Media Studies 360: Game Studies
Intended for 40 undergraduate students
Spring 2025 at the University of Victoria
lə́ḱʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ territories
M and Th, 1 - 2:20pm | 1.5 units | prereq: AWR
Taught by Jentery Sayers (he / him) | jentery@uvic.ca
Office hours: M and Th, 12-1pm, in CLE D331

View this document in PDF (dated 5 January 2025).

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Contents:

Territory Acknowledgement

As a researcher and instructor at the University of Victoria, I acknowledge and respect the Lə́ḱʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lə́ḱʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. I'm a settler scholar at UVic, and I arrived here as an uninvited guest in July 2011.

In this video, Songhees Elder Elmer George welcomes visitors to the traditional lands of the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ people in lə́ḱʷəŋən and English. The acknowledgement in this video was prepared in consultation with local Indigenous communities.

The fact that we're gathering at UVic to study games is a product of colonization and injustice upon local lands, waters, and people. I continue to learn about those injustices, and I will make no assumptions about your knowledge or experiences of them. As part of this course, I invite ongoing dialogue about territory acknowledgements and how UVic students, faculty, and staff are building good relations and fostering reciprocity.

Description

This course "surveys approaches to play and games around the world, from board and tabletop games to video games, alternate reality games and even sports." For more information, see "MDIA360 - Game Studies" in UVic's academic calendar.

The course counts toward UVic's new Media Studies certificate, which requires 10.5 units of coursework.

Goals

I designed this course for you to:

1. Build a vocabulary for playing and understanding games. This means you'll learn a lexicon for conversing with game critics and designers.
2. Practice techniques for documenting play. This means you'll record it, write about it, and reflect on it.
3. Account for context and culture in the analysis of games across the globe. This means we'll consider how, where, when, by whom, for whom, and under what assumptions games are made, played, and circulated.
4. Respond directly to classroom activities and lectures about games. This means you'll complete three worksheets and one report to demonstrate what you're learning.
5. Produce a multimodal argument about a game or Game Studies topic of your choice. This means you'll use video, audio, and/or images plus text to craft a public-facing essay by the end of term.

I will assume you've no experience in Games Studies, and I will focus on critical approaches to games as they apply to content creation. Please note that this is not a Game History, History of Gaming, Game Preservation, or Game Design course.

About Me

My name is Jentery Sayers (he / him). I skip a syllable and say it in two: "JEN-tree." You can call me Jentery, Doctor Sayers, or Professor Sayers.

I spend 14.63% of the day looking for my glasses, and I enjoy writing about games and media. I grew up in Richmond, Virginia and went to Virginia Commonwealth University for my BA and BS degrees. Then I moved to Seattle, where I received an MA and PhD in English from the University of Washington. I now teach courses for UVic Media Studies and English, and I direct the Media Studies program. I like to play TTRPGs, drums, guitar, and soccer in my spare time. I also do my best to maintain a portfolio of my work.

You can email me at jentery@uvic.ca or find me in Clearihue D331. My office hours are Monday and Thursday, 12-1pm, in CLE D331. I respond to emails Monday through Friday, 9am - 5pm, excluding holidays.

Games and Materials

You do *not* need to purchase a textbook for this course, but you will need access to a computer, the internet (including Brightspace), a camera, and a microphone.

Games: Time permitting, we'll study the following games (if only briefly) this term. I will encourage (but not require) you to purchase at least two of them: one or more for your genre report and one or more for your final essay (see "Assignments" below for details).

- *Satisfactory* by Coffee Stain Studios, who are based in Sweden.
- *Sweave* by Leti Games, who are based in Ghana.
- *Baldur's Gate 3* by Larian Studios, who are based in Belgium.
- *Celeste* by Maddy Makes Games / Extremely OK Games, who are based in Canada.
- *1000xRESIST* by sunset visitor 斜陽過客, who are based in Canada.
- *UFO 50*, by Derek Yu, Jon Perry, Eirik Suhrke, Paul Hubans, Ojiro Fumoto, and Tyriq Plummer, who are scattered across the US, Norway, and Japan.
- *Helldivers 2* by Arrowhead Studios, who are based in Sweden.
- *Lasers & Feelings* by One Seven Design / John Harper, who are based in the US.
- *Inscryption* by Daniel Mullins, who is based in Canada.
- *Slay the Spire* by MegaCrit, who are based in the US.
- *Lorelai and the Laser Eyes* by Simogo, who are based in Sweden.
- *Suika Game* by Aladdin X, who are based in Japan.
- *Neva* by Nomada Studio, who are based in Spain.
- *Arctic Eggs* by The Water Museum, who are from the internet.
- *Teardown* by Tuxedo Labs, who are based in Sweden.
- *The Nothings Suite* by Pippin Barr, who is based in Canada.
- *Animal Well* by Shared Memory, who are based in the US.
- *Signalis* by rose-engine, who are based in Germany.
- *Pacific Drive* by Ironwood Studios, who are based in the US.
- *Venba* by Visai Games, who are based in Canada.
- *Nine Sols* by Red Candle Games, who are based in Taiwan.
- *Powerwash Simulator* by FuturLab, who are based in the UK.
- *Home Safety Hotline* by Night Signal Entertainment, who are based in the US.
- *Umurangi Generation* by Origame Digital, who are based in Australia.
- *Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy* by Bennett Foddy, who is based in the US.
- *Disco Elysium* by Aleksander Rostov, Robert Kurvitz, and ZA/UM, who are scattered across the UK, Estonia, and other parts of Europe.
- *Cuphead* by StudioMDHR, who are based in Canada.
- *Outer Wilds* by Mobius Digital, who are based in the US.
- Soulslike games, including Soulsborne games by FromSoftware, who are based in Japan.
- *Fledgling Manor* by In Secret Places, who are based in the US (I think).

- *Under a Star Called Sun* by Cecile Richard, who is based in Australia.
- *Indika* by Odd-Meter, who are based in Spain and Kazakhstan.
- *Stardew Valley* by ConcernedApe, who is based in the US.
- *Trombone Champ* by Holy Wow, who are based in New York.
- *Street Fighter* by Capcom, which is based in Japan.
- *Pandemic Legacy* by Z-Man Games, which is based in the US.
- *Fog of Love* by Jacob Jaskov et al., who are based in Denmark.
- *Mario Party* by Nintendo, which is based in Japan.
- *Overcooked* by Ghost Town Games, who are based in England.

Content Warnings: I'll include content warnings for materials, including games, before I share or screen them in class.

Class Notebook: I will create a class notebook for this course and update it throughout the term. It'll be available online, and I recommend checking it at least twice a week (after each class session). I will use it to document what we're doing in class, ask you questions, and point you to secondary sources, including publications in the field of Game Studies. The URL for the notebook is available in Brightspace.

Recordings: I do not plan to record our class sessions; however, you are welcome to record audio for private access, study, and note-taking.

Brightspace: I'll use the course Brightspace to:

- Circulate a class announcement each week (usually on Thursdays) to help you plan for what's next,
- Share clips of games and links to the class notebook,
- Point you to games and other resources available online,
- Accept all your assignments (please don't submit anything to me by email), and
- Comment on those assignments and mark them.

Assignments

There are no exams, quizzes, or participation marks in this course.

I am asking you to complete five assignments this term.

1. **Worksheet 1**: 20% of your final grade (due by Thursday, January 30th, at 1pm).
2. **Worksheet 2**: 20% of your final grade (due by Monday, February 24th, at 1pm).
3. **Worksheet 3**: 20% of your final grade (due by Monday, March 17th, at 1pm).
4. **Genre Report**: 15% of your final grade (due by Monday, March 31st, at 1pm).
5. **Essay**: 25% of your final grade (due by Thursday, April 17th, at 1pm).

Worksheets: The worksheets will ask you to apply what you're learning in class through a combination of media (audio, images, text, and video). They will also scaffold your learning toward the final essay (see below). A worksheet will never contain more than three

prompts, and I will encourage you to use class time to draft your brief responses to them. I will circulate each worksheet well before it's due, and I'll review each prompt in class to ensure it's clear.

Genre Report: Near the end of term, you will work in a small group (4-6 people) to cover a genre of games that does not appear explicitly in the schedule below. Together, you will describe the genre as an activity and provide examples of its significance. I will encourage (but not require) your group to meet up (F2F or online) to play games in this genre. The prompt for this assignment will include a mechanism to help ensure equal contributions from group members.

Final Essay: For your final assignment, you will produce an essay about a game or Game Studies topic of your choice. You are welcome to select a game that does not appear on the above list (see "Games and Materials"), but please run it by me before commencing your research. You'll have two options: 1) a video essay of 10-14 minutes or 2) a written essay of 1250-2000 words plus images and/or audio. The worksheets in this course will scaffold your learning toward this essay (that way, you don't start it at the last minute), and I'll ask you to compose the essay with a public audience in mind (e.g., viewers of a specific channel or readers of a particular games website or magazine). I will also ask you to write at least some of the essay from the first-person perspective and include documentation of the game you played and how you played it.

Brightspace: Please use Brightspace to submit all your work this term. You do not need to purchase any software to use Brightspace, but you will need your UVic NetLink ID, access to the internet, and a computer. I cannot accept assignments by email.

Feedback: I will provide brief and focused feedback on worksheets according to grading rubrics. Please email me or schedule an appointment (F2F or Zoom) to discuss my feedback. Again, I respond to emails Monday through Friday, 9am - 5pm, excluding holidays. Thanks in advance for your patience.

Workload

The most important thing to know about this course is that *I'll opt for care in every instance.* If the workload becomes too much or we're juggling more than we should, then I'll cut material. I planned for the maximum in advance, under the assumption we won't get to everything. And that's totally fine.

I suggest dedicating *4 to 6 hours* to MDIA 360 each week in addition to our weekly meetings on Monday and Thursday. Of course, 4 to 6 hours per week is only a guideline. You may find that you need more or less time depending on the activity, your preferences, and your familiarity with the materials and work involved.

I will give you some time during class to draft responses to the worksheets; however, you will need more time (between classes) to develop and refine your work, hence the recommended 4 to 6 hours per week.

Schedule

Here's the schedule for the term. It's subject to change. In fact, I'm 99.08% certain it will change. I will use a Brightspace announcement to notify you of those changes, and I will never use schedule changes to increase your workload (e.g., add an assignment or reading).

All meetings are scheduled to occur in person (face-to-face). If you miss a class session or you simply want a review, then I recommend checking the class notebook for that session and touching base with a peer to see if they're willing to share their notes or audio recordings.

M 6 January: Hello!

We'll introduce ourselves, and I'll provide an overview of the course.

Please check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you're on the waitlist for this course and have questions or concerns.

Th 9 January: Work and Play

We'll discuss the privilege and necessity of play alongside topics such as esports, grinding, goldfarming, the magic circle, wasting time, and making your own fun.

We'll draw material from games that are familiar to you. Feel free to share!

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any trouble accessing course material in Brightspace.

M 13 January: Sandboxes and Casual Games

We'll study sandboxes and casual games. Would you call them toys? In what ways do they appeal to play?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Satisfactory* by Coffee Stain Studios, who are based in Sweden.
2. *Sweave* by Leti Games, who are based in Ghana.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Th 16 January: Stories and Mechanics

We'll discuss ludology and narratology alongside topics such as rules, character customization, controls, gameplay loops, functional and expressive verbs, diegetic and nondiegetic game elements, and evoked, enacted, embedded, and emergent narratives.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Baldur's Gate 3* by Larian Studios, who are based in Belgium.

2. *Celeste* by Maddy Makes Games / Extremely OK Games, who are based in Canada.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Sunday, January 19th is the last day for a 100% reduction of tuition fees for standard second-term courses.

M 20 January: Genre and Experimentation

We'll discuss activity theories of genre alongside topics such as intended audiences, player expectations, uptake, gamification, and AAA, indie, and experimental games.

We'll draw material from:

1. *1000xRESIST* by sunset visitor 斜陽過客, who are based in Canada.
2. *UFO 50*, by Derek Yu, Jon Perry, Eirik Suhrke, Paul Hubans, Ojiro Fumoto, and Tyriq Plummer, who are scattered across the US, Norway, and Japan.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about Worksheet 1.

Th 23 January: Culture and Content

We'll discuss gaming communities and content creation alongside topics such as monetization, intersectionality, fandom, toxicity, harassment, gamergate, completionism, and accessibility.

We'll also review all the games we've studied thus far in terms of their culture and the content people (including fans) make about them.

We'll draw material from *Helldivers 2* by Arrowhead Studios, who are based in Sweden.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

M 27 January: RPGs

We'll study RPGs. How do they resemble theatre? How do they stage performance and storytelling?

We'll play *Lasers & Feelings* by John Harper / One Seven Design, who are based in the US.

See my remarks in the class notebook after this session.

Th 30 January: Deckbuilders and Puzzles

We'll study deckbuilding and puzzle games. How are they decoded? How do they invite replay?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Inscryption* by Daniel Mullins, who is based in Canada.

2. *Slay the Spire* by MegaCrit, who are based in the US.
3. *Lorelai and the Laser Eyes* by Simogo, who are based in Sweden.
4. *Suika Game* by Aladdin X, who are based in Japan.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Worksheet 1 is due today by 1pm, and tomorrow (January 31st) is the last day to pay second-term fees without penalty.

M 3 February: Physics and Affect

We'll discuss the feelings and physics of games alongside topics such as perspective, cameras, worldbuilding, dimensions (2D and 3D), engines, vibes, mood, and realism.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Neva* by Nomada Studio, who are based in Spain.
2. *Teardown* by Tuxedo Labs, who are based in Sweden.
3. *Arctic Eggs* by The Water Museum, who are from the internet.
4. *The Nothings Suite* by Pippin Barr, who is based in Canada.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Th 6 February: Platformers and Survival

We'll study platform and survival games. How do they approach movement and obstacles? How do they treat death?

1. *Animal Well* by Shared Memory, who are based in the US.
2. *Signalis* by rose-engine, who are based in Germany.
3. *Pacific Drive* by Ironwood Studios, who are based in the US.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Sunday, February 9th, is the last day for a 50% reduction of tuition fees for standard courses.

M 10 February: Audio and Visuals

We'll attend to the particulars of audio and visuals in game design, including adaptive audio, animation, soundscapes, voice-over, music, colour, light, and 2D and 3D graphics.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Venba* by Visai Games, who are based in Canada.
2. *Nine Sols* by Red Candle Games, who are based in Taiwan.
3. Games (including *Pacific Drive*, *Animal Well*, *Baldur's Gate 3*, and *Neva*) we've studied and played thus far.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about Worksheet 2.

Th 13 February: Sims

We'll study simulation games. How do they appeal to realism or immersion? How do they resemble or feel like work?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Powerwash Simulator* by FuturLab, who are based in the UK.
2. *Home Safety Hotline* by Night Signal Entertainment, who are based in the US.
3. *Umurangi Generation* by Origame Digital, who are based in Australia.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

17-21 February: Reading Break

No class.

M 24 February: Agency and Structure

We'll discuss agency on and off the rails alongside topics such as player motivations, power fantasies, "choices matter," level design, game states, side quests, machine and player behaviours, and horizons of intent and action.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Getting Over It with Bennett Foddy* by Bennett Foddy, who is based in the US.
2. *Disco Elysium* by Aleksander Rostov, Robert Kurvitz, and ZA/UM, who are scattered across the UK, Estonia, and other parts of Europe.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Worksheet 2 is due today by 1pm.

Th 27 February: Visiting Speaker

We'll be joined by Dr. Kishonna L. Gray (Professor of Racial Justice and Technology in the School of Information at the University of Michigan), who is UVic's 2024-25 Lansdowne Visiting Speaker in Media Studies.

Be sure to check the class notebook after Dr. Gray's talk.

Tomorrow (February 28th) is the last day to withdraw from second-term courses without penalty of failure.

M 3 March: Difficulty and Tutorialization

We'll discuss how games challenge, teach, and train us alongside topics such as uncertainty, predictability, randomization, progression, satisfaction, assist modes, time to completion, and trial and error.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Cuphead* by StudioMDHR, who are based in Canada.
2. *Outer Wilds* by Mobius Digital, who are based in the US.
3. Soulslike games, including Soulsborne games by FromSoftware, who are based in Japan.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about Worksheet 3.

Th 6 March: Adventure and Fiction

We'll study adventure games and interactive fiction, including visual novels and narrative games. How do they encourage exploration without relying on action?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Fledgling Manor* by In Secret Places, who are based in the US (I think).
2. *Under a Star Called Sun* by Cecile Richard, who is based in Australia.
3. *Indika* by Odd-Meter, who are based in Spain and Kazakhstan.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the Genre Report.

M 10 March: Management and Rhythm

We'll discuss the dynamics between management and rhythm alongside topics such as pacing, items, inventories, immersion, and user interfaces.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Stardew Valley* by ConcernedApe, who is based in the US.
2. *Trombone Champ* by Holy Wow, who are based in New York.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Th 13 March: Metagaming and Cheating

We'll discuss types of metagaming and how they regulate, control, and subvert play.

We'll draw material from:

1. *Street Fighter* by Capcom, which is based in Japan.
2. Games we've played and studied thus far.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the Final Essay.

M 17 March: Strategy

We'll study strategy games. Are they always about war?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Pandemic Legacy* by Z-Man Games, which is based in the US.
2. *Fog of Love* by Jacob Jaskov et al., who are based in Denmark.
3. Games (including *UFO 50*) we've studied and played thus far.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

Worksheet 3 is due today by 1pm.

Th 20 March: Party Games

We'll study party games. How do they foreground the social elements of play? The chaotic aspects?

We'll draw material from:

1. *Mario Party* by Nintendo, which is based in Japan.
2. *Overcooked* by Ghost Town Games, who are based in England.

Be sure to check the class notebook after this session.

M 24 March: Games Media and Criticism

We will dedicate this session to the state of games media and criticism today, including topics such as video essays, podcasting, magazines, streaming, and peer-reviewed journals.

As always, don't forget about the class notebook.

Th 27 March: Writing Workshop

We'll conduct a writing workshop during this session. You'll share draft material and provide feedback. I'll leave some tips in the class notebook.

M 31 March: The Genre Report

You'll present your genre reports today! Details about the format are coming soon.

The Genre Report is due today.

Th 3 April: Last Session!

We'll wrap up the class with a review and complete course experience surveys.

Th 17 April: Submit the Essay

Please submit your essay by 1pm today. I hope you've a wonderful summer break!

Resources

Here are some resources for the course and your studies at UVic.

UVic Learn Anywhere

UVic Learn Anywhere is where you can find articles, tip sheets, and video tutorials to develop the learning skills you need for academic success at UVic.

UVic Libraries

Everyone at the University of Victoria Libraries is committed to the success of UVic's students and faculty. The library's foundational role in acquiring and preserving research resources is critical in the complex digital environment of 21st-century scholarship. Their expert staff are increasingly working within disciplines, across disciplines, and beyond traditional boundaries, as they navigate this exciting landscape with students, faculty, and researchers. They welcome the wider public into their physical spaces and actively seek partnerships with local and regional organizations to support and enhance the rich arts, culture, and learning opportunities in UVic's communities.

Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE)

The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement serves as a hub for cultural, academic, and community connections. Whether you are a student seeking guidance, a community looking to collaborate, or an individual interested in learning more about Indigenous initiatives at UVic, IACE is here to support you on your journey. They work closely with Indigenous students, staff, faculty, Elders, and community to create opportunities for meaningful engagement, ensuring that Indigenous perspectives and voices are woven into the fabric of their work.

Centre for Academic Communication (CAC)

The Centre for Academic Communication offers online and in-person one-on-one tutorials, workshops, and more. As a priority, they actively coach students on academic integrity, including preventing accidental plagiarism. Their free services are available to all UVic students. They are here to support students with time management and planning for a successful semester. They also coach students on reading, writing, speaking, understanding academic expectations, and other aspects of academic communication. They can support you in creating academic posters, blogposts, PowerPoint slides, and e-portfolios.

Community-Engaged Learning (CEL)

Community-Engaged Learning is a rewarding way to apply your studies to real-life projects in the community. This type of learning is a partnership between UVic students, faculty, campus partners, and the community beyond campus. It's a way to gain meaningful hands-on experience that supports and honours the community and strengthens your academic experience.

Academic Concessions and Accommodations

If your academic courses are affected by illness, accident, or family affliction, you may wish to request an academic concession. Are you a student with a learning disability, ADHD, mental health issue, or long-term recurring physical or sensory disability? Do you have chronic health issues? If you do, UVic provides academic accommodations to address barriers to your education.

Student Wellness

Their team of practitioners offers a variety of services to support students' mental, physical, and spiritual health. You can make a same-day or pre-booked appointment with a counsellor, nurse, physician, or spiritual care provider.

Ombudsperson

The ombuds office is an independent, impartial, and confidential resource for undergraduate and graduate students and other members of the University of Victoria community. The ombudsperson helps resolve student problems or disputes fairly.

Student Groups

The following student groups may be relevant to your life as a student here at UVic:

- The Native Students Union,
- The Students of Colour Collective,
- The Society for Students with a Disability (SSD),
- The Gender Empowerment Centre (GEM), and
- UVSS Pride Collective.

Policies

Here are the policies for this course alongside several UVic policies. Please let me know if anything is unclear, ignorant, or mistaken. I'll correct it.

Media Studies Certificate

This course counts toward UVic's Media Studies certificate.

Communications and Office Hours

The best way to communicate with me is by email (jentery@uvic.ca) or during office hours, which are Monday and Thursday, 12-1pm, in CLE D331. I can also make an appointment to meet with you in person or via Zoom.

I respond to email between 9am and 5pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Assessment and Feedback

One worksheet, the genre report, and the essay are required to pass this course. Failure to complete these three assignments will result in a failing N grade (calculated as a 0 for your GPA).

I will use UVic's official grading system to produce rubrics to assess your work. I will not post marks publicly or outside my office, and I do not use plagiarism or AI detection software.

All assignments should be submitted via Brightspace. I cannot accept them via email.

I will use Brightspace to provide feedback on your work. If you ever want additional feedback, then feel free to ask me. I can provide it in person, via Zoom, or by email.

Throughout the term, I'll request feedback from you on how the course is going. I'll also ask you to complete course experience surveys at the end of the term.

Late Submissions and Extensions

I've a 24-hour grace period (no questions asked, no email required, and no penalties) for every worksheet in this course. A late penalty of five points per business day will apply after 24 hours. Weekends and holidays do not count as business days.

I will not accept worksheets more than two weeks after they are due and cannot accept the essay after April 23rd at 5pm.

Please email me if you need an extension for any assignment, and we can discuss possibilities on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance and Participation

There is no participation or attendance mark in this course; however, every class session will rely heavily on discussion and interaction.

I will assume you are attending each class meeting. If you are unable to attend a particular meeting, then please email me in advance and coordinate with a peer to get notes and the like from the session(s) you'll miss.

You do not need to provide me with documentation for an absence.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

I aim to create an inclusive learning environment that attends to difference and honours each of you, including your experiences at the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, power, and class. I want to be a resource for you, and I continue to learn about EDI. If something is said in class (by anyone, including me) that makes you feel uncomfortable, then don't hesitate to talk with me. If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your university records, then let me know, and I'll correct the documents provided to me. If your performance in the class is being impeded by your experiences outside of class, then keep me posted, and we'll

make adjustments. I also welcome any suggestions to improve the quality of the course, and I will make available mechanisms for anonymous feedback since you may prefer them.

Information for All Students

This page contains a list of important UVic policies.

Creating a Respectful, Inclusive, and Productive Learning Environment

UVic is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and productive learning environment across all modalities of learning and teaching. All members of the university community have the right to experience, and the responsibility to help create, such an environment. In any course, the instructor has the primary responsibility for creating a respectful, inclusive and productive learning environment in a manner consistent with other university policies and regulations. Instructors or students who have unresolved questions or concerns about a particular learning environment should bring them to the Chair or Director of the unit concerned (or Dean, in the case of undepartmentalized faculties).

Accessibility

UVic commits to addressing and removing barriers that hinder full and equal participation of people with disabilities. UVic's Accessibility Plan includes guiding principles and existing resources. It summarizes consultations, barriers, and priorities for the next three years to address those barriers.

Equity Action Plan

The Equity Action Plan's goals provide UVic with strategic direction to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion, and to create the conditions in which everyone feels a sense of belonging: as connected and respected parts of the university community.

Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response

UVic's Sexualized Violence Resource Office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR) offers information on how to start the conversation about consent, where to get support on and off campus, and the options available under UVic's Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy.

Accommodation of Religious Observance

UVic recognizes its obligation to make reasonable accommodation for students whose observance of holy days might conflict with the academic requirements of a course or program. Students are permitted to absent themselves from classes, seminars, or workshops for the purposes of religious or spiritual observance. In the case of compulsory classes or course events, students will normally be required to provide reasonable notice to their instructors of their intended absence from the class or event for reasons of religious or spiritual observance. In consultation with the student, the instructor will determine an appropriate means of accommodation. The instructor may choose to reschedule classes or

provide individual assistance. Where a student's participation in a class event is subject to grading, every reasonable effort will be made to allow the student to make up for the missed class through alternative assignments or in subsequent classes. Students who require a rescheduled examination must give reasonable notice to their instructors. If a final exam cannot be rescheduled within the regular exam period, students may request an academic concession.

Student Conduct

UVic is committed to promoting a safe, respectful and supportive learning, living, and working environment. As part of the university community, each student is responsible for their personal conduct as it affects the university community, university activities, and the university's property. The Office of Student Life works directly with the university community to review and help resolve non-academic student conduct concerns. They administer the university's Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy and serve as a supportive resource to the university community.

Non-Academic Student Conduct

UVic's Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300) clarifies what non-academic student misconduct is; details how the university responds to non-academic misconduct allegations; outlines the review and investigation processes; describes possible outcomes and ensures that when misconduct is found to have occurred, any sanctions that are applied are fair and consistent; and, explains how to appeal a decision that has been made under the policy.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. It is expected that students, faculty members, and staff at the University of Victoria, as members of an intellectual community, will adhere to these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Any action that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification, or deception, undermines the intention and worth of scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community. This policy is designed to ensure that the university's standards are upheld in a fair and transparent fashion.

Students are responsible for the entire content and form of their work. Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit students from developing their academic skills through the exchange of ideas and the utilization of resources available at the university to support learning (e.g., The Centre for Academic Communication). Students who are in doubt as to what constitutes a violation of academic integrity in a particular instance should consult their course instructor.

Copyright

All course materials, including my slides, handouts, and lectures, are made available for educational purposes and the exclusive use of students in this course. The material is

protected under copyright law even if it is not marked as such, and the syllabus is licensed CC BY-NC 4.0. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires written permission, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300).

Generative AI

UVic encourages innovative teaching practices and supports instructors who may like to adopt new pedagogical approaches and learning technologies. Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is a form of machine learning with the capabilities to produce text, images, video, music, code, etc. UVic does not have a general ban on the use of GAITs, including ChatGPT. Instead, UVic embraces the appropriate and ethical use of GAITs in learning and teaching. The university recognizes potential concerns associated with the use of GAITs, including potential biases in the algorithms and the possibility that GenAI might be used in ways that violate academic integrity principles and intellectual property rights. Faculty and instructors are best positioned to make decisions about the use of GAITs in their courses. UVic offers guidelines to support faculty, instructors, and students in the responsible, effective, and ethical use of artificial intelligence tools. These guidelines also support principles of academic integrity and help to prepare students for a future where the use of GAITs continues to evolve.

Basic Needs

I want you to thrive in this course and everywhere else. Please let me know as early as possible if you have any concerns or if you require any supports to succeed. I'll do my best to help. If, for instance, you need to cover gaps in care, then please don't hesitate to bring your children to class meetings. Babies who are nursing are always welcome, as I do not want you to choose between feeding your child and continuing your education.

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