UNIVERSITY of HAWAIʻI
WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Ke Kulanui Kaiāulu o ke Koʻolau

CM 271: Games & Gaming in Society

Fall/2026, Tuesdays & Thursdays 13:15-15:00

3 Credits | 62038

This syllabus and/or our Course Schedule is subject to change at any time. I will notify you of any changes via direct communication. Mahalo!

Windward Community College Mission Statement

ʻO keia ka wā kūpono e hoʻonui ai ka ʻike me ka hoʻomaopopo i kō Hawaiʻi mau hoʻoilina waiwai. Aia nō hoʻi ma ke Kulanui Kaiāulu o ke Koʻolau nā papahana hou o nā ʻike ʻake akamai a me nā hana noʻeau. Me ke kuleana koʻikoʻi e hoʻohiki ke Kulanui e kākoʻo a e hoʻokumu i ala e hiki kē kōkua i ka hoʻonui ʻike a nā kānaka maoli. Na mākou nō e hoʻolako, kākoʻo a paipai i nā Koʻolau a kō Oʻahu aʻe me nā hana noʻeau ākea, ka hoʻonaʻauao ʻoihana a me ka hoʻonui ʻike ma ke kaiāulu— hōʻaʻano a e hoʻoulu i nā haumāna i ka poʻokela.

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawaiʻi and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide the Koʻolau region of Oʻahu and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

ʻĀina

Windward Community College is located in the ahupuaʻa of Kāneʻohe and Heʻeʻia in the moku of Koʻolaupoko on the island of Oʻahu. Both ahupuaʻa are directly connected to the moʻo ʻōlelo of Pāpa and Wākea, who are seen as the ancestors of the Hawaiian nation. The campus sits beneath the puʻu of Keahiakahoe, which is also connected to many moʻo ʻōlelo of this ʻāina. Because wind names and rain names are associated with specific ʻāina, the rain name of Kāneʻohe is known as the ʻĀpuakea and the rain name of Heʻeʻia is the Ulumano.

Instructor Information

How to Contact Your Instructor

- Mason, Richard
- Office: Office & Phone: TBD (for the time being, The Hub)
- Office Hours: Mondays & Fridays 11:30 – 13:00.
- Email: masonrl@hawaii.edu

About

Greetings, I'm Mason! It's great to be your instructor for this course. The best way to get ahold of me is either by E-mail, or better yet if possible, just holler at me when you see me. I check my E-mail often, but with plenty of emails coming in, getting back might take me a minute. However, I promise to do so ASAP. Contact me at any time.

Alternate Contact Information

If you are unable to contact the instructor, have questions that your instructor cannot answer, or for any other issues, please contact the Academic Affairs Office:

- Location: Alakaʻi 121
- Phone: (808) 235-7422

Asking Course Questions

Please use course Q&A in Lamakū Discussions for all general course questions about content, activities, due dates, how work will be graded, etc. I will check Q&A daily and provide follow-up information there. Email specific grading questions and/or personal matters, per FERPA, to keep your information protected. Again, email me, or holler at me, at any time.

Contingency Plan

If there is an outage, weather situation, or family emergency on my end, I will do my best to find a way to communicate an update as soon as possible about my return to the course. Mahalo in advance for your understanding and I hope you will do the same.

Course Format & Structure

This course is offered in a 16-week time frame. Please note that this is not a self-paced course; our course schedule is provided in this syllabus. It is Asynchronous, but we adhere to the schedule as best as we are able. That said, things change. Our schedule may change by a day or two, depending on our needs as a class.

Participation Verification

Campuses are required by federal regulations to verify the participation of students in their classes. In accordance with Executive Policy 7.209, all students in the University of Hawai'i system are required to establish "participation" to ensure that they are not dropped from their class(es). Effective Fall 2021, students who fail to participate by the late registration period for a class will be administratively dropped from that class. Students may also be dropped from dependent prerequisite and/or corequisite classes if both courses do not establish participation.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This survey study of games and gaming in human culture and society brings together various methodologies and conceptual tools to create a complex analysis. Topics covered will include: the concept of gaming in popular culture, how games are created and circulated in popular culture, how elements of gaming in popular culture connect to historical, political, social, symbolic, and intellectual history, how different groups in society relate to gaming, and how games play a role in the lives of individuals, groups of players, and create or change communities.

This course examines the human activity of gaming through the lenses of economics, education, mathematics, military theory, neuroscience, psychology, and anthropology, also introducing students to game design principles, the field of professional game design, and how certain kinds of games enhance intelligence quotient, creative problem solving, and life skills.

Students will study and play many games: classic strategy games used by kings of old such as Chess or Go, games which generated economies of gambling around them (poker, blackjack, craps), games as social activities to strengthen social and or familial ties (such as monopoly, trivial pursuit, charades), complex modern strategy gaming used in military academies around the world (games such as diplomacy, Warhammer 40k, etc.), and the wide world of video gaming entertainment (everything from resource management games, simulations, real-time strategy games, role playing games, first person shooters, etc.). We will also look at the use of games to further education, and the burgeoning field of alternate reality games for life enhancement, and the use of gamification to affect social issues and communities.

Students will research and write on social/political or economic phenomenon in games and gaming, create a detailed survey to define and determine traits and proclivities of a specific community in gaming, and write comprehensive reviews of specific games after logging hours of play and determining levels of entropy vs. optimal play/risk vs. reward/etc., and finally design their own original games and produce mock-ups/design-documentation of these games including board/cards/items and rulebooks, and conduct extensive alpha and beta tests to gather data on their own originally designed games' playability and player responses.

1. The WCC WI Hallmarks:

W1. The class uses writing to promote the learning of course materials.

W2. The class provides interaction between the instructor and students while students do assigned writing. At least one student-teacher conference on a writing assignment is required in writing intensive courses at WCC.

W3. Writing assignments must make up at least 40% of each student's course grade.

W4. The class requires students to do a substantial amount of writing—a minimum of 4,000 words, or about 16 pages.

W5. To allow for meaningful professor-student interaction on each student's writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.

2. **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

• Analyze the connection between gaming and larger political, social, and psychological patterns in society.

• Conduct surveys and interviews with populations of gamers and major figures in current gaming trends.

• Analyze economic and political shifts in gaming communities and industries.

• Design an effective, balanced game that speaks to a population of gamers.

COURSE TASKS

This course will analyze, through writing, reading, seminar-style discussions, surveys, interviews, and break out game sessions, the deep human connection to the activity of gaming its influence on our modern society. We will look at the evolution of gaming from ancient times to the exploding video game culture surrounding us in the 21st century and look at how games are being utilized in our society not only as a means of distraction/relaxation, but also how they are educating us in unconventional ways, building better communities, and even curing cancer.

In order to meet the course SLOs, this course will revolve around the following tasks:

- **Write 1 Game Design Document/Mock-Up** *(MINIMUM 5 pages).* Over the course of this semester you will design your very own game for any medium you see fit (video, board, pen-n-paper roleplaying, card, alternate reality game, etc.). You will create a detailed mock-up and design document for your game, which you will then present to the class on our final Game-a-thon Day. This assignment is worth 40 points of your final grade (20 points for the design work/writing and 20 points for the presentation).
- **Create and conduct an extensive playtest log** and associated survey of play testers to better understand your games' effect on players. *This will usually be over 5 pages.* This is worth 50 points of your final grade.
- **Complete a variety of in-class activities** (12 points total). You will be frequently required to participate in group assignments, discussions, and informal writing assignments such as journal reflections. You will also be required to play games often in class. Your sportsmanship, ability to apply yourself in a concentrated manner will be evaluated every class session. You will also catalogue (in journal), *usually up to 6 pages.* what aspects of gaming (as learned in class) were reflected in the activities.

Participate in class by being physically, as well as mentally, present and respectful of others. This includes not talking with friends, not listening to music, and coming to class on time. This also includes not monopolizing class discussion with your own point of view and not being respectful of what your classmates have to say.

ASSESSMENT TASKS & GRADING		
Game Design Doc/Mock-up and Presentation =	5-pages	40 points
Gaming Log/ Playtest Survey =	5-pages	50 points
Journal Entries/ In-Class Activities =	6-pages	12 points
Total	16 pages	= 102 points

Final grade Breakdown: A+ (97–100); A (93-96); A- (90–92); B+ (87–89); B (83–86); B- (80–82); C+ (77–79); C (73–76); C- (70–72); D+ (67–69); D (63–66); D- (60–62); F (under 60)

As of Right Now, All Students have a 100% A+ GRADE – IT IS UP YOU TO MAINTAIN IT.

"Students must adequately complete all writing assignments to pass the course with a 'D' or better Students who do not complete all writing assignments will get a D- or an F and will not earn W Focus Credit."

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

This course makes use of learner-centered activities to help you learn the material. In other words, this class will not rely solely on lecture. If you find that this teaching style does not work for you, please drop the class.

This course will utilize peer-feedback methods for your games and papers. You will typically be asked to share your writings and game design in small (3—4 person) groups. You will also be expected to give constructive feedback to your group members.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WILL HELP YOU IN THIS CLASS

1. This class is not only *writing-intensive* but also reading-intensive AND thinking-intensive. Since we will move at an extremely fast pace, it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and paper assignments.

2. You will be expected to write thoughtful & analytical conversations on given topics AND keep up with all assigned readings. Seriously consider dropping the class if you find that the topic of Games and Gaming does not interest you since lack of interest in a subject corresponds to a negative grade.

3. Faithfully attend class, since failure to attend class on a regular basis corresponds to a negative grade.

4. Always take notes. This includes anything that is written on the board, viewed on the overhead projector, discussed with one another, gleaned from videos, etc. These notes can help you write your papers!

5. Bring required readings to class according to the class schedule. We will typically refer back to these readings in class. Also, these readings will help you complete in-class assignments. Failure to buy the required texts always corresponds to a negative grade.

6. Ask questions if you don't understand and definitely let me know if you are having any problems in the class.

Course Materials: All Readings will be handed out in class

Schedule of Events (Subject to change)

Date	Topics	Reading/Topics	Activity	Due
Week 1	**Module 1**	**Introductions to Concepts**		
Tues 25	Who are you? Who I am?	Syllabus, WI, expectations	Heiti/Kennings/Words	
Thu 27	What the final project looks like	Chapter 1 Handout	What is a Game?	Journal Entries
Week 2				
Tue ***Sep*** 1	Making due	Gaming in Prison Article	What isn't a Game?	
		Sept 1 - Last Day for 100% Tuition Refund		
Thu 3	Concepts	Gaming in Human Society and General Concepts	Why is a Game?	Journal Entries
Week 3				
Mon Sep 7		Labor Day		
Tue 8	History of Gaming	Snakes-Ladders-Instructions	The Oldest Game	
Thu 10	History of Gaming	Rules of Gyan	Gyan	Journal Entries
Week 4				
Tue 15	Tools	Rules of Monopoly	Expanding Capacity	
Thu 17	Resource Mgmt.	Hounds and Jackals		Journal Entries
Week 5				
Tue 24	Tools	Augmented Reality Handout	Applications of Resources	
Thu 24	Considering your Game	Augmented Reality Handout	Point-Systems?	Journal Entries
Week 6				
Tue 29	Fluff vs. Crunch	Excerpts from PHB	What would it look like?	
Thu ***Oct*** 1	TTRPG	CtD Handout	Shameless Self Promotion	Journal Entries
		Gaming Log Assigned		
Week 7	**MODULE 2**	**Putting it all together**		
Tue 6		FFCTOP_GTS	Application	
Thu 8	.	Marvel_Remix_Rulebook-en	Application	
Week 8				
Tue 13		Glass-Bead Game	Application	
Thu 15		The Oldest Game	Application	Gaming log
Week 9				
Tue 20		Hounds and Jackals	Application	
Thu 22		Othello/Go	Application	Gaming log
Week 10				
Tue 27	Ideas?	Conferences –	Application	
Thu 29	Ideas?	Conferences –	Application	Gaming log
Week 11	**Module 3**	**Testing Phases**		
Tue ***Nov*** 3		Election Day (State Holiday)		
Thu 5		Peer reviews/playtesting project Alphas		Gaming log
Week 12				
Tue 10		Peer reviews/playtesting project Alphas		
Thu 12		Nov 11, Veterans Day (Federal Holiday)		
Week 14				
Tue 17		Peer reviews/playtesting project Alphas		
Thu 20		Peer reviews/playtesting project Alphas		Gaming log
Week 15				
Tue 24		Peer reviews/playtesting project Alphas		
Thu 26		Thanksgiving		
Week 16				
Tue ***Dec*** 1		Peer reviews/playtesting project Betas		
Thu 3		Peer reviews/playtesting project Betas		
Week 17				
Tue 8		Instructor Reviews/ Final Playtests with collated data from Alpha and Beta playtests.		Final Game
Thu 10		Meetings, final Grades		

Academic Integrity

Work submitted by a student must be the student's own work. The work of others should be explicitly marked, such as through the use of quotes or summarizing with reference to the original author.

In this class, students who commit academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism will have the following consequence(s):

- Students will receive a failing grade for plagiarized assignments.
- All cases of academic dishonesty are referred to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Windward CC Student Conduct Information

UH System Student Conduct Policy EO 7.208

Notes about AI

Students should refrain from using AI. The class Focuses on opinions, judgments, and Ethics that no computer program, no matter how advanced, can comprehend.

Student Kuleana

- Please review our Hawai'i-Style Netiquette, which blends the values of ALOHA with approaches to how we should consider treating each other online.
- Windward CC has Grievance Procedures in place, but I encourage us to try to work together first to see if we can work through any troubles. Mahalo!

RESPECT:

The material presented is sacred to millions of people around the world. It is vital that it is presented with the decorum and magnanimity it so richly deserves. Though a student may disagree with it, even disapprove of it, they must still approach the subject matter with all the respect that they would show their own beliefs.

This goes doubly so for others in the classroom. The Golden Rule was presented by a myriad of Faiths, and it is just as true in each. Students who cannot abide by this simple tenet lose all participation points for the week, and *risk failing the course*.

-THE CLASS WILL BE A SAFE-SPACE AT ALL TIMES- And safe enough to explore precarious ideas.

TRIGGER WARNINGS:

This course will explore morally difficult themes.

- *There are subjects concerning human sexuality and gender norms prominent in some of the discussions and readings that may prove challenging.*
- *Certain ugly elements of racial intolerance are a necessary reality for covering the modern period*
- *Violence was, and is, a universal aspect of the human condition. Warfare and bloodshed play a role in some of the readings and viewed materials of this unit.*

A certain level of maturity is needed to deal with these facets of the religion. If for any reason a student feels uncomfortable about any material, it is imperative that they speak with the professor. There are counselors available if the student feels uncomfortable approaching the professor.

Academic and Technical Support

Academic Support

- Windward Community College Library
- Library eResources
- Library Research Units (LRUs)
- Ka Piko Tutoring Services: Math Lab, Speech Lab, Writing Lab, ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi Lab
- Online Learning at Windward Community College
- STAR Balance

Technical Support

- UH ITS Help Desk: email help@hawaii.edu or call (808) 956-8883 (or 1-800-558-2669) for Lamakū and most technology support. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays.
- Student Tech Support: email winhelp@hawaii.edu, call (808) 235-7437, or stop by in person at Hale Laʻakea 228. Available Monday–Friday from 8:00 am–4:00 pm.
- Lamakū: Click on the Lamakū Help link in the menu bar at the top of the Lamakū homepage to fill out and submit a question and get your answer via email.
- Information Security for Students

College Policies & Support Services

Basic Needs

Basic needs include food and housing, childcare, mental health, financial resources, and transportation. Student basic needs security is critical for ensuring strong academic performance, persistence and graduation, and overall student well-being. If you or someone you know is experiencing basic needs insecurity, please see the UH System Basic Needs.

Disabilities Accommodations Statement

Windward Community College's Disability Student Services Office (WCC-DSSO) is committed to providing equal access to qualified students with disabilities.

If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to participate fully in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor, Roy Inouye, to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. The Disabilities Counselor can be reached at (808) 235-7448, wccdsso@hawaii.edu, or stop by the office (Hale Kakoʻo 106) for more information.

Financial Aid

If you are receiving financial aid and are contemplating not completing the course it is highly recommended that you contact the Financial Aid Office at (808) 934-2712 or email them at wccfao@hawaii.edu ***BEFORE*** you withdraw to discuss the impact this decision may have on your financial aid eligibility.

LGBTQ+

The University of Hawai‘i system and Windward Community College are committed to building an inclusive community that supports and advocates for all students, staff, and faculty. We welcome all members of our campus community to our campuses: transgender, māhū, and people of all gender identities. All members of our campus community deserve a work and educational environment free from harassment or bullying based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. For more information, see the University of Hawai‘i Commission on LGBTQ+ Equality. Windward Community College Commissioner: Scott Sutherland, scottjks@hawaii.edu

Mental Health Counseling

Mental Health and Wellness at Windward Community College provides counseling services and activities on campus to support students' life goals as well as their academic goals. Information about services can be found at WCC Mental Health & Wellness.

Student Conduct Code

Windward Community College follows the University of Hawai‘i Code of Student Conduct which defines expected conduct for students and specifies those acts subject to University sanctions. Students should familiarize themselves with the Code of Student Conduct since, upon enrollment at Windward Community College, they have placed themselves under the policies and regulations of the University and its duly constituted bodies. The disciplinary authority is exercised through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Copies of the Student Conduct Code are available at the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

TRiO Program

The Federal TRiO Programs are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRiO includes six outreach and support programs targeted to serve and assist low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities in progressing through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs. Information about services can be found at Windward CC TRiO.

Title IX - Sex Discrimination And Gender-Based Violence Resources

Windward Community College is committed to providing a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these, WCC has staff and resources to support and assist you. To report an incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence, as well as receive information and support, please contact one of the following:

Desrae Kahale, UH System Confidential Advocate
Phone: (808) 235-7393
Email: advocate@hawaii.edu
Office: Hale Kākoʻo 101

Desrae Kahale, Mental Health Counselor & Confidential Resource
Phone: (808) 235-7393
Email: dkahale3@hawaii.edu
Office: Hale Kākoʻo 101

Mykie E. Menor Ozoa-Aglugub, J.D., Title IX Coordinator

Phone: (808) 235-7468
Email: mozoa@hawaii.edu
Office: Hale Kākoʻo 109

Karen Cho, Deputy Title IX Coordinator
Phone: (808) 235-7404
Email: kcho@hawaii.edu
Office: Hale ʻAlakaʻi 120

As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. Although the Title IX Coordinator and I cannot guarantee confidentiality, you will still have options about how your case will be handled. My goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need.

For more information regarding sex discrimination and gender-based violence, refer to the University's Title IX resources, and the University's Policy, EP 1.204.

UH Alerts

The UH Alert emergency notification system alerts the university community in the event of a natural, health or civil emergency. The information you provide will only be used in the event of an emergency that impacts the health and safety of the UH community or the closure of whole campuses. It will not be shared with others or used for routine UH communications or announcements. To sign up, visit UH Alerts for more information.