CS499R/PSYCH482/CS798
Games for Health—Winter 2016
Administrivia
Course Objectives, Schedule, and Grading

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Course Objectives

- Review of current major applications of games in healthcare.
- Reading seminar and game design course.
- Case studies of representative health-related games: from “best-practices” to still pretty terrible.
- By the end of this course students should have:
  - Good understanding of current major topics in health-related games.
  - Appreciation of what makes for good "gamification" in healthcare.
  - Ability to apply good game design principles in healthcare applications.
Schedule of Topics

- Characteristics of serious games.
- Games versus gamification (panel).
- Board and card games.
- Exergaming.
- Cognitive and mental health—***SPECIAL THEME***.
- Games for children and youth/the elderly.
- Narrative and storytelling—***SPECIAL THEME***.
- Social and virtual reality games.
- Personalization in games
- Final discussion: Serious games on sensitive subjects.
Canonical Reference—“Games for Good”

- Individual copies on loan. Inexpensive to buy.
- Also see: http://janemcgonigal.com
References—Games for Health

- K. Bredl and W. Bosche (eds), Serious games and virtual worlds in education, professional development, and healthcare, 2013.
- Two copies of each reference – short-term loan from course coordinator.
References and Resources—Game Design

- In-class workshops led by Games Institute research associates.
- Jesse Schell, The art of game design: A deck of lenses, 2014. (Cards to accompany the book)
- Individual copies on loan.
Course Delivery

- Each session addresses a different genre of health game:
  - Case studies of representative games.
  - Research papers. Evaluations.
  - Individual or two-person presentations. Promoting discussion.
- Series of in-class workshops on game design:
  - Choosing a game design project idea. Forming teams.
  - In-progress: Developing the game prototype.
  - Games Institute mentoring.
- Final deliverables:
  - Game prototype (board, card, paper, digital) and walk-through.
  - Design document.
  - Poster.
Grading Breakdown ***UPDATED***

- 60% Course project—Game prototype (1–4 person team):
  - (5%) Project proposal (one page)—due Friday February 5
  - (10%) In-class design workshops—Jan 29, Feb (TBA), March 11
  - (10%) Poster presentation—(TBA)
  - Draft project design document—for feedback only
  - (35%) Final project design document—due Friday April 1
- 30% Presentations of papers and case studies:
  - **Graduate students:**
    - 5 presentations are required (25% of the final grade)
      At least 2 presentations must be done individually.
      3 additional individual or team presentations are also required.
    - Additional essay (5% of the final grade)
      An in-depth individually written “thinkpiece” on some aspect of games
      for health that presents interesting medical, technical, business,
      ethical, or other challenges (1000–1500 words).
  - **Undergraduate students:**
    - 3 team presentations are required.
    - Optional Bonus “thinkpiece” essay
      (1000–1500 words, up to 5% of the final grade).
Required Background

- No formal requirements. Interest in learning and critiquing state-of-the-art of health games: Challenges, successes, failures.
- **Course themes:** Games for mental health/Narrative in games
  - Collaboration with Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). CAMH interested in designing games to address difficult health issues for young people (problem drinking; mental health).
  - Prof. Raymond Mar (Psychology, York University) and Lab. Effects of narrative on the brain.
- **Projects:** Address various issues in CAMH game prototypes:
  - Gamifying sensitive subjects.
  - Good game mechanics for serious (health) games.
  - Better models of interactive narrative for health games.
  - Modelling persuasive language (health rhetoric) in games.
  - Interactions between narrative and game mechanics.
  - Integrating cognitive behaviour therapy into gameplay.
  - ... and more.
More Details

- Chrysanne Di Marco, DC1308, cdimarco@uwaterloo.ca
- Workshop leaders: TBA
- Course website: http://www.cs.uwaterloo.ca/~cdimarco/cs798w16
- Getting started:
  - Also see: http://janemcgonigal.com
- Excellent introduction to game studies on www.coursera.org:
  - “Understanding Video Games”, new session started Sept 1.
  - Thorough coverage of various aspects of game studies and design.
  - Extremely well-researched—extensive readings and references by game scholars and game designers.
  - History of videogames—huge number of case studies, demos.
  - Note: Access soon will be closed.