

Course Number	Course Title	Semester	Year
Section	Day of Week	Time	Classroom
N/A	Monday	15:00 - 18:00	Virtual Classroom
Professor	Ryerson Email	Phone	Office & Office Hours
Dan Hawes	dhawes@ryerson.ca	"Emails preferred"	RCC215 Wednesday 14:00-16:00
GA/TA	GA/TA Email	GA/GA Phone	Office Hours
			Monday 13:00 - 15:00
<i>Only Ryerson emails are to be used for communication between faculty, staff, and students. All news (announcements) posted on class D2L.</i>			

Course Description

Video games constitute one of the most dynamic and fastest growing segments of the Creative Industries. This course explores the history, aesthetics, and cultural impact of video games while familiarizing students with the production, distribution and marketing processes that have evolved to stimulate this young industry. Issues confronting the video game industry as well as applicable developments in design and technology will be among the topics covered.

More on the Course:

This course is intended for students that are interested in the emerging game industry. Students DO NOT need to be experts or gamers to succeed in the course. Explore the artistry of game design and discover key insights into the business side of gaming. Learn how this industry works: the opportunities and challenges. From kids to corporations, from apps to lotteries, learn how games are being woven into all aspects of our daily lives. We will also explore the future of gaming focusing on virtual reality gaming that will have a profound impact on how we learn, grow and evolve as humans.

Course Details

Teaching Methods

The course will be conducted synchronously online using Google Meet. The course will include practical and theoretical content related to business and design aspects of gaming and both personal/group projects related to the game creation and business planning processes.

Each class will be broken up into 3 separate sections and one break period.

1. The first 90 minutes will include weekly updates and core lecture content
2. 15-minute break
3. A group/team breakout session lasting 45 minutes to work on project or business/creative concepts
4. All students reconvene after breakout session for 30-minute discussion related to group activities.

Required Readings, Resources & Materials

Course Materials

We will use LEVEL UP by Scott Rogers, 2nd Edition and The Art of Game Design by Jesse Schell as key course resources. These are not mandatory but are recommended as excellent resources for reference.

Industry Platforms For Weekly Review:

- <https://www.virtualrealitypulse.com/>
- Gamasutra | www.gamasutra.com
- Games Industry | <http://www.gamesindustry.biz/news>
- Academic Outlets: Games and Culture; New Media & Society
- *Wired Magazine's* Game Life | www.wired.com/gamelife
- www.techaddiction.ca
- PBS Digital – Game/Show

Weekly Schedule (Subject to change)

WEEK ONE		Monday January 18 th , 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	Introduction to Gaming. An overview of the past, and the current state of gaming. A brief glimpse into the future.
	WORKSHOP (45 mins)	In groups, discuss games that have affected you during your youth. What was special about these games? Be prepared to discuss/present your views.
	DISCUSS (30 mins)	Course Review Assignments Overview Course Text – Level Up (Kindle)
	READINGS	
	SCREENING	
	DUE	Thursday, January 25 th , 2021. Your project teams should be selected.

WEEK TWO		Monday January 25 th , 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	Understanding Games. Why Games? Who makes these things? How does the gaming ecosystem work? Overview of the process of design and business thought process.
	WORKSHOP (30 mins)	Working in Groups, come up with a fresh idea for a game. Present your idea to the class.
	DISCUSS (15 mins)	Details of the Core Deliverable: To create a game design UX and Micro Business Plan.
	READINGS	Level Up, Level 1 to Level 4 Free Write - based on questions related to readings and screenings.
	SCREENING (30 mins)	Wreck it Ralph. To be discussed in Class.
	DUE	

WEEK THREE		Monday Feb 1 st 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	Making Games I. Understanding how games are made. The roles, goals and deliverables.
	WORKSHOP (45 mins)	In your teams, break down the required roles, goals and deliverables for your game project.
	DISCUSS (30 mins)	The challenges of organizing the team and resources. How does this relate to your project? Bonus Levels 1 – Level Up
	READINGS	Level Up – Levels 5-7. Free Write - based on questions related to readings and screenings.
	SCREENING	
	DUE	Initial Game Idea/Concept Pitches

WEEK FOUR		Monday Feb 8 th , 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	Making Games II, Under the hood. Understanding technology, content, people and experience design. Managing a project from concept to completion.
	WORKSHOP (30 mins)	In teams, create the preliminary UX/Wireframe that defines what your screens will look like.
	DISCUSS (45 mins)	What process did you use to decide as a group what to design? Did it work? Are you happy with the result? What could you have done better?
	READINGS	Level Up, Level 8 and 9 Constructionist Gaming: Understanding the Benefits of Making Games for Learning. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4784508/
	SCREENING	
	DUE	Final Game Idea Pitches – 1 Page

Study Week – Feb 15th, 2021

WEEK FIVE		Monday Feb 22nd, 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	Game Experience Design. Understanding the playing experience.
	WORKSHOP (45 mins)	In your design studio teams, work together to address the experience design issues. Be prepared to talk about your ideas.
	DISCUSS	
	READINGS	Level Up – Levels 10 – 14, Bonus Level 5, Manrique, V. (2013) Why people play games - Happiness, Motivation & Fun (Online).
	SCREENING (30 mins)	Jane McGonigal Ted Talk https://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_gaming_cannot_make_a_better_world
	DUE	

WEEK SIX		Monday March 1 st , 2021
	TOPICS (90 mins)	The Business of Gaming. Understanding the marketplace and relevant business models
	WORKSHOP (30)	Within your teams, work to identify the business model(s) and marketplace details that will define your eventual game design.
	DISCUSS (15)	Business Case Analysis Review
	READINGS	Level Up: Level 15, Level Up! 2 nd Ed., 419-423
	SCREENING	
	DUE (40 mins)	Business Case Analysis and Critical Game Review Presentations Begin

WEEK SEVEN *Monday March 8th, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	Gamification in Business and Beyond
	WORKSHOP (45 mins)	In groups ... Can you think of a process that would benefit from the process of gamification? How would it improve the process? How would that work.
	DISCUSS (30 mins)	Gamification in Business and Beyond Team Findings presentations
	READINGS	Heller, N. (2015) High Score: Review of SuperBetter (Online)
	SCREENING	Potential Guest Speaker – TBD Gamification Platforms for business
	DUE	Final Revised Submission of One Pagers Preliminary Submission of Game Design Document

WEEK EIGHT *Monday March 15th, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	Gaming Law, intellectual property and labour Issues
	WORKSHOP (15 mins)	Within your teams, determine which legal issues you may be affected by? Prepare to discuss.
	DISCUSS (15 mins)	Gaming Law, intellectual property and labour Issues
	READINGS	Grimes, S. (2006). Virtual Space for Intellectual Property Debates, Dyer-Witheford, N. and G. de Peuter (2006) ‘EA Spouse’ and the Crisis of Video Game Labour
	SCREENING	TBD
	DUE (45 mins)	Critical Game Review Presentations Begin Business Case Essays

WEEK NINE *Monday March 22nd, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	Gaming and Culture – Part 1 Gaming addiction and reality distortion.
	WORKSHOP (15 mins)	Each group will be presented with an issue. They will be required to think critically and present a solution to the class.

	DISCUSS (15 mins)	Gaming addiction and reality distortion.
	READINGS	Tech Addiction: http://www.techaddiction.ca/gaming-addiction-statistics.html
	SCREENING	TBD
	DUE (45 mins)	Critical Game Review Presentations (ongoing)

WEEK TEN *Monday March 29th, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	Gaming and Culture: Part 2 Violence and Misogyny
	WORKSHOP (30 mins)	Game Design Workshop: Work in your teams to further define the target market for your game and the anticipated cultural impact. Is it positive?
	DISCUSS	Violence and Misogyny and the cultural issues surrounding your game design.
	READINGS	www.marissabellino.com/uploads/7/6/6/1/7661682/content_analysis_video_games_and_gender.pdf
	SCREENING	
	DUE (45 mins)	Critical Game Review Presentations (ongoing)

WEEK ELEVEN *Monday April 5th, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	The Future of Gaming:
	WORKSHOP (75 mins)	Critical Game Review Presentations, Critical Feedback on presentations
	DISCUSS	
	READINGS	Level Up: Bonus Level 10

	SCREENING	
	DUE	Critical Game Review Presentations

WEEK TWELVE *Monday April 12th, 2021*

	TOPICS (90 mins)	The Future of Gaming: Part 2
	WORKSHOP (60 mins)	Group Presentations of Game Designs
	DISCUSS (30 mins)	Critical Feedback/Discussions on presentations
	READINGS	
	SCREENING	
	DUE	Final Game Design Papers

Assignments, Evaluation, Marking

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	% of Final Grade
		Start of class unless noted	
#1	Free Writes on Readings (6 writing challenges per term)	Jan 25 th + ad hoc	10%
#2	Business Case Analysis	March 1 st , 2021 (Week 6)	30%
#3	Critical Game Reviews	March 15 th , 2021 (Week 8)	20%
#4	Game Design: The Art and Business Solution (Team)	April 5 th , 2021 (Week 11)	30%
#5	Participation	Cumulative	10%

Description of Assignments

Please note that additional details / information on assignments may be posted on the Course D2L. Different sections may assign students for team projects in different ways. Professors reserve the right to (re)assign students to balance numbers and skills.

All course marks and feedback will be provided/returned within 2 weeks of submission and/or presentation.

❑ Assignment #1 – Free Writes (10%)

Free Writes – Six times during the term, you will be provided with 15 minutes where you will be asked to free write/comment on one of two questions presented related to the previous week's reading assignments. These dates will not be provided in advance, rather will be initiated at the beginning of class.

❑ Assignment #2: Business Case Analysis (30%)

In this assignment, you are going to conduct an in-depth business analysis of one game or game-related activity based on your own personal interest and experience. The modes and platforms of video game play have grown tremendously just in the past few years. Your job is to:

- 1) Choose one game or game-related topic to study: it could be a game you are playing, a game you see people playing on the TTC, a game your family or friends play (whatever age), a youtube video about games you've heard about, a gaming website or community, a video game league (professional or amateur), or others (I'm open to different ideas but please pass them by me before you start).
- 2) Conduct secondary research and compile information related to 4 main questions:
 - a. What is the business-model behind the game or game-activity you chose and can this game or activity be considered a business success?
 - b. What kind of business and creative processes would likely be involved in the production of such games or game-related activities?
 - c. How, and to whom, is the game or activity being marketed and how is the consumer or game-player 'activated'?
 - d. What does your chosen game or game-related activity suggest about the current landscape of gaming and its future development?
- 3) Write an essay (maximum 1200 words, not including figures or references) presenting your research findings and personal opinions about the game or game-activity you studied. There will be a grading rubric provided for this assignment, but this is an expository essay that has a thesis statement supported with evidence.

❑ Assignment 3 – Critical Game Review (20%)

Choose a game of your choice and perform a critical game review. Create a one page blog/review that you are prepared to share on a blog or on a web based publishing platform.

This assignment will be assessed on the following dimensions: Creativity, Insight and entertainment value.

You have 5 minutes to present the game to your peers in front of the class.

❑ Assignment #4 – Game Design – The Art and Business

Within your teams of 3-4, you will be required to create a UX design and a viable model of business and economic sustainability for a game design of your choice. You will present an initial Idea Pitch on Week 4 and work together over the course of the term to deliver the following.

- The Idea Pitch – One page (presented in advance – Sept 28th)
- UX design and screen flow of your game design
- Target Market Analysis – Who is going to play your game? Why?
- What will be the cultural impact of your game.
- A plan to make (art design, assets, coding, testing) – roles & goals
- Budget estimates for all elements of production, distribution and sales
- Strategic partnerships if any
- Key Monetization Plan – How are you going to make money?
- Longer term evolution plan.

Participation. Professionalism (including attendance), quantity and quality of in-class contributions are considered. Too much quantity without quality results in lower marks. Excellent insights are given extra weight.

Handing in Papers / Late Policy / Other Relevant Information

- Academic Consideration (e.g., extended assignment deadlines, make-up assessments) may be requested on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances (such as health or compassion), and must be supported by a properly completed documentation such as a Ryerson University PDF file-Student Health Certificate.

Note: Part of the Ryerson University Student Health Certificate must be completed by a Regulated Health Professional (RHP).

The instructor and/or the Teaching Department reserve the right to verify the authenticity of any health certificates submitted.

Requests for Academic Consideration must be submitted to the teaching department for verification via the on-line ACR system within 72 hours of the missed deadline.

<https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/academic-consideration-health-policy-134-152/>

- *NEW for Fall 2020 due to COVID-19: Students who miss an assessment due to cold or flu-like symptoms, or due to self-isolation, are currently not required to provide a health certificate. Other absences must follow Senate [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#).*
- Religious or cultural observations accommodations must be requested by the end of the second week of the term. <https://www.ryerson.ca/humanrights/religious-cultural-observances/>
- We expect that all communications by e-mail and in person between students, their colleagues, and instructors will be civil and professional as per *Senate Policy #61*.
- Grades are posted on the D2L. Not all materials submitted for marking will be returned, so make extra copies for your records.
- Assignments submitted late, without extension, will result in a penalty of (5% deducted per day, 10% for a weekend). Do not wait until the last moment to submit your paper. Allow for technical glitches. Missed presentations without permission will result in a 0;
- Check with your individual professor to see if they require hard copies or not of the assignments.
- Students are required to retain a copy of all work undertaken as well as *all rough materials, references, sources, and notes* until the marked original has been returned.
- The professors reserve the right to modify the syllabus and assignments as required over the course of the term, but any changes to the course assignments, due dates, and/or grading scheme will be discussed with the class prior to being implemented.
- On occasion guest speakers may attend our class. Students should refrain from contacting these guests after the class, unless invited to do so.
- The unauthorized use of intellectual property of others, including your professors', for distribution, sale, or profit is expressly prohibited, in accordance with Policy 60 (Sections 2.8, 2.10). Intellectual property in this context includes, but is not limited to:

slides, lecture notes, presentation materials used in and out of class, lab manuals, course packs, and exams.

- **Students are expected to show respect for their fellow students:**
 - Arrive on time (before 10 minutes after the hour). Be ready to start.
 - Do not indulge in side conversations in class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave. We reserve the right to adjust a student's overall mark if they interfere with their colleagues' learning.
 - NO eating in class. Coffee or water are fine.
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Technology Statement

At the discretion of the instructor, computers, tablets, and other electronic devices are allowed in class to take notes, annotate lecture slides, and do quick internet searches of relevant materials only. All devices should be on silent/mute. Computers and tablets should not be used to email or message during class. Phones are not to be used, including for texting and messaging. Students on Facebook or Youtube, watching the hockey game or texting distract not only themselves but also their colleagues. Any student who gratuitously "multitasks" will not be allowed to use electronic devices in the classroom.

No electronic recording of any segment of lectures / sessions without the express prior agreement of the instructor.

It is expected that assistive technologies as detailed in Ryerson Senate Policy 159 (Academic Accommodation of Students) are to be used in keeping with this technology statement.

This course is conducted in accordance with all relevant University academic policies and procedures and students are expected to familiarize themselves with them and adhere to them. Students should refer online to for specific information with respect to the following policies:

- [Policy #60](#): Academic Integrity
- [Policy #61](#): Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct
- [Policy #135](#): Final Examinations
- [Policy #157](#): Ryerson's E-mail Accounts for Official Communication
- [Policy #159](#): Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities
- [Policy #166](#): Course Management
- [Policy #167: Academic Consideration](#)
- And all other course outline policies: <https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/>

Important Resources Available at Ryerson

- [The Library](#) provides research workshops and individual assistance. If the University is open, there is a Research Help desk on the second floor of the library, or go to [Workshops](#).
- [Student Learning Support](#) offers group-based and individual help with writing, math, study skills, and transition support, as well as [resources and checklists to support students as online learners](#).
- You can submit an [Academic Consideration Request](#) when an extenuating circumstance has occurred that has significantly impacted your ability to fulfill an academic requirement. You may always visit the Senate website and select the blue radial button on the top right hand side entitled: Academic Consideration Request (ACR) to submit this request).

Please note that the Interim Provost/ Vice President Academic and Dean's approved a COVID-19 statement for Fall 2020/Winter 2021 related to academic consideration. This statement has been built into the Online Academic Consideration System and is also on the Senate website (www.ryerson.ca/senate):

Policy 167: Academic Consideration for Fall 2020/Winter 2021 due to COVID-19: Students who miss an assessment due to cold or flu-like symptoms, or due to self-isolation, are currently not required to provide a health certificate. Other absences must follow Senate [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#).

Also NOTE: Outside of COVID-19 symptoms, the new Policy 167: Academic Consideration does allow for a once per term academic consideration request without supporting documentation if the absence is less than 3 days in duration and is not for a final exam/final assessment. In both of those instances, documentation is required. For more information please see Senate [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#).

- [Ryerson COVID-19 Information and Updates for Students](#) summarizes the variety of resources available to students during the pandemic.
- Familiarize yourself with the tools you will need to use for remote learning. The [Continuity of Learning Guide](#) for students includes guides to completing quizzes or exams in D2L or Respondus, using D2L Brightspace, joining online meetings or lectures, and collaborating with the Google Suite.
- Information on Copyright for [Faculty](#) and [students](#).
- *At Ryerson, we recognize that things can come up throughout the term that student's ability to succeed in their coursework. These circumstances are outside of one's control and can have a*

serious impact on physical and mental well-being. Seeking help can be a challenge, especially in those times of crisis. Below are resources we encourage all Ryerson community members to access to ensure support is reachable. <https://www.ryerson.ca/mental-health-wellbeing>

If support is needed immediately, you can access these outside resources at anytime:

Distress Line — 24/7 line for if you are in crisis, feeling suicidal or in need of emotional support (phone: 416-408-4357)

Good2Talk- 24/7 hour line for postsecondary students (phone: 1-866-925-5454)

For more information on CI Academic Policies & Procedures and links to resources please see:

<https://www.ryerson.ca/creativeindustries/academic-advising/>