

# danm 147: intro to queer game studies — summer 2022

## session 1

### class info

instructor: dani wright (she/they)

email: [daniwright@ucsc.edu](mailto:daniwright@ucsc.edu)

discord: scareoset#6669

office hours: by appointment

meeting times: N/A

### course links

[canvas](#)

[discord](#)

[drive](#)

### learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be expected to

- know how to identify queer games,

- be familiar with contemporary queer game designers and scholars,

- perform queer readings of games as cultural texts,

- engage with queer theory,

- and have an awareness of the landscape of the games industry as a whole as well as the queer games subculture.

### assignments

Intro to Queer Games Studies will look at writing about queer games—both academic and non-academic—as well as contemporary queer games. Students will be expected to write an essay that synthesizes queer theory and game studies. They will also have to answer a few short questions about each reading. For extra credit, students will develop a prototype of a queer game. The midterm will be a draft of the final paper. Throughout the course, students will have gained experience in looking critically at pieces of digital media art, creating short video games, and reading queer theory as well as game studies writing.

## weekly schedule

### week 1: some definitions

#### readings:

[\*Opening the Horse Volume 1\*](#)

[\*No Future—chapter 1\*](#)

[\*Cruising Utopia—introduction\*](#)

[\*The Queer Art of Failure—introduction\*](#)

#### games:

[\*Game Studies \(from Some Small Games\)\*](#)

[\*with those we love alive\*](#)

[\*Queers in Love at the End of the World\*](#)

#### assignments:

[reading questions](#)

[optional] reading annotations

### week 2: a brief history of {queer|game} studies

#### readings:

[\*Queer Game Studies—introduction\*](#)

[\*Queer Game Studies—chapter 1\*](#)

[\*Queer Game Studies—chapter 15\*](#)

[“Not Gay as in Happy: Queer Resistance and Video Games \(Introduction\)”](#)

[\*Endnote 5: A Case Study in Digital Radicalism\*](#)

[optional] [\*Why Does Metal Gear Rising Keep Getting More Popular?\*](#)

[optional] [\*Does Call of Duty Believe in Anything?\*](#)

#### games:

{ [\*Gone Home\* playthrough](#) | [optional purchase] [\*Gone Home\*](#) }

[\*Depression Quest\*](#)

[\*Quing’s Quest VII\*](#)

#### assignments:

[reading questions](#)

[optional] reading annotations

### week 3: making queer games

#### readings:

[“Just making things and being alive about it: The queer games scene”](#)

[“Queer and Trans-formative Game Design”](#)

[\*Queer Game Studies—chapter 6\*](#)

[\*Queer Game Studies—chapter 7\*](#)

[\*Queer Game Studies—chapter 9\*](#)

[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—chapter 1\*](#)

[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—chapter 6\*](#)  
[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—chapter 8\*](#)  
[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—chapter 16\*](#)

games:

[\*Butterfly Soup\*](#)  
[\*Electric Zine Maker\*](#)  
[\*Realistic Kissing Simulator\*](#)

assignments:

[midterm: draft of paper](#)  
[reading questions](#)  
[optional] reading annotations

week 4: queer theory and games

readings:

[\*Between Men—Chapter 1\*](#)  
[\*Video Games Have Always Been Queer—Chapter 1\*](#)  
[\*The Queer Art of Failure—Chapter 3\*](#)  
[\*Video Games Have Always Been Queer—Chapter 5\*](#)  
[\*Queer Game Studies—Chapter 3\*](#)

games:

[\*When Rivers Were Trails\*](#)  
[\*violeta\*](#)  
[\*tiny rainbow rebels\*](#)

assignments:

[reading questions](#)  
[optional] reading annotations

week 5: what are queer games?

readings:

[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—Introduction\*](#)  
[\*The Queer Games Avant-Garde—Afterword\*](#)  
[\*Queer Game Studies—Chapter 2\*](#)  
[\*Queer Game Studies—Chapter 19\*](#)  
[\*Queer Game Studies—Chapter 24\*](#)  
[\*Video Games Have Always Been Queer—Conclusion\*](#)

games:

[\*there's this girl\*](#)  
[\*Leymusoom Digital Shrine\*](#)  
[\*Full of Birds\*](#)  
[\*QUEERING THE MAP\*](#)

assignments:

[final: paper](#)

[reading questions](#)

[optional] reading annotations

extra credit: small queer game

student hours breakdown

weekly hour breakdown

class: 0 hours :3

readings: 18 hours

homework: 12 hours

total: 30 hours

assessments, assignments, and grades

There will be no exams in this course. Instead, students will be graded by their assignments—weekly homework, a midterm draft of a paper, and a final paper. This is the grading breakdown:

Weekly homework assignments: 50%

Midterm (draft of final paper): 25%

Final (paper): 25%

Extra credit (small queer game) : 10%

Total: 110%

final exam time slot

The final exam time slot will not be used for a sit down final. Instead, the final paper will be due by the end of the time slot. This will also be the deadline for any late work submissions.

principles of community

The University of California, Santa Cruz expressly prohibits students from engaging in conduct constituting unlawful discrimination, harassment or bias ([see more here](#)). I am committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity and supports inclusivity. We need to work together to build this community of learning. I ask all members of this class to:

- be open to and interested in the views of others
- consider the possibility that your views may change over the course of the term
- be aware that this course asks you to reconsider some “common sense” notions you may hold
- honor the unique life experiences of your colleagues

- appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other
- listen to each other's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature
- ground your comments in the texts we are studying. Refer frequently to the texts and make them the focus of your questions, comments, and arguments. This is the single most effective way to ensure respectful discussion and to create a space where we are all learning together.

### land acknowledgement

The land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, comprised of the descendants of indigenous people taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during Spanish colonization of the Central Coast, is today working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from historical trauma.

### academic integrity statement

All members of the UCSC community benefit from an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. You are expected to present your own work and acknowledge the work of others in order to preserve the integrity of scholarship.

Academic integrity includes:

- Following exam rules
- Using only permitted materials during an exam
- Viewing exam materials only when permitted by your instructor
- Keeping what you know about an exam to yourself
- Incorporating proper citation of all sources of information
- Submitting your own original work

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam
- Accessing exam materials without permission
- Copying/purchasing any material from another student, or from another source, that is submitted for grading as your own
- Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation
- Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor
- Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism) without prior permission from the instructor.

Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript. For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students and instructors should refer to the [Academic Misconduct page](#) at the [Division of Undergraduate Education](#).

#### drc info

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu).

#### title ix info

The [Title IX Office](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the Campus Advocacy Resources & Education (CARE) Office by calling (831) 502-2273. In addition, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide confidential counseling support. Call CAPS at (831) 459-2628. You can also report gender discrimination directly to the University's Title IX Office, (831) 459-2462. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD, (831) 459-2231 ext. 1. For emergencies call 911.

Faculty and Teaching Assistants are required under the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) to inform the Title IX Office should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.