



**Faculty of Arts**  
**School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures**

JPNS 325-01  
**JAPANESE VIDEOGAMES AND GAMING CULTURE**

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
2:00 – 3:15 PM  
Taylor Institute (TI) Studio E

Fall 2018

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**INSTRUCTOR'S NAME:** Dr. Ben Whaley

**OFFICE LOCATION:** Craigie Hall D #425

**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesdays, 12:00-14:00 (Fall Term), or by appointment

**PHONE:** (403) 220-3482

**E-Mail:** benjamin.whaley@ucalgary.ca

**COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES**

In this course we analyze videogames made in Japan, as well as the global fandom communities surrounding these games. We begin with an introduction to the history and various genres of Japanese games. Next, we develop a foundation in critical approaches to the formal study of the medium. The goal of this course is to provide students with the means to “read” videogames as texts. That is, construct and support arguments about a game’s cultural or historical significance in relation to Japan, as well as analyze the core mechanisms that allow the medium to convey new types of narratives about the human condition. A central theme of this course will be videogames and social issues. We will not only learn about Japanese culture through the games we play, but how these games have shaped and are significant to the national culture of Japan.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of the course students will have:

- Collaborated with their peers in analytical and reflective group assignments
- Gained knowledge of and compared a variety of Japanese games, genres, and play styles
- Learned the history and development of the Japanese videogame industry and its fandom
- Acquired methodological tools from media studies and formally analyzed video games
- Practiced orally presenting their original research and leading class discussion
- Taken charge of their own learning by designing their own final course assessment

**DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES**

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and Participation | 20% |
| Creative Assignment          | 10% |
| Group Presentation           | 20% |
| Videogame Analysis           | 20% |
| Group Final Assessment       | 30% |



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#### GRADING SCALE

A+ 90–100    A 85–89    A– 80–84

B+ 76–79    B 72–75    B– 68–71

C+ 64–67    C 60–63    C– 55–59

D 50–54    Fail ≤49

#### REQUIRED TEXTS

All required readings will be provided on D2L. There is no need to purchase anything from the bookstore. However, the following text is optional and available in the bookstore for students who would like more insight into videogame analysis:

Newman, James. *Videogames*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Taylor and Francis, 2013.

#### COURSE NOTES

- This course will involve mostly **joint learning assignments, and students will work together in groups and complete assignments collaboratively** for the majority of the term.
- There is **no language requirement** for this course and **no prior knowledge** of videogames is needed.
- Students are naturally expected to come to each class having already read all the **required readings** and prepared to discuss them. An attendance sheet will be circulated daily.
- **Make-up Work** will only be allowed with proper documentation from a physician or academic advisor.
- Readings, lecture slides, the syllabus, etc. will be **posted on D2L**. You are expected to check the course website daily. Please make sure the email address registered with U of C is one you check frequently or you may miss out on class announcements! Additional guidelines appear on the course syllabus.

#### WARNING(!)

Some of the games we will play and analyze contain potentially disturbing content such as violence, excessive gore, or sexually suggestive themes. **If you will be too uncomfortable to play these games or take part in these discussions, you should not take this course.**

#### ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.



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3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINTS**

Craigie Hall: Professional Faculties food court (alternate: Education Block food court)

Education Block and Tower: Scurfield Hall atrium (alternate: Professional Faculties food court)

Kinesiology: north courtyard, MacEwan Student Centre (alternate: University Theatres lobby)

For the complete list of assembly points please consult <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

**FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca)

Website: [arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate).

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca).

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT**

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it.



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Please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

#### **INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

#### **SAFEWALK**

To request a Safewalk escort anywhere on campus, 24 hours a day and seven days a week, please call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help Phones.

Web: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>

#### **STUDENT UNION INFORMATION**

Representatives and contact details: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/home/contact.html>

Student Ombudsman: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

#### **WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

Writing skills should cross all disciplines. Students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office (<http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca/>) can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.