MINOR IN VIDEO GAME STUDIES

Video Games represent a major cultural form that has eclipsed box office revenue worldwide. Academic programs that examine games and interactive media are proliferating with the recognition that we must examine the role they play in our society. Video games must be understood as meaningful systems that exert both personal and cultural influence. Video games are at once creative and aesthetic objects, psychological and social experiences, cultural artifacts, forums and modalities of interaction, platforms for storytelling and communication, opportunities for ethical and ideological inquiry, sites of (often problematic) identity construction, and instances of collaboration and creative interaction for an incredibly diverse international demographic.
  This program brings together a wide variety of academic disciplinary approaches in order to apprehend the diverse qualities and effects of this multimodal object.   Such work trains students in interdisciplinary research and critical thinking about a ubiquitous media at the same time it prepares students for a wide variety of careers in burgeoning fields related to video games.

Program Learning Outcomes

Completion of this program in Video Game Studies will enable students to perform the following at the level of a minor:

a. Identify elements, principles and techniques in game design and evaluate them. (Field I)

b. Apply research and literary or other disciplinary theories in Video Game Studies to analyze or interpret video games as aesthetic forms, constructed narratives, or designed interactive engagements. (Field II)

c. Describe aspects of the social, political, ideological or other historical contexts of video games or gaming practices, including such as aspects as the cultivation of critical perspectives on intersecting identities and the impact of games on communities; analyze at least once such aspect through an appropriate methodology. (Field III)

All of these PLOs will be met at the introductory level by our required course "Introduction to Video games: A Comparative Perspective."

Each of these PLOs will be mastered, at the level of a minor, by a single course taken in each of the following fields. Each field directly corresponds to one of the PLOs:

- **Field I: Game Design** Students will study and gain hands-on experience learning the principles and techniques of designing and developing video games as creators (programming, scriptwriting, sound design, animation, musical scoring, etc.). (PLO #1)
- **Field II: Interpretation and Theory** Students will study existing video games as aesthetic forms, constructed narratives, or designed interactive engagements in order to arrive at discipline-specific conclusions about the qualities and significance of those designs.   This would include courses that examine genres of video games, undertake formal analyses and theorization of video games, or take up questions like the ethics implied by decision tree design or the representation of race in a given game. (PLO #2)
- **Field III: Reception and Impact** Students will study the historical and ongoing roles of video games on social, economic, political, and other grounds. This field also deals with cultural phenomena such E-sports, streaming platforms, player communities, public or scholastic events, media reporting, psychological impact, etc. It would cover the history of video games from any perspective (cultural, industrial, etc.), questions about demographics or distribution, economies of exchange, etc. (PLO #3)

Video Game Studies, Minor – 12 units minimum

No more than 50% of the total courses counting toward the minor may be lower-division. Courses may not be double-counted across requirements areas.

Students can petition to have other advanced courses count in the minor; petitions will be reviewed by the volunteer program coordinator or an advisor in the program.

A minimum of 6 upper-division units are required to complete the minor.

All coursework used to satisfy the requirements of the minor must be completed with a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

Core Requirement (3 units)

Code	Title	Units
CWL 180	Introduction to Videogames: A Comparative Perspective	3

Game Design (3 units)

Select one:

Code	Title	Units
BECA 374	Writing for Video Games	3
BECA/MUS 434	Introduction to Sound for Games	3
BECA 454	Live Streaming and Content Creation for Esports	3
BECA/MUS 534	Sound Design for Games	3
BECA 593	Interactive and Transmedia Electronic Media Workshop	3
CSC 631	Multiplayer Game Development	3
DES 252	Rethinking Digital Visual Media: History, Technology, and Content	3
DES 367	Introduction to Game Design	3
MUS 451	Scoring for Games I	3

Interpretation and Theory (3 units)

Select one:

Code	Title	Units
BECA 374	Writing for Video Games	3
CINE 336	Video Game Culture	3
CWL 270	Fantasy and Fiction: Exploring Parallel Worlds	3
CWL/ENG 275		
CWL 380	Thinking with Video Games	3
MUS 134	Survey of Music for Film, TV, and Games	3

Reception and Impact (3-4 units)

Select one:

Code	Title	Units
ANTH/CST 585	Globalization and World Cultures	3
CINE 336	Video Game Culture	3
COMM 595	Games, Communication, and Culture	4

CWL 380	Thinking with Video Games	3
MUS 137	Survey of the History of Electronic Music	3
PLSI 423	Video Games, Politics, and The State	4