

GAME 120 : GAME TESTING

Section 501, CRN 68413

Fall 2020

Instructor: Ian Burch

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Office and Hours: Online on Zoom & Learn (TBD)

Course Goals:

This course focuses on the various types of testing in gaming, beginning with an introduction to playtesting, as well as issues of clarity, strategies, and accessibility. Much of the course will also be devoted to the technical aspects of testing, such as formal test plans, stress testing, bug tracking, and the various phases of game development.

Materials:

- Internet Access, for Learn, Zoom, and Youtube.
- Notebook

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the types of strategies in games
- Identify degenerate, optimal, and FOO strategies
- Mathematically analyze game systems and basic probability
- Write a testing plan
- Identify types of testing and their limitations
- Properly bug test a game

Course Content

Each week we'll explore an aspect of balance, strategy, and testing through playing, discussing, and analyzing different games. The first week of the semester I'll send out a survey to find the optimal time(s) for zoom meetings and playthroughs. After we play and discuss the game, you'll have to post your thoughts as homework. Each unit will end with a small project where you analyze and discuss a game of your choice, along with a small presentation.

Grade Breakdown:

Participation	30%
Homework	40%
Projects	30%

Letter grades will be given as follows, with + or - given for the highest and lowest 3% in each range, respectively. Incomplete (I) grades will not be assigned without documented, extenuating, circumstances.

90% - 100% A

80% - 89% B

70% - 79% C

60% - 69% D

0% - 59% F

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1 - Introductions, Scheduling, What kinds of testing are there?

Strategy

Week 2 - Intro to Game Theory, Tic Tac Toe

Week 3 - Hidden Information, 6 Nimit

Week 4 - Victory Conditions, 7 Wonders

Week 5 - Tactics vs Strategy, Stone Age & Chess

Balance

Week 6 - Project I Presentation, What is balance?

Week 7 - Probability, Yahtzee

Weeks 8 & 9 - Ratios, Cookie Clicker

Week 10 & 11 - Incomparables, Starcraft

Bug & Usability Testing

Week 12 - Project Presentation, Combinatorics

Week 13 - Testing Plans, Game TBD

Week 14 - Testing, Game TBD

Week 15 - Bug Tracking, Game TBD

Week 16 - Presenting

Late Work / Absences:

Homework past the due date will not be accepted without an emailed or written request prior to the deadline. If you're going to miss a zoom meeting, please let me know in advance.

Expectations:

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and collegial manner. During Zoom meetings, be professional, appropriate, and mute when not speaking. When posting on discussion boards, be polite, concise, and avoid using internet slang. If you need an extension on an assignment, please email or message me before it is due. Students missing more than 4 consecutive assignments may be dropped from the course.

Disability Statement:

In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow. Contact Accessibility Resource Center at 277-3506 or arc.unm.edu for additional information.

If you need an accommodation based on how course requirements interact with the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment, we can discuss the course format and requirements, anticipate the need for adjustments and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Disability Services Office for assistance in developing strategies and verifying accommodation needs. If you have not previously contacted them I encourage you to do so.

Academic Integrity:

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in course work may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Credit-hour Statement:

This is a three credit-hour course. Class meets for two 75-minute sessions of direct instruction for fifteen weeks during the Fall 2020 semester. Students are expected to complete a *minimum* of six hours of out-of-class work (or homework, study, assignment completion, and class preparation) each week.

Title IX :

In an effort to meet obligations under Title IX, UNM faculty, Teaching Assistants, and Graduate Assistants are considered “responsible employees” by the Department of Education (see pg 15 - <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>). This designation requires that any report of gender discrimination which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity (oeo.unm.edu). For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, see:

<https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html>

Citizenship and/or Immigration Status: All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. As for all students in the class, family emergency-related absences are normally excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration’s welcome is found on our website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.