



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 399.16**  
**Philosophy and Digital Games**  
Spring 2020  
Online

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Instructor Name:** Ananya Chattoraj  
**Email:** ananya.chattoraj@ucalgary.ca  
**Office Hour:** Mondays at 12noon – 1pm on Zoom or by appointment

**COURSE DELIVERY INFORMATION**

Hybrid delivery. Asynchronous lecture recordings and quizzes coupled with optional synchronous discussion time on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm – 2pm.

**PREREQUISITE(S)**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

Is Candy Crush a real game?

Why can't we resell our Steam games?

What are "clunky" game mechanics?

Why do we like watching streamers on Twitch?

In this course we will focus on themes of digital games as art, digital games as social reflections, and digital games as technology. We'll think about the questions above and consider the nature of digital games and the importance of play in our modern lives.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Broad knowledge of the philosophically interesting problems around how digital games fit within our lives and society
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex sources
- Ability to write a convincing argument that takes adequate account of alternative positions
- Ability to engage in constructive, respectful, oral and written argumentation

**REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS, READINGS AND MATERIALS**

All readings will be available on D2L as a link, subject to university policies and Canadian copyright law. There is no required textbook purchase for the course.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

**Assessment Components and Grading Schemes**

No particular assignment is required to pass the course as a whole.

All assignments should be submitted on D2L dropbox or the appropriate quiz assessment. Detailed information on assignments can be found on D2L.

Students must take a screenshot of the D2L dropbox submission confirmation for their own records.

Assignments:

- Weekly Quizzes: 30% of the final grade. Due: May 14, May 21, May 28, June 4, June 11, June 17. Lowest grade is dropped.
- Reading Questions: 5% of the final grade (P/F). Due: May 10, May 17, May 24, May 31, June 7, June 14. Lowest grade is dropped.
- Very Short Paper Draft: 15% of the final grade. 1000 words max. Due May 24 before 11:59pm.
- Very Short Paper: 25% of the final grade. 1500 words max. Due June 11 before 11:59pm if you do not want comments.
- Game Review Critique: 10% of the final grade. Due May 17 before 11:59pm.
- Game Review: 15% of the final grade. Due June 17 before 11:59pm.

Late quizzes, questions, or assignments will only be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

#### Exams

- There is no registrar scheduled final exam for this course.

A+ = 96 – 100	A = 91 – 95	A- = 86 – 90	B+ = 81 – 85
B = 77 - 80	B- = 72 – 76	C+ = 68 - 71	C = 64 - 67
C- = 59 - 63	D+ = 54 - 58	D = 50 - 53	F = 0 - 50

### IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

#### Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf).

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/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf). Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

#### Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.

#### Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at [ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines](http://ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines)

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

## Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](https://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit [phil.ucalgary.ca](https://phil.ucalgary.ca). Further academic guidance is available by contacting David Dick (Undergraduate Program Director [dgdick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dgdick@ucalgary.ca)) or Jeremy Fantl (Honours Advisor [jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)). If you have questions regarding registration, please email Rebecca Lesser (Undergraduate Program Administrator [phildept@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phildept@ucalgary.ca)).

## Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance. For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit [ucalgary.ca/ssc](https://ucalgary.ca/ssc).

## Required Technology

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

## Responsible Use of D2L

Important information and communication about this course will be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit [ucalgary.service-now.com/it](https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it) for how-to information and technical assistance.

All users of D2L are bound by the guidelines on the responsible use of D2L posted here: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/commitment-to-the-responsible-use-of-d2l/>. The instructor may establish additional specific course policies for D2L, Zoom, and any other technologies used to support remote learning. Instructional materials, including audio or video recordings of lectures, may not be posted outside of the course D2L site. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the [University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#).

## Media Recording

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: [https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP\\_FINAL.pdf](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf)

## Academic Misconduct/Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at [ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html](https://ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html).

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

**University Policies**

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf)

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at [ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip](http://ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip). The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright ([ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf)) and requirements of the copyright act ([laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html)).