This course is an interactive, research-based game studies seminar focused on examining the impact of online video game involvement on a user’s inter- and intrapersonal sociability. This will include a critical evaluation and discussion of empirical research that has found online video game engagement to both positively and negatively impact one’s social motivations, abilities, and relationships in offline contexts. Specifically, the seminar will focus on the relationships between online video game play and social ability (e.g., social skills) and social currency (e.g., social relationships, social support). This seminar will contain one introductory lecture and two broad overview lectures of the primary theories and constructs in this field of research. These will be followed by a series of student-led presentations focusing on specific aspects of the literature.

This seminar will be held exclusively in English.

This seminar will be for master’s level students who are interested in learning more about game studies research. Participants should be able to critically analyze research and contribute to group discussions.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Summarize key contemporary issues and debates about the influence of mediated socialization, and online video game involvement in particular, on an individuals’ social and psychological well-being
2. Analyze the positive and negative social, psychological, and relational impact of online video game involvement
3. Compare and critique the key theories that relate to the impact of mediated socialization and individuals’ social and psychological well-being
4. Synthesize research and discussions presented in class to generate predictions about the impact of mediated socialization at an individual level
5. Critically analyze empirical research for its theoretical and methodological strengths, limitations, and inconsistencies

Course Materials
To ensure active participation within the seminar, you will be required to read all of the course materials provided in the reader prior to the day where that specific topic will be discussed. For example, before the first day of the course, you should have read the readings associated with Lecture 1: “Introduction to Game Studies” and Lecture 2: “What is Social Ability?”.

Course Requirements
You will be required to give a research presentation focused on one of the primary topics of interest covered within the seminar. The presentation should not simply regurgitate the information from the readings but critically evaluate the material, provide insight, and demonstrate a full understanding of the topic. Each presentation should be around [TBD based upon number of participants] minutes. Following the presentations, there will be time set aside for Q&A. Each presenter must also serve as a “respondent” for one other presentation, and will be responsible for facilitating discussion amongst the rest of the class.

To demonstrate your understanding of the course material, you will also be required to submit a written essay based upon your presentation topic that incorporates the feedback given by the instructor and the class. While there are no minimum word limits on this assignment, it should be no longer than 10 pages, 1.5 spaced (including references). The structure of the essay and the references should follow standard APA guidelines. The essay should cover all of the primary theoretical and empirical points discussed within the presentation and should engage the material with by demonstrating critical and original thought.
Please note that the key readings for the course should be considered a starting point for your presentation and written assignment. You are strongly encouraged to move beyond this core material.

Lastly, prior to the first day of the course, each participant must complete the orientation assignment (Personal Game History) outlined at the end of the reading “An Introduction to Game Studies” (Mäyrä, 2008).

### Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 1: Thursday, June 26</th>
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<tr>
<td>16 – 18</td>
<td>Lecture 1: Introduction to Game Studies</td>
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<td>18 – 20</td>
<td>Lecture 2: What is Social Ability?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 2: Friday, June 27</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 – 12</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Social Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 – 14</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Psychosocial well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 – 16</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Social Learning I</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day 3: Saturday, June 28</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 – 14</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Social Learning II</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 – 16</td>
<td>Lecture 3: What is Social Currency?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>16 – 18</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Offline Friendships</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 – 20</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming &amp; Online Friendships</td>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>10 - 12</td>
<td>Presentations: Introduction to Online Video Game Addiction</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 – 14</td>
<td>Presentations: Online Gaming Addiction &amp; Social Outcomes</td>
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### List of Required Readings

Below are the key readings for the course organized by topic. You will be responsible for reading each of the selected readings prior to date at which the topic will be discussed within the seminar.

**Introduction to Game Studies**


*Note: Please complete the orientation assignment (Personal Game History) outlined at the end of this chapter prior to Thursday, June 26.*


**What is Social Ability?**

**Online Gaming & Social Learning**

...*General (theory)*


...*Leadership*


...*Pro-Social Behavior*


...*Miscellaneous Learning*


**Online Gaming & Psychosocial Well-Being**


**What is Social Currency?**


Domahidi, E., Kowert, R., & Quandt, T. (*under review*). Friends with benefits? Assessing the relationship between social skills, gaming-related friendships, and social capital among online game players.

**Gaming & Offline Friendships**


**Gaming & Online Friendships**


**Online Gaming & Social Skills**


**Online Video Game Addiction – What is it?**


Gaming Addiction & Social Outcomes
