



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2024

4,762: Freier Bereich/Open Area: Digital Game Design 101

ECTS credits: 3

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (50%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work group grade (50%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[4,762,1.00 Freier Bereich/Open Area: Digital Game Design 101](#) -- English -- [Schwab Philomena](#) , [Busch Thorsten](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

Students do not need any prior knowledge in order to succeed in this class. Having taken the BA class "Digital Games: Business, Culture, Ethics" (taking place each fall term) is helpful but not necessary.

Learning objectives

Upon successful completion of this class, students will:

- be familiar with fundamental concepts and universal techniques of game design;
- understand the multi-faceted nature of game design, including its psychological, technological, ethical, and business aspects;
- have created their own game prototypes in order to turn theory into practice.

Course content

Digital games have been around for more than 50 years now. Today, they are a pervasive and ubiquitous medium with tremendous cultural, artistic and commercial impact all across the globe. Over the course of their careers, HSG graduates will thus interact with games in many different contexts, whether it be business gamification, marketing, or innovation. This makes game design required knowledge not only for anyone seeking a career in digital media, but for any professional in a wide range of industries, and even in public service.

When it comes to the cultural, technological, political, and ethical contexts of games, HSG students already have the option of taking the contextual studies BA class "Digital Games: Business, Culture, Ethics" (T. Busch), which takes place every fall term. However, the best way to learn about game design is to actually make games yourself.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

This block course during the semester break is modeled after a three-day game jam in which students make games from scratch in groups. The course lecturers will provide them with necessary theory and hands-on tools to build prototypes, and at the end of the game jam, student groups will present said prototypes. After the block course is done, students will critically reflect on their experience by way of an individual term paper.

- day 1: interactive introductory workshop on game design
- day 2: game jam (groups of three students each design and produce a game prototype)



- day 3: presentation of game projects and critical reflection on the design process

Course literature

Engström, H. (2020). *Game development research*. Skövde: University of Skövde. Available at: <https://his.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1501250/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

Fullerton, T. (2018). *Game design workshop. A playcentric approach to creating innovative games*. 4th edition. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press/T&F.

Gravvy (2016). *Game Maker handbook: resources for beginners*. https://www.reddit.com/r/gamemaker/comments/3lyoik/game_maker_handbook_resources_for_beginners_and/

Harviainen, J.T., Meriläinen, M., & Tossavainen, T. (2015). *The game educator's handbook*. Revised international edition. Helsinki: University of Helsinki. <https://pelikasvatus.fi/gameeducatorshandbook.pdf>

Keogh, B. (2023). *The videogame industry does not exist. Why we should think beyond commercial game production*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Full text: <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/14513.001.0001>

Koster, R. (2014). *A theory of fun for game design*. 2nd edition. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.

Salen Tekinbas, K., & Zimmerman, E. (2003). *Rules of play: game design fundamentals*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Schell, J. (2019). *The art of game design*. 3rd edition. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press/T&F.

Sotamaa, O., & Svelch, J. (eds., 2021). *Game production studies*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/47043>

Sylvester, T. (2013). *Designing games. A guide to engineering experiences*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly.

Additional course information

Dr. Thorsten Busch is a Lecturer in digital business ethics, game studies, and responsible innovation at the University of St. Gallen, a Senior Lecturer at the ZHAW Center for Corporate Responsibility, and Affiliated Faculty in game studies at Concordia University, Montréal, Canada.

Philomena Schwab is a game designer and community manager from Zurich, Switzerland. She wrote her Master's thesis at the ZHDk on "Community Building for Indie Developers" and went on to co-found the indie game studio Stray Fawn in 2016. In 2017, Philomena was named as top 30 under 30 in Technology in Europe by Forbes. As a vice president of the Swiss Game Hub, she helps the local game industry grow.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	50%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

individual reflection paper



Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	50%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Remark

group presentation of game prototypes

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

In groups students will present their game prototypes in class (50% of the grade, graded as a group); after class, students will write an individual term paper to critically reflect on the process of making a game (50% of the grade, graded individually)

Examination relevant literature

see course literature



Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 25. Januar 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 18 March 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2024);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: Starting with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 08. April 2024).