# USC

**COURSE OUTLINE**

## SGD200 Experimental Game Design

**Course Coordinator:** Justin Carter (jcarter3@usc.edu.au)  **School:** School of Business and Creative Industries

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### 2021 | Semester 1

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| USC Sunshine Coast | **ON CAMPUS** | Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online. |
| Online | **ONLINE 1** | You can do this course without coming onto campus. |

*Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.*

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## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

This course examines the theoretical concepts of game design through the lens of experimental practice. In response to a theme, you will work individually to develop unique ways of interacting with gamespaces by rapidly prototyping a series of game ideas. Through focused experimentation, you will create, apply and critique game designs, gameplay and game technology in a variety of contexts and genres.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

| ACTIVITY | HOURS | BEGINNING WEEK | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ON CAMPUS** | | | |
| **Lecture** – 1 hour online lecture content for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 1hr | Week 1 | 12 times |
| **Laboratory** – On campus laboratory for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 2hrs | Week 2 | 12 times |
| **ONLINE 1** | | | |
| **Online** – 3 hours online content for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 3hrs | Week 1 | 12 times |

### 1.3. Course Topics

History and approaches to experimental game design practice
Game design frameworks and game elements
Minimalism and game design
Gameplay space and advanced mechanics
Game balance
Dynamic Difficulty Adjustment (DDA) and Flow theory
Virtual Sensation – Designing Game Feel
Embodiment and Tangible media

## 2. What level is this course?

200 Level (Developing)

Building on and expanding the scope of introductory knowledge and skills, developing breadth or depth and applying knowledge and skills in a new context. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally, undertaken in the second or third full-time year of an undergraduate programs.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

## 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

| COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES | GRADUATE QUALITIES |
|---|---|
| On successful completion of this course, you should be able to... | Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming... |
| **1** Demonstrate knowledge of theories relating to game design and production, game mechanics, and game elements, and how they integrate to form game experiences. | Knowledgeable |
| **2** Critically analyse games through given frameworks and design theories. | Creative and critical thinker |
| **3** Design and create prototypes of experimental games based on theories of design and game design principles. | Engaged |

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the USC Glossary of terms for definitions of "pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites".

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

knowledge and skills (where applicable) Beginner knowledge of game design theory and practices.

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

By the end of week 4, students will give a 5-minute presentation on a game that they have designed and learned something from that links their play experiences to learning theories. This will provide an opportunity to showcase students' current knowledge and receive feedback from both the tutor and their peers.

## 6.3. Assessment tasks

| DELIVERY MODE | TASK NO. | ASSESSMENT PRODUCT | INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP | WEIGHTING % | WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH? | WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT? | WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| All | 1 | Artefact - Creative | Individual | 30% | Four game prototypes | Refer to Format | Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check |
| All | 2 | Activity Participation | Individual | 30% | 20 minutes - (4 sessions x 5 minutes) | Throughout teaching period (refer to Format) | Online Self and Peer Assessment |
| All | 3 | Journal | Individual | 40% | 2500 words | Week 13 | Online Blog, Wiki or Journal |

### All - Assessment Task 1: Game Prototypes

| GOAL: | Develop a range of prototypes that explore and test a variety of game design principles and mechanics. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PRODUCT: | Artefact - Creative | | |
| FORMAT: | Students are required to design and develop a series of prototypes in short development cycles and in response to keywords and themes. Prototypes will be submitted for critique in weeks 4, 7, 11 and 13 during the scheduled critique sessions. Feedback for each prototype will be provided during critique sessions, with a final grade awarded for the submission of all four prototypes in week 13. | | |
| CRITERIA: | **No.** | | **Learning Outcome assessed** |
| | 1 | Demonstrates an understanding of the key concepts covered in the unit lectures, tutorials and workshops. | 1 3 |
| | 2 | The prototypes provide an appropriate and creative response to the keywords and themes of the design brief. | 1 3 |
| | 3 | Game mechanics are unique and demonstrate practical knowledge of game design theory and frameworks. | 2 3 |

### All - Assessment Task 2: Critique Sessions

| GOAL: | Critique your own work and present an analysis of the prototyping experience. Explain the chosen design process and production methodologies when presenting results. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PRODUCT: | Activity Participation | | |
| FORMAT: | Participate and effectively contribute to critique sessions. Critique sessions occur in weeks 4, 7, 11 and 13. Students are required to actively participate in the critique of their own and others work demonstrating an understanding of game design concepts and theories discussed in lectures. Each session will be worth 7.5% (total of 30%) of the total course marks. | | |
| CRITERIA: | **No.** | | **Learning Outcome assessed** |
| | 1 | Critically discusses linkages between existing games, game design theories and game-play mechanics. | 1 3 |
| | 2 | Analyses game design and game mechanics while expressing clearly reasoned viewpoints supported with credible evidence. | 1 2 3 |
| | 3 | Uses a range of information resources for a research topic. Critically analyse effectiveness, accuracy and rigour of information sources. | 1 2 3 |

**All - Assessment Task 3:** Reflective Journal

| | |
|---|---|
| **GOAL:** | A personalised account of own experience during design challenges. Incorporating reflection of experimental techniques and methodologies as well as the deconstruction and evaluation of other works. |
| **PRODUCT:** | Journal |
| **FORMAT:** | Design journal reflecting on a series of prototypes, presentation, and game designs.  During the development of each prototype and after each critique you will submit a changelog/blog entry via Pebblepad, that summarizes your design goals and reflects on existing game design influences and the feedback provided during the critique sessions. |

| **CRITERIA:** | **No.** | | **Learning Outcome assessed** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | Demonstrates the application of theory to game design and development. | ① ② ③ |
| | 2 | Reflects on learning during practice, clearly articulates decision making and results | ① ② ③ |
| | 3 | Conveys ideas clearly and fluently, in spoken, written and game prototype form. | ① ② ③ |

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

| REQUIRED? | AUTHOR | YEAR | TITLE | PUBLISHER |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recommended | Jesse Schell | 2008 | The Art of Game Design | CRC Press |

### 8.2. Specific requirements

This course requires some commercial software or hardware which is provided at USC campuses for student use. If you elect to do this course online, you may either; attend a campus at which it is available, discuss alternative open source solutions with your course coordinator that would enable you to demonstrate the learning outcomes, or if you prefer you may acquire this software and / or hardware at your own expense.

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online induction training for students, and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation.  It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline.  This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person.  You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign.  This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

## 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct.

## 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate: - 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. - 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. - A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

## 10.4. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the Learning Advisers web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

## 10.5. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to Student Hub, email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

## 10.6. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, , injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, AccessAbility Services can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to Student Hub, email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.7. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website: http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

## 10.8. General Enquiries

**In person:**

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890
**Email:** studentcentral@usc.edu.au