University of Gdańsk

Subject card

Subject name and code	Ethical and Social Issues in Historical Games, PG_00190248						
Field of study	Historical game design						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2026		Academic year of realisation of subject	2027/2028			
Education level	Bachelor's studies		Subject group	Obligatory subject group in the field of study Subject group related to scientific research in the field of study			
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery	at the university			
Year of study	2		Language of instruction	English			
Semester of study	4		ECTS credits	2.0			
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form	credit			
Conducting unit	Centrum Gier Historycznych i Kulturowych (Center for Histori -> Faculty of History -> Rector						
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr Marta Tymińska				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30		0.0		20.0	50
Subject objectives	The aim is to familiarize students with the ethical dilemmas surrounding historical video games and to raise awareness of their social impact.						

Learning outcomes

Course outcome	Subject outcome	Method of verification
[PGHL3_K03] Engages in the co-organisation of activities for the benefit of the social environment in the field of education and the promotion of historical and cultural heritage of the region, Poland, and Europe		
[PGHL3_K02] Demonstrates awareness of professional ethical principles governing the work of historians and cultural practitioners, showing understanding of the values and attitudes of people in different historical periods and contexts		
[PGHL3_W01] Explains significant relationships between selected historical, cultural, and social facts, objects, and phenomena, using theories and methods of the humanities		
[PGHL3_U04] Participates in discussions on history, cultural heritage, and the creative industries, presenting and evaluating different opinions and viewpoints	Can effectively engage in spoken and written discussions on ethical dilemmas related to the design of historical games, demonstrating critical awareness of their societal and cultural implications.	[SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion [SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report
[PGHL3_W09] Characterizes selected dilemmas of the contemporary world in the context of relationships between the past and the present, including the popularization of historical knowledge through games and other media	Understands key ethical challenges of contemporary society and can relate historical contexts to present-day issues in the ethical design of historical games.	[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion [SW3] text preparation/written work

Subject contents

1. Introduction to Ethics in Games
2. Psychology of Games and Play
3. Social Impact of Games
4. Ethical Design of Historical Games
5. Ethical Dilemmas of Game Designers
6. Dark Design Patterns, Deep Play and Dark Play
7. Accessible, Inclusive, and Sustainable Game Design
8. Work on the Final Project
9. Alternative Design Paths

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Assessment methods and criteria

Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
assessment of group work	50.0%	40.0%
assessment of the final project	50.0%	40.0%
Evaluation of student engagement during classes	30.0%	20.0%

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Recommended reading</td><td>Basic literature</td><td>Apperley, T. H., & Clemens, J. (2016). The Biopolitics of Gaming. Avatar-Player Self-Reflexivity in Assassins Creed II. W M. Kapell (Red.), The play versus story divide in game studies: Critical essays (s. 110124). McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
Bogost, I. (2007). Persuasive games: The expressive power of videogames. MIT Press.
Chapman, A. (2016). Digital games as history: How videogames represent the past and offer access to historical practice. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
Cover, R. (2016). Digital identities: Creating and communicating the online self. Academic Press/Elsevier.
Isbister, K. (2017). How games move us: Emotion by design (First MIT Press paperback edition). The MIT Press.
Kapell, M. (Red.). (2016). The play versus story divide in game studies: Critical essays. McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
Kowert, R., & Quandt, T. (Red.). (2016). The video game debate: Unravelling the physical, social, and psychological effects of digital games. Routeldge.
Kowert, R., & Quandt, T. (Red.). (2021). The video game debate 2: Revisiting the physical, social, and psychological effects of video games . Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
Madigan, J. (2019). Getting gamers: The psychology of video games and their impact on the people who play them. http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9781442240001
Mäyrä, F. (2008). An Introduction to Game Studies. Games in Culture. SAGE Publications, Inc.
McGonigal, J. (with OverDrive, I.). (2011). Reality Is Broken. Penguin Group US. http://api.overdrive.com/v1/collections/v1L2BaQAAAJcBAAA1M/products/44205f90-d66a-4b2b-8483-8a0cdb6a8822
Mochocki, M. (2021). Role-play as a heritage practice: Historical larp, tabletop RPG and reenactment. Routledge.
Nakamura, L. (2000). Race in cyberspace (B. E. Kolko & G. B. Rodman, Red.). Routledge.
Schechner, R. (2006). Performatyka: Wstęp (T. Kubikowski & M. Rochowski, Tłum.). Ośrodek Badań Twórczości Jerzego Grotowskiego i Poszukiwań Teatralno-Kulturowych.
Schrier, K., & Gibson, D. (Red.). (2010). Ethics and game design: Teaching values through play. Information Science Reference.
Sicart, M. (2009). The ethics of computer games. MIT Press.
Sicart, M. (2014). Play matters. MIT Press.
Švelch, J. (2010). The Good, The Bad, and The Player: The Challenges to Moral Engagement in Single-Player Avatar-Based Video Games. W K. Schrier & D. Gibson (Red.), Ethics and Game Design: Teaching Values through Play. Informatlon Science Reference.
Švelch, J., & Krobová, T. (2016). Historicizing video game series through fan art discourses. Transformative Works and Cultures, 22. https://doi.org/10.3983/twc.2016.0786
Waszkiewicz, A., & Tymińska, M. (2024). Cozy Games and Resistance Through Care. Replay. The Polish Journal of Game Studies, 11(1), 716. https://doi.org/10.18778/2391-8551.11.01
Woods, S. (2007). Playing with an Other: Ethics in the Magic Circle. W M. Eskelinen, G. Frasca, & R. Koskimaa (Red.), CyberText Yearbook 2007: Ludology (s. 126). University of Jyväskylä.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Supplementary literature</td><td>Aboujaoude, E. (2012). Virtually You: The Dangerous Powers of the E-Personality (1st ed). W. W. Norton & Company, Incorporated.</td></tr>
<tr><td>eResources addresses</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed</td><td colspan="2">Where does gaming addiction come from?

Cultural tensions reflected in historical games.

Social impact of games.

The human-avatar relationship.

Experiencing history and heritage in games as a culture-forming element.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Work placement</td><td colspan="2">Not applicable</td></tr>
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