstacles, and giant spiders) in order to locate his younger sister.

*World of Warcraft* (2004): This MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) PC-based adventure game allows players to take a first-person or third-person role among the contending forces in a fantasy realm in the “Dungeons and Dragons” tradition. Players can create new characters, and characters can develop skills through play.

*Myst* (1993): The ground-breaking Macintosh-based CD-ROM puzzle game starts out with the player deposited on a mysterious island; s/he must solve a series of interactive puzzles (some involving books) in order to access different worlds and solve a mystery



that concerns two son's attempts to imprison and overthrow their father, the king of the island.

*Donkey Kong* (1981): This classic platform arcade game from Nintendo centers around the player-character Jumpman's (in later games, Mario) never-ending attempts to rescue Pauline from the barrel-tossing gorilla Donkey Kong. Although light in terms of narrative structure, it does incorporate many formal elements (e.g., cutscenes in between levels that advance the storyline) that would end up becoming commonplaces of game-based narratives.

- (3) Topics will cover the different forms, artistic design, and purposes of video games, including educational games, action games, and single and multi-player games, discussing the visual conception, use of sound, and narrative point of view.
- (4) Written assignments include a review of a game, discussing such matters as its audiovisual aspects, its cultural assumptions, and narrative effectiveness; and three "Game Walkthroughs" in which students analyze specific screenshots from games.
- (5) Students will make use of a video game laboratory.

**ELO 2: Students engage in informed observation and/or active participation in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.**

- (1) This course focuses on informed observation and analysis of video games (it is not a course in video game design). Emphasis is on critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.
- (2) To ensure that students have an informed understanding of how to analyze video game, readings on narrative and cultural theory by Ian Bogost, McKenzie Wark, Ben McCorkle, and others will be assigned weekly.

Reading list:

Bogost, Ian. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames* (MIT Press, 2010).

Bogost, Ian. *How to Talk about Videogames* (Electronic Mediation, 2015).

McGonigal, Jane. *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make us Better and How they can Change the World* (2011)

Wark, McKenzie. *Gamer Theory* (Harvard University Press, 2007).

Wolf, Mark J.P., and Bernard Perron, *The Video Game Theory Reader* (2003).

- (3) Topics will discuss video games as an emergent and evolving artistic and cultural form.
- (4) Students will be required to write regular responses on the background readings and to produce a final research paper that must include either informed observation of, or research on, video games; or the creation and analysis of some art and narrative conforming to a specific video game genre.
- (5) Students will be encouraged to observe gaming in action in other locations such as student dorms and public spaces.

<b>GE Expected Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>	<b>Level of Student Achievement expected for the GE ELO</b>	<b>What is the process that will be used to review the data and potentially change the course to improve student learning of GE ELOS?</b>
<p><b><u>ELO 1</u></b> Students analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.</p>	<p><b>Direct:</b> Students will write a review of a video game, discussing its aesthetic, narrative, and cultural significance; students will analyze screen shots of video games.</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> Students will complete both a discursive evaluation and be asked to rate to what extent the course met the ELO on a 5-point scale.</p>	<p><b>Direct:</b> At least 80% of the class scoring 80% or more on artistic analysis assignments</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> an average score of at least 4.2 on a 5-point scale for ELO 1.</p>	<p>The Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Undergraduate Committee will review the data and make recommendations if change is warranted.</p>
<p><b><u>ELO 2</u></b> Students engage in informed observation and/or active participation in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.</p>	<p><b>Direct:</b> Students will frame and complete a final project demonstrating their understanding of the video games art form through research, observation, and/or creativity.</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> Students will complete both a</p>	<p><b>Direct:</b> At least 80% of the class scoring 80% or more on final research assignment.</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> an average</p>	<p>If multiple sections of the course are offered, a course director will review all course evaluations and ensure that first-time instructors' syllabi articulate how the ELOs will be achieved; classes will be observed.</p>

	discursive evaluation and be asked to rate to what extent the course the course met the ELO on a 5-point scale.	score of at least 4.2 on a 5-point scale for ELO 2.	
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April 1, 2016

Professor Clare Simmons  
Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of English  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Campus

Dear Clare –

This note is in response to your request for a letter of concurrence from the School of Communication regarding the 2000-level course, Introduction to Video Game Studies. As you know, we had discussion about it and potential overlap with certain course already taught in the School of Communication. Following that discussion, I am happy to offer this letter of support. I hope that our two units can collaborate more in the future, as we bring different strengths to the topic. We are also looking forward to being a partner in discussion about a potential interdisciplinary minor in video game studies.

Sincerely,

Daniel G. McDonald  
Professor and Director

[Moddelmog, Debra](#); [Simmons, Clare](#)

Cc:

M

[Beecher, Mary A.](#)

Inbox

Wednesday, March 23, 2016 8:12 AM

To help protect your privacy, some content in this message has been blocked. If you're sure this message is from a trusted sender and you want to re-enable the blocked features, [click here](#).

Hi Debra and Clare,

Thanks for sending this drafty draft. Both ACCAD and Design are very interested in discussing the possibilities of some kind of collaborative effort - so let's make the time to do that.

I think there is very nice potential to put together a minor. You probably know that there is a good collaborator in Communications, Jesse Fox and we should also eventually talk to CSE (Roger Crawfis) about their efforts. However after reading the draft of the game studies minor proposal I would ask that you clarify in that draft I that there is currently no game production program of any kind here at OSU. I do not want that kind of assumption to move forward through the administration. One of the problems is that there is in fact a number of disconnected courses in game design and production but no clear or organized path or program currently for students to follow.

While it is nice to have the Princeton Review rank us highly for what we do, they are also perpetuating a myth that a program exists where it doesn't. I have a lack of confidence in any real research they do to make their rankings but that is conversation for another day!

All this to say that there are a good number of strong parts here on campus that could use some organization and I think there is real potential for student interest.

I look forward to further discussions.  
Maria

**Maria Palazzi**

Professor of Design

Director of ACCAD

**Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design** Department of Design

331 Sullivant Hall, 1813 N. High Street, Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-2406 Office

[palazzi.1@osu.edu](mailto:palazzi.1@osu.edu) [osu.edu](http://osu.edu)

*Buckeyes consider the environment before printing.*

Friedman, Ryan

Actions

To:

M

[Simmons, Clare](#)

Cc:

M

[Lowry, Debra](#); [Moddelmog, Debra](#)

Inbox

Tuesday, March 08, 2016 2:21 PM

You replied on 3/8/2016 2:25 PM.

Dear Clare:

I'm writing to give the Film Studies Program's concurrence for English's proposed new video games course. The course looks very interesting and doesn't overlap with any of our offerings. At present, I don't think that the course would work for our major or minor. At some point in the near future--once we get through some of the more pressing business we are facing--I hope to have a conversation with the members of our committee about the possibility of incorporating non-film courses into our curriculum.

Depending on the outcome of that conversation, we might want to reconsider the decision not to include this course.

Thanks and all best,  
Ryan

Ryan Jay Friedman  
Director, Film Studies Program  
Associate Professor of English  
The Ohio State University  
Hagerty Hall 150  
Columbus, OH 43210

From: Simmons, Clare  
Sent: Thursday, October 13, 2016 6:51 PM  
To: Harvey, Rebecca  
Cc: Lowry, Debra  
Subject: RE: Concurrence request from English

Thanks, Rebecca--we appreciate it. We have heard that there's student interest in the possibility of a Video Games minor so perhaps we should continue this conversation once our course is completely approved.

Wishing you all the best,

Clare Simmons

From: Harvey, Rebecca  
Sent: Thursday, October 13, 2016 10:57 AM  
To: Simmons, Clare  
Subject: Re: Concurrence request from English

Dear Clare,

The Department of Art is pleased to grant concurrence for English 2436, Introduction to Video Games. The proposal was vetted by several faculty in the Department with expertise in this area and all felt that it would be a complement to our offerings in the digital realm.

Best,

RH

Rebecca Harvey

Professor, Chair  
College of the Arts and Sciences  
Department of Art  
258 Hopkins Hall 128 N Oval Mall  
Columbus, OH 43210-1319  
614.292.5072 Office / 614.292.1674 Fax  
harvey.113@osu.edu / art.osu.edu

From: <Simmons>, Clare <simmons.9@osu.edu>  
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 2016 12:28 PM  
To: Rebecca Harvey <harvey.113@osu.edu>  
Subject: RE: Concurrence request from English

Thanks, Rebecca.

Best,

Clare

From: Harvey, Rebecca  
Sent: Wednesday, October 12, 2016 11:51 AM  
To: Simmons, Clare  
Cc: Lowry, Debra  
Subject: Re: Concurrence request from English  
Thanks Clare -

I forwarded it to several of my faculty for input – I just reached out to them again and asked that



they send me any feedback by the end of the day today. You should have my response by noon tomorrow, sorry for the delay.

RH

From: <Simmons>, Clare <simmons.9@osu.edu>

Date: Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:29 AM

To: Rebecca Harvey <harvey.113@osu.edu>

Cc: "Lowry, Debra" <lowry.40@osu.edu>

Subject: Concurrence request from English

Dear Professor Harvey,

We are seeking concurrence from the College of Art for a new course proposal, English 2463, Introduction to Video Games Analysis (proposal attached). The Arts and Sciences and Curriculum Committee has conditionally approved the course but has requested that we send you the proposal for your concurrence. I'm attaching a concurrence form for your convenience but an e-mail to me will work just as well. If you have any questions about the proposal, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Clare Simmons

Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies

Department of English

Thanks, Mary Anne--that's great news.

All the best,

Clare

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**From:** Beecher, Mary A.  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 18, 2016 3:02 PM  
**To:** Simmons, Clare  
**Subject:** RE: Concurrence request from English

Hi Clare,

The Department of Design has no reservations and sees no conflicts between the proposed course and our offerings. We find that it will be a valuable addition to the college curricula. We recommend that it be supported for approval whole-heartedly.

Best,

Mary Anne Beecher

Dr. Mary Anne Beecher, Chairperson  
Department of Design  
The Ohio State University

**From:** Simmons, Clare  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 12, 2016 10:50 AM  
**To:** Beecher, Mary A. <[beecher.17@osu.edu](mailto:beecher.17@osu.edu)>  
**Cc:** Lowry, Debra <[lowry.40@osu.edu](mailto:lowry.40@osu.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: Concurrence request from English

Dear Professor Beecher:

I wanted to check that you received my request for concurrence for English 2463.

Sincerely,

Clare Simmons  
Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of English

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**From:** Simmons, Clare  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 11:24 AM  
**To:** Beecher, Mary A.  
**Cc:** Lowry, Debra  
**Subject:** Concurrence request from English

Dear Professor Beecher:

We are seeking concurrence from the division of Design for a new course proposal, English 2464, Introduction to Video Games Analysis (proposal attached). The Arts and Sciences and Curriculum Committee has conditionally approved the course but has requested that we send you the proposal for

your concurrence. We have already received concurrence from ACCAD. I'm attaching a concurrence form for your convenience but an e-mail to me work just as well. If you have any questions about the proposal, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Clare Simmons  
Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of English

**Curriculum Map: B.A. English**

	<b>Goal (1)</b>	<b>Goal (2)</b>	<b>Goal (3)</b>	<b>Goal (4)</b>
<b>Required English Surveys (Both)</b>				
English 2201 or 2201H	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2202 or 2202H	Beginning		Beginning	
<b>Students Select One Additional Survey</b>				
English 2290	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2291	Beginning		Beginning	
<b>Methods Course (One Required)</b>				
English 2270 (Folklore)	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3379 (WRL)		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 3398 (Lit & CW)	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
<b>Concentration I: Literature</b>				
English 2201	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2201H	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2202	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2202H	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2220	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2220H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2260	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2260H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2261	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2261H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2262	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2262H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2263	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2264	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2270	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2270H	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2272	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2275	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2277	Beginning			Beginning
English 2280	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2280H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2281	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2290	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2291	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2296H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 3331		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3361		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3364			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3372			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3378			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3398	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 4400	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4513	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4514	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4515	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced



English 4592	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4595	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4597.01		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4597.04H		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5710				Advanced
English 5720	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5721	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5722	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5723	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5797	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
<b>Concentration II: Writing, Rhetoric, Literacy:</b>				
English 2269		Beginning		Beginning
English 2367.01		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.01E		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.01H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.01S		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.02		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.02H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.03H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.04		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.04H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.05		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.05H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 3271		Advanced		Advanced
English 3304		Advanced		Advanced
English 3305		Advanced		Advanced
English 3379		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 3467S		Advanced		Advanced
English 4150		Advanced		Advanced
English 4555		Advanced		Advanced
English 4567S		Advanced		Advanced
English 4569		Advanced		Advanced
English 4570		Advanced		Advanced
English 4571		Advanced		Advanced
English 4572		Advanced		Advanced
English 4573.01		Advanced		Advanced
English 4573.01E		Advanced		Advanced
English 4573.02		Advanced		Advanced
English 4574		Advanced		Advanced
English 4584		Advanced		Advanced
English 4585		Advanced		Advanced
English 4591.02H		Advanced		Advanced
English 2265		Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2266		Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2267		Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2268		Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2298	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	intermediate
English 3465		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3466		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3468		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3662		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate

English 4565		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4566		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4566E				
English 4568		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4591.01H		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
<b>Folklore:</b>				
English 2270	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2270H	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2367.05		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.05H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 4571		Advanced		Advanced
English 4590.04H		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4577.01	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4577.02	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4577.03	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4597.02	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
<b>Undergraduate Research</b>				
English 4998	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4998H	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4999	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4999H	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
<b>Required Courses Outside the Unit for Pre-Ed:</b>				
EDTL 2389			Intermediate	Intermediate
EDTL 3356	Intermediate		Intermediate	
<b>General Elective Courses:</b>				
English 4189		Advanced		
English 5191		Advanced		
English 5193	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 5194	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
<b>General Education Courses:</b>				
English 2201	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2201H	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2202	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2202H	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2220	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2220H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2260	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2260H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2261	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2261H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2262	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2262H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning

English 2263	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2264	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2269	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2270	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2270H	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 2272		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2275	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2276		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2277	Beginning			Beginning
English 2280	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2280H	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2281	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning	Beginning
English 2282	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2290	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2291	Beginning		Beginning	
English 2367.01		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.01H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.01S		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.02		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.02H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.03		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.03H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.04		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.04H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.05		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2367.05H		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 2463		Intermediate	Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3361		Intermediate		Intermediate
English 3364			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3372			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3378			Intermediate	Intermediate
English 3597.03				Intermediate
English 4554		Advanced		Advanced
English 4597.02		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
English 4597.04H		Advanced	Advanced	Advanced