🏫 **Media Studies 360 at UVic**
🎓 Intended for 40 undergraduate students
📅 Spring 2026 at the University of Victoria
📇 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, 11:45am-12:45pm, in CLE D331

Contents:

Territory Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm / Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

In this video, Yux'wey'lupton, Dr. Clarence "Butch" Dick of the Songhees Nation, welcomes visitors to the traditional lands of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm / Esquimalt) and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples in Lək̓ʷəŋən and English. The updated acknowledgement was developed through UVic's continued dialogue and relationships with the local Nations, in recognition of their presence and governance structure in these territories.

The video supports the UVic community to engage more meaningfully with the territorial acknowledgement. It is intended to inspire reflection, learning and accountability—while acknowledging that this is one step in a much broader journey of ʔetalnəw̓əɫ / ÁTOL,NEUEL / Respecting the rights of one another and being in right relationship with all things. It is one part of our shared, ongoing commitment to understanding the responsibilities we hold as guests in these territories and to act in ways that uphold our relationships with the original stewards of these lands.

Description

Echoing UVic's academic calendar, this course is about "games as both culture and material. Surveys approaches to play and games around the world, from board and tabletop games to video games, alternate reality games and even sports. Emphasis on experiential learning in UVic Libraries and local communities."

The course counts toward UVic's new Media Studies certificate, which requires only 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, designers, and developers.
2. Practice techniques for documenting play. This means you'll record gameplay, describe 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 fourteen exit tickets and two worksheets 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 final project, supported by a research prospectus, by the end of term.

Please note that this is not a Game History, History of Gaming, Game Preservation, or Game Design course.

I will assume you've no experience in Games Studies, and I will focus on approaches to games as they apply to games media and criticism. I won't assume you've much, if any, experience playing video, tabletop, card, or board games or that you (care to) identify as a gamer.

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 8.16% 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 relocated to Victoria the summer I received my PhD,

and I currently direct UVic's Media Studies program. I like to play TTRPGs, drums, guitar, and basketball 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, 11:45am-12:45pm, or by appointment, in CLE D331. I respond to emails Monday through Friday, 9am - 5pm, excluding holidays.

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: We'll play and watch games throughout the term, and I will invite you to choose your own game(s) to study as part of your final project. The game(s) you choose to study may be video, tabletop, card, board, virtual reality, augmented reality, or alternate reality games.

Here are some games I'll likely engage during lectures and class discussion (this list is obviously not exhaustive):

- *1000xRESIST*
- *Arctic Eggs*
- *Citizen Sleeper*
- *Dark Souls*
- *Despelote*
- *Dungeons & Dragons*
- *Fledgling Manor*
- *Fog of Love*
- *Hollow Knight*
- *Home Safety Hotline*
- *Honey Heist*
- *Inscryption*
- *Lasers & Feelings*
- *The Roottrees Are Dead*
- *South of Midnight*
- *Stardew Valley*
- *Tetris*
- *Trombone Champ*
- *Ultimate Werewolf*
- *Umurangi Generation*
- *Under a Star Called Sun*
- *Undertale*
- *WarioWare*

Content warnings: I'll include content warnings for games before I play 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 share aspects of my lectures, document what we're doing in class, ask you questions, and point you to primary and secondary sources, including games and Game Studies publications. The URL for the notebook is available in Brightspace. Please do not share it with anyone who is not in this course.

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 to help you plan for what's next,
- Share clips of games and links to the class notebook,
- Point you to games, collections, journal articles, books, video essays, and other resources available online,
- Accept all of your assignments except the exit tickets (please don't submit anything to me by email), and
- Mark those assignments and provide feedback on them.

Assignments

There are no exams, quizzes, or presentations in this course.

I am asking you to complete five assignments this term.

- **Exit tickets**: 10% of your final grade (fourteen of them, each due by the end of class on the day prompted)
- **Worksheet 1**: 20% of your final grade (due by Monday, January 26th at 1pm)
- **Worksheet 2**: 20% of your final grade (due by Monday, February 23rd at 1pm)
- **Research prospectus** 20% of your final grade (due by Monday, March 16th at 1pm)
- **Final project**: 30% of your final grade (due by Thursday, April 16th at 1pm)

Exit tickets: At the end of twenty-one different class sessions, I will ask you to use a notecard (which I will provide) to respond to two prompts. These prompts will ask you to share what you're learning from class sessions, what you hope to learn, and what questions you have. You will submit your responses (on the notecard) to me by the end of class. You should submit a total of fourteen exit tickets (meaning you don't need to submit one at the end of every class), and I will track your submissions in Brightspace. See the schedule below for sessions *without* an exit ticket.

Worksheets: The worksheets will ask you to apply what you're learning in class through a combination of media (audio, images, text, and video), and I will encourage you to use class time to take notes and draft your 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. The worksheets and their grading rubrics are posted online (see links above). You should download them,

complete them in your word processor of choice (e.g., Word, Docs, Pages), and submit them via Brightspace.

Research prospectus: The prospectus will prompt you to prepare a foundation for your final project. This way, you begin working on the project well before it's due. You will identify your topic and research question, share your critical approach to them, describe the structure of your project, explain your project's contribution to Game Studies, and support your inquiry with a brief, annotated bibliography.

Final project: You will have three choices for your final project: 1) a video essay (10-16 minutes, including at least five minutes of your own gameplay footage), 2) a written essay (1500-2500 words plus at least five minutes of your own gameplay footage), or 3) a digital exhibit (1250-2250 words plus metadata and at least five minutes of your own gameplay footage). The exit tickets, worksheets, and research prospectus will scaffold your learning toward the final project, which I'll ask you to approach 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 encourage you to write from a first-person perspective. Note that each option involves the use of your own gameplay footage.

Brightspace: Please use Brightspace to submit your worksheets, research prospectus, and final project. 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 (including exit tickets) by email.

Feedback: I will provide brief and focused feedback on assignments according to their grading rubrics. Please email me or schedule an appointment (F2F or Zoom) to discuss the 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 *3 to 6 hours* to MDIA 360 each week in addition to our weekly meetings on Monday and Thursday. Of course, 3 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.

Schedule

Here's the schedule for the term. It's subject to change. In fact, I'm 99.12% certain it will change. I will use a Brightspace announcement to notify you at least two weeks in advance

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). I will assume you are attending each class meeting. If you are unable to attend, 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 are welcome to record audio of the following sessions for private access, study, and note-taking.

M Jan. 5: Hello!

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

After class, please read the course outline, including the schedule and policies.

no exit ticket today

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

MODULE 1: Culture (four sessions)

This module begins on Thursday, January 8th and ends on Monday, January 19th.

Th Jan. 8: Situating Play in Games

How do we know we're playing? Who is free to play? How is play shaped by culture and socialization? By the construction of boundaries? By norms about what *counts* as work or leisure?

Activity: What happens when 39 people play *Ultimate Werewolf*?

After class, please read "Situating Play in Games" in the class notebook.

Exit tickets begin today and end on Monday, March 30th.

Please email me if you have trouble accessing the class notebook or questions about the exit tickets.

M Jan. 12: Keep Playing: From Motivation to Exploitation

What motivates people to play and keep playing? How are learning and other activities gamified to encourage productivity? To track behaviours? To invite competition? Is gamification always a gimmick? When is it exploitative?

Activity: Becoming a "Craft Master" in *Stardew Valley*, hitting your Apple Watch move goal 500 times, and other achievements in life

After class, please read "Keep Playing: From Motivation and Exploitation" in the class notebook.

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

Th Jan. 15: Ownership, Rights, and EDI in Game Industries

Who owns the games you play? How do games become global commodities? What rights do game designers and developers have as workers? And what's the state of equity, diversity, and inclusion in game industries in and beyond Canada?

Activity: Learning from reports by the Canada Media Fund, Entertainment Software Association of Canada, International Game Developers Association, RPG-IATSE, and UNESCO

After class, please read "Ownership, Rights, and EDI in Game Industries" in the class notebook.

January 18th is the last day for a 100% reduction of tuition fees for standard second-term courses.

M Jan. 19: Joy and Toxicity in Gaming Communities

How do habits and values draw people to gaming communities? How do some gaming communities centre joy and protect their members, while others normalize harassment and police gaming content? To what effects on games and game design?

Activities: Can strategies for cooperative and interdependent play help reduce toxicity? What do histories of arcades teach us?

After class, please read "Joy and Toxicity in Gaming Communities" in the class notebook.

Today is the last session covered by Worksheet 1, which is due by Monday, January 26th at 1pm.

MODULE 2: Play and Metagaming (seven sessions)

This module begins on Thursday, January 22nd and ends on Thursday, February 12th.

Th Jan. 22: Satisfaction, Socializing, and the Immersion Problem

How do different types of games foster different kinds of socialization and satisfaction? How do games frame perception and engagement? How do they make mediated experiences feel immediate, and how do they create friction?

Activities: Getting lost in *1000xRESIST*. Sleuthing in *The Roottrees Are Dead*.

After class, please read "Satisfaction, Socializing, and the Immersion Problem" in the class notebook.

M Jan. 26: Agency and Affect

Where or how do we locate agency in the relational dynamics of gaming? How do games treat our bodies like interfaces? How do they stage interaction between players? With

environments and NPCs? And how do we act, think, and feel our way through them? Matters of control, entitlement, and vulnerability are important here.

Activities: *Umurangi Generation* prompts us to photograph red skies, get paid for it, and reflect on player, character, and system agency. Elsewhere, we start the day with a dice roll in *Citizen Sleeper*.

After class, please read "Agency and Affect" in the class notebook.

Worksheet 1 is due today by 1pm.

Th Jan. 29: Playstyles

How do people express themselves verbally and nonverbally through games? How are games entwined with skill and performance discourse? With identity? How does style articulate with timing and repetition?

Activities: Learning from charades and PVP games. Writing love and breakup letters to games you've played.

After class, please read "Playstyles" in the class notebook.

January 31st is the last day to pay second-term fees without penalty.

M Feb. 2: Roleplay

How do we pretend to believe? How does roleplay transform us? How does it experiment with new social relations and ways to communicate? How do RPGs become storytelling engines? What makes a compelling NPC in roleplay?

Activity: Let's play *Lasers & Feelings* or *Honey Heist*.

After class, please read "Roleplay" in the class notebook.

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

Th Feb. 5: Theorycrafting and Cheating

How and why do people optimize play, and to what effects on games and gaming cultures? What does it mean to "play it right" or "play it wrong"? Can you even cheat at video games?

Activities: Think statistically about a game. Recall a moment when you felt cheated during a game.

After class, please read "Theorycrafting and Cheating" in the class notebook.

February 8th is the last day for a 50% reduction of tuition fees for standard courses.

M Feb. 9: House Rules and Making Your Own Fun

How do contexts like the kitchen table alter the rules and boundaries of play? What circumstances or motivations spark the need or desire to modify a game? To change the

parameters or impose challenges on ourselves? What's "out of bounds"? Party games, fangames, and speedruns are informative here.

Activity: Let's watch a Frame Fatales speedrun and share our favourite fangames.

After class, please read "House Rules and Making Your Own Fun" in the class notebook.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the feedback (global or individual) I provided on Worksheet 1.

Th Feb. 12: Content Creation and Backseat Gaming

How and why do people turn play into content? Why might they watch or chat about games instead of playing them? How do these phenomena shape game design and social relationships?

Activity: Let's listen to *Friends at the Table*.

After class, please read "Content Creation and Backseat Gaming" in the class notebook.

Today is the last session covered by Worksheet 2, which is due by Monday, February 23rd at 1pm.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the research prospectus, which is due by Monday, March 16th at 1pm.

M Feb. 16 and Th. Feb 19: Reading Break

We wish you a rejuvenating reading break!

M Feb. 23: Christine H. Tran (guest speaker)

Christine H. Tran (they/she) is a tenure-track Assistant Professor at the Alberta University of the Arts, where they hold an appointment in the School of Critical and Creative Studies. With a current focus on the creator economy, Christine's research examines how video platforms—from Twitch.tv to TikTok and Zoom—orient user experiences of leisure, labour, and love in the home. Funded by the SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, their PhD dissertation in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information uses digital ethnography to document the cultural influence of Twitch.tv–Amazon's world-leading game streaming platform–on the future of "Work from Home" for marginalized groups in the cultural industries. The title of their talk is "Artificial Fun in Real Time."

After class, please read "Artificial Fun in Real Time" in the class notebook.

Worksheet 2 is due today by 1pm.

MODULE 3: Values and Design (nine sessions)

This module begins on Thursday, February 26th and ends on Monday, March 30th.

Th Feb. 26: Modes and Genres

How are game genres more like activities than labels, and how are those activities configured and prompted through game design?

Activity: Let's use a read- and think-aloud protocol while playing *Fledgling Manor*.

After class, please read "Modes and Genres" in the class notebook.

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

M Mar. 2: Accessibility, Trust, and Tutorialization

How do we learn to play games, and how do games teach us? How do we grow to trust them, and how do they assist us along the way? We'll engage examples of player-agnostic, player-antagonistic, and player-centric design.

Activity: Conduct a fly-on-the-wall observation of a game and its settings using the Elito method.

After class, please read "Accessibility, Trust, and Tutorialization" in the class notebook.

Th Mar. 5: Worldbuilding and Worldviews

How is a world more than the setting of a game? What do gameworlds make possible? What do they value? How and when do we encounter their edges?

Activity: Conduct a design charrette to prototype a gameworld or reimagine an existing one.

After class, please read "Worldbuilding and Worldviews" in the class notebook.

M Mar. 9: Art, Vibes, and Perspectives

What happens when we focus on the art, haptics, and audiovisual effects of games? How are games designed to be heard, seen, felt, and experienced, and how do they construct or frame perspectives?

Activity: Create an asset list for a published game based on 30 seconds of gameplay footage.

After class, please read "Art, Vibes, and Perspectives" in the class notebook.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the feedback (global or individual) I provided on Worksheet 2.

Th Mar. 12: Habits and Mechanics

What are the expressive and functional verbs of games, and how are they embodied? How (and under what assumptions) do they become entangled with the discourse of "addictive" loops?

Activities: Let's flip some *Arctic Eggs*. We might try a game of crokinole and a run of *Hades*, too.

After class, please read "Habits and Mechanics" in the class notebook.

M Mar. 16: Narrative, Pacing, and Progression

When and why do choices matter in a game's narrative? How and to what extent is progression gated, and to what degree can the rhythm of activities and events be designed? How do player stories differ from game narratives, and how do game environments evoke, trigger, and stage storytelling?

Activities: Let's read *Under a Star Called Sun* and discuss memorable beats, arcs, and player stories from other games.

After class, please read "Narrative, Pacing, and Progression" in the class notebook.

The research prospectus is due today by 1pm.

Th Mar. 19: Simulation and Management

How do simulations train players? Test systems? Entertain the absurd? Revel in the mundane? How do games establish high-fidelity connections between in-game (diegetic) experiences and everyday (non-diegetic) life?

Activities: You field calls to the *Home Safety Hotline* and notice something's distinctly wrong. You begin *Fog of Love* only to realize it's a resource management game?

After class, please read "Simulation and Management" in the class notebook.

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the final project.

M Mar. 23: Conferences

I will hold optional student conferences. Please contact me to schedule an appointment if you would like to discuss your work in this course. I'm happy to chat!

no exit ticket today

Th Mar. 26: Puzzles and Easter Eggs

Is every game a puzzle game? Or, is every game meant to be "solved" in some way? How do players respond variously to secrets and hidden information? What's the relationship between puzzles and problems?

Activity: Let's survey types of puzzles in games and discuss what they do well and when they go wrong.

After class, please read "Puzzles and Easter Eggs" in the class notebook.

M Mar. 30, Pt. I: Guest Speaker

Details regarding our guest speaker are coming soon.

M Mar. 30, Pt. II: Localization and Preservation

I'll give a brief lecture on current research in two areas: a) game preservation and b) game localization or "culturalization."

After class, please read "Localization and Preservation" in the class notebook.

Th Apr. 2: Last Session!

We'll wrap up the class, discuss what you learned, and reflect on what worked and what could be improved.

no exit ticket today

Please email me if you have any questions or concerns about the feedback (global or individual) I provided on the research prospectus.

UVic is closed on April 3rd and 6th, and the exam period begins on April 7th.

Th Apr. 16: Final Project

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

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.

Academic Skills Centre

The Academic Skills Centre 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 advocacy 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.

Office Hours and Contacting Me

The best way to communicate with me is by email (jentery@uvic.ca) or during office hours, which are Monday and Thursday, 11:45am-12:45pm 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

You must submit the final project and both worksheets 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 except for the exit tickets should be submitted via Brightspace. I cannot accept the worksheets, research prospectus, exit tickets, or final project via email. Each exit ticket is due by the end of class (2:20pm) on the day it's prompted.

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 learning 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 assignment (except the exit tickets) 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 or the research prospectus more than two weeks after they are due and cannot accept the final project after Monday, April 20th at 1pm.

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 GenAI tools, including ChatGPT. Instead, UVic embraces the appropriate and ethical use of GenAI in learning and teaching. The university recognizes potential concerns associated with the use of GenAI, 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 GenAI 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 GenAI 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 welcome, as I do not want you to choose between feeding your child and continuing your education.

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