**CMDI 1105.01 Creating Games**

Tue and Thu 10am-11:40am in Hyde 413

**  
Photo Credit: Cathie LeBlanc**

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**Course Description**

Much has been written about the possibility that games could become the defining objects of popular culture in the new century. In this course, we will use games as a medium through which we can express our creativity. We will study the principles of game design so we can use them to critique existing games as well as to guide the design of new games. Topics to be discussed include the structure of compelling games, the role of games in society, meaningful play in games, games as simulations, games as narratives, and the culture of gaming. Creating, play testing, critiquing and revising games of all kinds will be the primary activities of the course.

**Required Textbook**

The Open Education Resource (OER) for this class which can be found here: <https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu>

**Cathie LeBlanc**

**Contact Information**

Email: [cleblanc@plymouth.edu](mailto:cleblanc@plymouth.edu)

Phone: 603-535-3122

You can just drop by to see me at these times/places:

* Mon Wed 9am-11am in Speare 304C
* Tue Thu 8:30am-9:30am in Hyde 235B

But if you can’t make these times, let’s make an appointment. You can do that either by talking to me or by going directly to my calendar: <https://cathieleblanc.com/appointments/>

Here’s a list of possible things you might want to me about but you really can come to talk about anything that’s on your mind:

* A game you really like playing and why
* How you’re currently doing in the class
* Something I might be able to do to help with your participation in the class
* Material in the class that you don’t understand
* Feedback that I have given you on an assignment or project
* Developing a plan for completing an assignment or project
* Needing extended time on an assignment or project
* Something going on in your personal life that is making academic work challenging
* Something you’re anxious or worried about
* Issues with teammates on your project(s)
* An activity you would like to work on and get credit for in the class
* Choosing your classes for next semester
* Choosing a major or a minor

**General Course Goal:**

The major goal of this class is for each student to become *game literate*. Game designer Tracy Fullerton says, "Being game literate means understanding how games systems work, analyzing how they make meaning, and using your understanding to create your own game systems." (Fullerton, *Game Design Workshop*, p. 10)

**Specific Course Goals**

1. [Understand how game systems work](#work)
   1. Define “game”
   2. Define game building blocks
2. [Analyze how game systems make meaning](#meaning)
   1. Analyze mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics in specific games
   2. Critique mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics in specific games
3. [Use understanding to create games](#newgames)
   1. Develop player experience goal(s) for a new game design.
   2. Collaborate with a team to develop a new game using the iterative process of design, implement, play test, critique and revise.
   3. Plan a play-testing session to elicit constructive criticism from play testers regarding which game elements work and which need revision.

**General Education**

This course fulfills the *Creative Thought Direction* within the General Education Program.

People need to be creative in order to thrive in our complex and changing world. People need to understand the creative processes that lead to the generation of ideas and to engage in new interpretations of existing ideas. Creative thought courses encourage students to recognize beauty in its many manifestations and to become aware of formal elements of creative expression. These courses also encourage students to view themselves as creative beings, to appreciate creativity in others, and to regard creativity as an essential component in all areas of human endeavor. In these courses, students develop and value perseverance and a tolerance for ambiguity. Students are challenged to appreciate aesthetic forms, to use their imaginations, and to develop the skills and attitudes that allow creativity to flourish: independence and non-conformity, the ability to organize and reorganize information, and the confidence to think in new ways. Creative Thought courses emphasize the skills of critical thinking, reading, writing, listening and speaking, and working with information technology.

**General Education-related Goals**

* **Recognize the value of the creative process for developing ideas and investigating questions.**
* Use information technology to support the creative iterative game design process.
* Practice the Habits of Mind.

**Habits of Mind**

The Habits of Mind are a set of four usual ways of thinking or ways of engaging with the world. These Habits of Mind equip you to succeed in your life and work during and after college. As you take courses within the General Education program, you develop and practice the Habits of Mind in various meaningful contexts. Details of the Habits of Mind can be found in the Habits of Mind section of the OER for the *Tackling a Wicked Problem* course: <https://wicked-problem.press.plymouth.edu/part/habits-of-mind/>

You will have multiple opportunities to practice each of the Habits of Mind this semester.

**The Habits of Mind are:**

* Purposeful Communication
* Problem-Solving
* Integrated Perspective
* Self-Regulated Learning

**Showcase of Student Engagement**

At the end of the semester (on Wednesday, April 29), our class will participate in the Showcase of Student Engagement by organizing a pop-up play event for the Plymouth Community. You will work with your game development group to organize a play-testing session for your game. More details to come.

**Evaluation of Learning**

To help you practice the Self-Regulated Learning Habit of Mind, this class is designed to give you lots of choice about how your learning is evaluated. Early in the semester, you will develop a plan (a *strategy*, in gaming terms) for how to achieve the semester grade you want in the class. Creating your strategy is the only activity that you MUST engage in. You will make choices about which of the other activities you want to engage in.

As stated earlier in this syllabus, there are three major learning goals in the class. You will need to demonstrate that you have met all three goals by the end of the semester. You do this by engaging in activities related to each learning outcome which will allow you to earn stars. In order to pass the class, you must earn at least 2 stars in each learning outcome. There are 15 levels in the class and each star you earn represents a level. You will all start at Level 0 with 0 stars. In order to pass the class, you must achieve at least Level 12 (12 stars). If you achieve Level 15 (15 stars), you will receive an A in the class.

To be able to start earning stars (\*) for the semester, you must submit a strategy paper that articulates which activities you will engage in to achieve your desired grade at the end of the semester. That is, you cannot start earning stars until your strategy has been submitted and approved. You are allowed to change your strategy as the semester goes on. You simply submit a revised strategy paper for approval.

A: 15 stars

B: 14 stars

C: 13 stars

D: 12 stars

F: fewer than 12 stars

(Note that you must earn at least 2 stars in each learning outcome in order to pass the class)

You can earn stars by engaging in the activities on the next page for each learning outcome. Please see the individual activity description for more detail. If there is an activity that you would like to engage in that is not listed below, please come talk to me about it. We can work together to write up the activity so that everyone can engage in it in order to earn stars. Note that these new activities will become permanent options in future offerings of the course.

**Attendance**

Your regular attendance is critical to the success of this class. Most of the work that we do will be completed collaboratively in game design teams so when you miss class, you miss the interaction and work of your team. Please let me know when you must miss class, but more importantly, please let your teammates know when you must miss class.

**Workload**

The workload for this course will be manageable if you are organized and plan your time carefully. **Please don’t hesitate to talk with me if you are having trouble understanding the material or keeping up with the workload.**

**Submitting Work**

You will submit all of your work and receive feedback on it in Office 365 in a folder with your name on it here: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105>. I will provide my feedback on each document that you submit. Note that I cannot open Apple specific files (.pages, .keynote, etc.) so please be sure to submit files in Microsoft formats (.docx, .pptx, etc.) or platform independent formats (.pdf, .rtf, etc.) Come see me if you have questions about what this means or how to change the format of your files.

**Our Classroom Community**

We will all have a more valuable learning experience if we each contribute to building a classroom community. Our class discussions and activities will be much more interesting and productive if we work together to create an environment that is respectful, encouraging, supportive, and open to all ideas. We all will be expected to demonstrate respect for each other, through our body language, words, attentiveness, punctuality, and courtesy.

**Learning from Each Other**

We must all take responsibility for effective use of our time together. That means that each of us is responsible for being thoroughly prepared for class and actively engaged during class. Each individual person’s questions, comments, and contributions to class discussions and game design work supports their own and everyone else’s learning.

**Class Philosophy**

The analyses that we do this semester will require us to constantly strive to go below the surface. In fact, the central question of this semester is **WHY**. Why do you like a particular game? It is not enough to say that a game is fun. Why is the game is fun? Which game elements contribute to making the game fun? How does the game engage you as a player? Always strive to go deeper in your analyses.

**Other Policies You Should Know About**

**Class Participation**

There’s more to class participation than simply attending class. As an engaged class participant, you will be encouraged and expected to:

* Work collaboratively to figure out common challenges, solve problems, and acquire knowledge and insights;
* Exchange ideas respectfully;
* Communicate clearly and purposefully, verbally and in writing.

**Academic Integrity**

You are expected to abide by Plymouth State University's Academic Integrity policy. Presenting someone else’s work as your own or without attribution is a violation of the University’s Academic Integrity Policy, If you have questions and/or need clarification regarding academic integrity, please ask. The full policy can be found in the catalog: <https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/>

**Fair Grading Policy**

It is important that you understand the expectations for each assignment and the course. If you have any questions about the feedback on an assignment or your performance in the course, please talk with me. I encourage you to also review the [PSU Fair Grading Policy](https://campus.plymouth.edu/faculty-governance/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2017/05/PSU-Fair-Grading-Policy.pdf) in the catalog: <https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/>

**Accommodations to Support Learning**

Each of us learns in different ways, and everyone needs some kind of help in order to learn effectively.

The PSU policy for academic accommodations is: “Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should contact Campus Accessibility Services (CAS), located in Speare 209 (535-3300) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with CAS.”

If you have a Letter of Accommodation for this course from CAS, please provide me with that information privately so that we can review those accommodations together. **Even if you aren’t eligible for academic accommodations through the CAS, please share your ideas about what I can do to support your learning.** For example, you might find it more conducive to learning if you sit in a particular spot, or you may benefit from having more time before being asked to respond to a question.

**Basic Needs and Learning**

College can be challenging to navigate, and it will be hard for you to learn if your basic needs aren't met--if you aren't getting good nutrition, or enough sleep, if you feel lonely or isolated, or if you're anxious about your living situation, finances, safety, resources, or other issues. Fortunately, there are many people and resources on campus that can provide support. Your **academic advisor, your instructors, your Student Success Coach, the Residential Life staff, Student Account** **Services**, and many others can answer questions you have and help you find resources you need.

At **Frost House**, (located on School Street, you’ll find helpful resources in the Academic Student Advocate, CARE Program, Dean of Students, and Title IX programs. You can reach the Frost House staff at 603-535-2206.

The **Student Support Foundation** (SSF) provides short-term emergency financial assistance and long-term student support. The Student Support Foundation also sponsors a food pantry, located in Belknap Hall. To learn more about the SSF and access the food pantry, contact the SSF advisor, Casey Krafton, at [psu-ssf@plymouth.edu](mailto:psu-ssf@plymouth.edu).

**Health Services** is located at 12 Merrill Street (Mary Taylor House), across from Hyde Hall and next to Merrill Place Residence Hall. If you’re not feeling well or need a prescription filled, contact Health Services at 603-535-2350 to schedule an appointment.

Free counseling services are available from the **PSU Counseling Center**, located near Hyde Hall (on the side away from the Hyde Hall parking lot). The building looks like a house and has a sign in the front lawn that says “Plymouth State University Counseling Center.” It is open Mondays through Friday, 8am-4pm.

from 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM and Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. You can call the Center at 603-535-2461.

If you’re in crisis or in an emergency, you can access counseling services during the hours when the Counseling Center isn’t open.

If you're comfortable talking with me about your situation, please call, email, or stop by my office. I’ll do my best to help you find resources and support.

For more information about Academic, Financial, and Health and Safety Resources, check out the “Know and Utilize Your Resources” section of the PSU Student Success Guide which can be found at

[https://www.plymouth.edu/current-students/student-success/student-success-guide/student-success-guide/](https://www.plymouth.edu/current-students/student-success/student-success-guide/student-success-guide/  )

**Course Calendar (subject to change)**

Note the date of the Showcase of Student Engagement (April 29) during the last week of the semester. You must participate in this event. In addition, note the date of our final exam period (May 7). Please don’t schedule yourself to leave for the summer until after this date. You must also participate in the final exam activities.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| WEEK 1 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Jan 21 | Get excited about the class! | Survey: your learning needs  Intro to Creating Games   * *Go Fish* * What makes this a game? * Role of chance/randomness * Let’s make a new game by removing as much chance as possible from *Go Fish*   + Is it still a game?   Talk about using the syllabus to get ready for Thursday’s work of creating a strategy |
| Jan 23 | Read the syllabus  Watch the following video   * [A Case for Board Games](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VONeNVPaNs&list=PLB9B0CA00461BB187&index=154&t=0s)   Bring an electronic device to class. (Let me know if you don’t have one so we can work something out.) We will work on developing a strategy for the class during class. It is due at the beginning of the next class. | Why study board games? Discuss the video  Develop your strategy for reaching your goal in this class. **This is due at the beginning of our next class**. You cannot start to earn stars in the class until this is complete  More discussion about what makes a game   * Let’s make another new game   + 15 minute board game |
| WEEK 2 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Jan 28 | Read [Some Game Definitions](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/some-game-definitions/) (Chapter 1 of our online textbook)  Finish and submit your class **strategy** to your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | We will design an analysis tool using the game definitions  Playtest and analyze the 15 minute board games from last class   * Does your game meet every game definition? Why or why not? |
| Jan 30 | Read [Costikyan’s Definition](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/costikyans-definition/) (Chapter 2 of our online textbook) and [How to Improve a Game](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/how-to-improve-a-game/) (Chapter 18 of our online textbook)  If you are going to complete the **game application framework assignment for *Go Fish***, it is due today. Submit it in your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | Discuss Costikyan’s game framework and his ideas about how to improve a game  Use our analysis tool from last class to analyze the game *Three to Fifteen*. Does it meet Costikyan’s definition? Can we improve it using Costikyan’s ideas about how to improve a game? |
| WEEK 3 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Feb 4 | Read [Formal Elements](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/formal-elements-of-games/) (Chapter 3 of our online textbook) and [Critical Analysis of Games](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/critical-analysis-of-games/) (Chapter 5 of our online textbook) | Let’s play the card game *War* and analyze its formal elements. Does it meet Costikyan’s definition of a game? Why or why not?   * Can we improve *War*? What are some ideas about how we might do that? |
| Feb 6 | Read [Games as Systems](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/games-as-systems/) (Chapter 6 of our online textbook) and [Quality of Decision-Making](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/quality-of-decision-making/) (Chapter 7 of our online textbook)  If you are going to complete the **summary of Costikyan’s article**, it is due today. Submit it in your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | Think about the components of *War* as a system. Think about the quality of decision-making in *War*.    Can you use your understanding of these elements to improve *War*? |
| WEEK 4 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Feb 11 | Finalize the rules of your revised *War* game | Play-test our War games with other students in our class  What can you learn from them about your game? Can you improve it? |
| Feb 13 | Read [Mechanics, Dynamics, and Aesthetics](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/mechanics-dynamics-and-aesthetics/) (Chapter 8 of our online textbook)  If you are going to complete the **game application framework assignment for *War***, it is due today. Submit it in your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | Describe the Mechanics, Dynamics, and Aesthetics of your revised version of *War*.  Add rules to your revised *War* game so that it has at least one feedback loop. |
| WEEK 5 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Feb 18  (meet in the Hage Room in the HUB) | Finalize the rules of your revised *War* game | Play-test our *War* games with students in ER2155—Play & Learning in Early Childhood  What can you learn from them about your game? |
| Feb 20 | Prepare a **presentation** about your revised *War* game. See the assignment description. | Presentations about revised *War* games  Learn to play a children’s card game |
| WEEK 6 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Feb 25 | Read [What Makes a Game Fun?](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/what-makes-a-game-fun/) (Chapter 9 of our online textbook) | Discuss what makes a game fun, including the psychological concept of “flow”  Continue to play the children’s card game |
| Feb 27 | Read [Kinds of Fun](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/kinds-of-fun/) (Chapter 10 of our online textbook) and [Kinds of Players](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/kinds-of-players/) (Chapter 11 of our online textbook)  Start thinking about a new board game | Teach another group how to play your children’s card game  Is the card game fun? What kinds of fun does it include? What kinds of players might like it? |
| **WEEK 7** | | |
| **March 5 –** Six Week Grades Available Online | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Mar 3 | Read [What is Game Design?](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/what-is-game-design/) (Chapter 12 of our online textbook) and [The Design Process: Game Ideas](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/game-ideas/) (Chapter 13 of our online textbook)  If you are going to complete the **summary of the MDA framework article**, it is due today. Submit it in your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | Discuss the game design process and how to generate ideas for new games  Brainstorm a new board game |
| Mar 5 | Watch this video [15 Games in 15 Years](https://www.gdcvault.com/play/1014381/15-Games-in-15)  Prepare a **game pitch**—be sure to pay attention to the lessons in the video  If you are going to complete the **game application framework assignment for your children’s card game**, it is due today. Submit it in your folder in our classroom space: <http://bit.ly/CMDI1105> | Pitch your game to the class (this is a really easy way to earn a star!)  Game development teams for the rest of the semester will be created by the end of class today |
| WEEK 8 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Mar 10 | SPRING BREAK | NO CLASS |
| Mar 12 | SPRING BREAK | NO CLASS |
| WEEK 9 | | |
| **March 20 –** Fall 2020 Schedule of Classes Available Online | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Mar 17 | Read [Formal Abstract Design Tools](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/formal-abstract-design-tools/) (Chapter 14 of our online textbook) and [The Design Process: Prototyping](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/the-design-process-prototyping/) (Chapter 15 of our online textbook) | Get started on your new game |
| Mar 19 (meet in the Heritage Room of Samuel Reed Hall Hall) | Work with your group on your game | We will listen to proposals about play advocacy from students in ER2155—Play & Learning in Early Childhood |
| WEEK 10 | | |
| **March 23-April 3—**PSU Advising Weeks | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Mar 24 | Read [The Design Process: Play-testing](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/the-design-process-playtesting/) (Chapter 16 of our online textbook) | Work on whatever you need to in order to get your game ready for play-testing during the next class period |
| Mar 26 | Get ready to play-test your game with other students in the class  Your **first group analysis of your game** is due today | Play-testing session with other students in our class  Plan your next set of revisions to your game |
| WEEK 11 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Mar 31 | Read [The Design Process: More About Play-testing](https://creatinggames.press.plymouth.edu/chapter/the-design-process-more-about-playtesting/) (Chapter 17 of our online textbook) | Work on your game |
| Apr 2 | Work on your game | Work on whatever you need to in order to get your game ready for play-testing during the next class period |
| WEEK 12 | | |
| **April 6-April 10**—PSU Spring 2018 Registration | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Apr 7 | Get ready to play-test your game with other students in the class  Your **second group analysis of your game** is due today | Play-testing session with other students in our class  Plan your next set of revisions to your game |
| Apr 9 | Work on your game | Work on your game |
| WEEK 13 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Apr 14 | Work on your game | Work on your game |
| Apr 16 (meet in the Hage Room in the HUB) | Work on your game | We will engage in play activities designed by students in ER2155—Play & Learning in Early Childhood |
| WEEK 14 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Apr 21 (meet in the Heritage Room in Samuel Reed Hall Hall) | Finalize rules of your game  Your **third group analysis of your game** is due today | Play-test your game with students in ER2155—Play & Learning in Early Childhood |
| Apr 23 | Reflect on the play-testing session and make modifications to your game | Make modifications to your game as needed. Engage in informal play-testing. |
| WEEK 15 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Apr 28 | Make final modifications to your board game | Final preparations for the Showcase of Student Engagement in which members of the larger Plymouth Community play your game |
| Apr 29 | Showcase of Student Engagement 10am-3pm (NO OTHER CLASSES)  Everyone is expected to attend the entire showcase | |
| May 1 | Reflect on your experience at the Showcase of Student Engagement  Your game is due today | You will bring your game to my office (Hyde 235B) today between 10am and 11:40am. You may want to meet with your team to plan your final presentation but **we will not meet as a whole class today**. |
| WEEK 16 | | |
| **Date** | **To Do Before Class** | **In Class Activity** |
| Final Exam Period  Thursday, May 7, 8-10:30am | Prepare your team’s Final Game Presentation | Final Game Presentations |

**Short Descriptions of Course Activities**

**(reminder:** you must have an approved strategy before you can start to earn stars!**)**

Here is a short explanation of how stars can be earned. Note that the items highlighted in yellow are ones that we will spend time in class working on so you probably want to add them to your strategy since they will be easy to complete. Remember that you need at least 2 stars in each learning outcome to pass the class. A full explanation of each of the activities below can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EiBvjZzOO85AhDvY9W5SFQcBHm4IGZMxEIR1znkm-SlgRg?e=ifkenm).

If you think of an activity that you would like to engage in that doesn’t appear in this list, please come talk to me about it. We can write it up so that other students have the

**DUE 1/28: Strategy development (strategic plan)**

* This is the only assignment that you MUST complete this semester. I will not accept any of your other work unless and until you have completed a strategic plan. That is, you cannot earn stars until you hand in your strategic plan.
* Part of being successful in any game is planning a strategy for winning. There are many opportunities for earning stars in this class, none of which (except this one) are required. Actively choosing which activities you will participate in to earn the stars required for your target grade is an important part of this class. To develop your strategic plan, you should:
  + Identify your target grade in the class including the number of stars needed to earn that grade.
  + Pick the activities that you will engage in.
  + Submit the plan in writing by the due date.
* Your strategic plan will represent your contract for how you will achieve your desired goal in the class. If, for any reason, you need to change your strategy, you will need to meet with me to discuss the change. For example, if you plan write the summary of Costikyan’s article in your own words but you miss the deadline for the first draft, you will need to meet with me to discuss the change. There are no exceptions to this rule.
* You can see the detail of the Strategic Plan Assignment [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EbePSOSSkrlAgQ7L0aoh3scBNwA5EuFgiyZNuq_z8LoP1Q?e=0us5CU). (Strategic Plan Assignment)

**Demonstrate that you understand how games work**

(can earn up to 4 stars for this learning outcome)

unless otherwise noted, each activity can earn one star

1. **DUE 2/6:** Explanation in your own words of Costikyan’s framework (both his required elements and the elements that can be used to improve a game)
   1. The main game definition that we are using in this class was written by Greg Costikyan in the article “I Have No Words and I Must Design.” I have summarized parts of that article in our online textbook in Chapters 2 (Costikyan’s Definition) and 18 (How to Improve a Game). You may not find my summary as clear as it could be, so in this assignment you can summarize the article in your own words.
   2. More detail about the assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EWWiOoZ6ZdxHpwzaEGCNNHQBb9jLOIZjodhJeSv4EVfjHA?e=dawjCr). (Assignment Costikyan Summary)
2. **DUE 3/3:** Explanation in your own words of MDA framework and the other material in the original article
   1. LeBlanc, et al. proposed the MDA (Mechanics, Dynamics, and Aesthetics) Framework as a way of looking at games. I have summarized parts of that article in our online textbook in Chapters 8 (Mechanics, Dynamics, and Aesthetics) and 10 (Kinds of Fun). You may not find my summary as clear as it could be, so in this assignment you can summarize the article in your own words.
   2. More detail about the assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/Ee2QswbV_jtMmxCB3f9FChIBznk97FKB0ZQu4hOftkqd9Q?e=ZsLdnF). (Assignment MDA Summary)
3. Either of the above activities that are good enough to become part of the online text for the course can earn an additional star
4. **DUE 4/30:** Game definition summary paper in which you explain/summarize someone else’s (besides Costikyan and the MDA) game framework (can be repeated multiple times with different game frameworks)
   1. We are using two game definitions in this class, the one laid out in Costikyan’s article and MDA framework. There are dozens (perhaps hundreds) of game definitions that other researchers have developed. In this assignment, you will find another definition of a game (not one of the two that we’ve already discussed) and summarize it.
   2. You will earn 1 star on this assignment when the summary is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although you can choose not to publish it there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. This assignment is due on the final day of class (April 30). You are unlikely to receive a star on a first draft of this assignment. I strongly encourage you to hand it in early in the semester, get some feedback from me and then revise based on that feedback.
   4. More detail about the assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EXlYZ2gCRRJHjeGDF39gbR8BE2KkjCB_3-YH2NepiTr3UA?e=5TEVcO). (Assignment Game Definition Summary)
5. **DUE 4/30:** Game definition paper in which you come up with your own definition of a game based on an analysis of other game frameworks (note that this can earn up to 2 stars)
   1. We are using two game definitions in this class, the one laid out in Costikyan’s article and the MDA Framework. Both definitions contain two parts: a list of elements that every game must have in order to be considered a game and a list of elements that might be helpful to make a game more engaging to the player. These definitions may get you thinking about your own ideas about what makes a game. In this assignment, you will develop your own, original definition of a game.
   2. You will earn 2 stars on this assignment when the summary is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although you can choose not to publish it there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. This assignment is due on the final day of class (April 30). You are unlikely to receive any stars on a first draft of this assignment. I strongly encourage you to hand it in early in the semester, get some feedback from me and then revise based on that feedback.
   4. More detail about the assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EQsMPYE9CJdApWt3PUtVlO8BrXoncn337XFkXjUb5LrVLw?e=uSSxcc). (Assignment Original Game Definition)
6. **DUE 5 entries by 3/6 and 5 entries by 4/30:** Contributions to a new glossary for the online text used in the class
   1. There are a lot of terms and concepts to be learned in this course. A glossary of these terms and concepts will be built by the students in the class as the semester progresses. In order to earn a star for this assignment, you will need to write 10 entries good enough to be published in the online textbook.
   2. You must complete at least 5 definitions before Spring Break (by Mar 6) and the rest must be completed by the last day of class (April 30)
   3. You will earn 1 star when you have completed 10 definitions that are ready to be shared in the online textbook for the class. You can decide whether you would like them to be shared (with or without credit).
   4. More detail about this assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ES2nQHmdjuJBnG2YbyJALW0Bt8SsaNKjO-X-6vRqFm2YIg?e=PiBeVC). (Assignment Build a Glossary)

**Demonstrate that you can analyze how games make meaning**

(earn up to 4 stars for this learning outcome)

unless otherwise noted, each activity can earn one star

1. **DUE 1/30:** Game framework application paper on *Go Fish*
   1. Analyze *Go Fish* using the instructions in the assignment document.
   2. You will earn 1 star on this assignment when the paper is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although either you or I can decide that it should not be published there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. More detail about this assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ETVCekRAXW5BhOOwX7KguD0BS6BNnRjQoAVSUgiVkbxJTw?e=JKbCBT). (Assignment Go Fish Analysis)
2. **DUE 2/13:** Game framework application paper on *War*
   1. Analyze *War* using the instructions in the assignment document.
   2. You will earn 1 star on this assignment when the paper is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although either you or I can decide that it should not be published there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. More detail about this assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EayvVh_23JdPpHvsfHV8UvcBeYv1M3Id9H-McdiR92b4vw?e=mhPVfT) (Assignment War Analysis)
3. **DUE 3/5:** Game framework application paper on children’s card game
   1. In your group, analyze the children’s card game that you played using the instructions in the assignment document.
   2. You will earn 1 star on this assignment when the paper is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although either you or I can decide that it should not be published there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. More detail about this assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/EY1J_Ln0S3VDhlmKHYDGRgsBt-PCQP8rE-EOHiEQhC_Pkw?e=b1aFFJ) (Assignment Childrens Game Analysis)
4. Any of the 3 activities above that are good enough to become part of the online text for the course can earn an additional star
5. **DUE 3/6 (first paper) and 4/30 (any subsequent papers):** Game framework application paper on a game of your choice (can be repeated multiple times)
   1. In your group, analyze any game of your choice using the instructions in the assignment document.
   2. You will earn 1 star on this assignment when the paper is good enough to be published in the online textbook for the class (although either you or I can decide that it should not be published there). This will likely require at least one revision of your work.
   3. More detail about this assignment can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ERiAVBoMp9VIpzvmXPrc-VsBPm3_WUDGrOWNmwYlsqIS7A?e=MRkj2U) (Assignment Game of Choice Analysis)

**Demonstrate that you can use your understanding to create your own games**

(can earn up to 9 stars for this learning outcome)

unless otherwise noted, each activity can earn one star

1. **Due 2/20:** *War* Project presentation (must participate in play-testing sessions in addition to the presentation)
   1. In class, beginning on 2/4, you will work in groups of 2 or 3 to reimagine the card game *War*. You will play the game, analyze it for its weaknesses using Costikyan’s game framework, and then come up with a new game that addresses those weaknesses. To get credit for this particular activity, you will need to participate in the following 3 events:
   2. On Feb 11, play-test your new game in our class. Revise the game based on feedback.
   3. On Feb 18, play-test your revised game in the Hage Room in the HUB. Make note of the feedback from your play-testers.
   4. On Feb 20, present your game to our class.
   5. More detail about this project can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/Eb3oYlIMKGhEqLAe_qchhZMBs1d5L0l5vRWp2s1Aau7B2g?e=Q4i8pR). (Project War)
2. Game Design project (full participation in all stages of this project earns 7 stars with 1 star for each of the following activities)
   1. The second half of our class will be devoted to working in groups to create a new board game from scratch. There are many stages in the game design and development process.
      1. **DUE 3/5:** Game pitch
      2. **DUE 3/28:** 1st game analysis paper
      3. **DUE 4/7:** 2nd game analysis paper
      4. **DUE 4/21:** 3rd game analysis paper
      5. **DUE 4/29:** Play event during Showcase of Student Engagement
      6. **DUE 5/1:** Final board game
      7. **DUE 5/7:** Final game presentation—during final exam period—must participate in the final presentation in order to get any of the stars for the project
   2. More detail about this project can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ERSol7mvOahMkCNsXUxhPcwBlCUU8onKaIqLrfd7WOgQ_A?e=gU66UJ). (Project New Game)
3. **DUE 4/30:** Video game design based on your group’s original board game
   1. In this class, we focus on board and card games. Many video games are based on board games and vice versa. In this assignment, you will rethink the new board game that you and your group are creating as a video game.
   2. More detail about this project can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ESsDHn3mOGVBtHBrOyPnDFkBmbikrBA9QnV_FhSXFaJFtA?e=n1FIxu). (Project Video Game Adaptation)
4. **DUE 4/30:** 15 Minute Board Game Project
   1. Early in the semester, we will engage in an activity in which we spend 15 minutes creating a new board game. We will play these games and analyze them but we won’t spend any time actually developing them. For this project, you will continue to work on developing this board game and you will it at our play event at the Showcase of Student Engagement during the last week of classes. The game itself as well as a process paper are due on the last day of classes.
   2. More detail about this project can be found [here](https://plymouthstate-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/cleblanc_plymouth_edu/ESWntHSYHcxPrHptVdVaPrkBk9KH-qS_PlaijwJ4P-Chiw?e=5xjEBI). (Project 15 Minute Board Game)