UniSC

COURSE OUTLINE

SGD100 Introduction to Game Design

School: School of Business and Creative Industries

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay

BLENDED LEARNING — Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Online

ONLINE — You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the
teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This course examines the role of the game designer by introducing participants to the fundamental skills and knowledge associated with contemporary game design and production. You will gain an understanding of the critical concepts related to gameplay design through the analysis and creation of both tabletop and digital games. Designing games involves rapid prototyping, teamwork and an understanding of gameplay systems and mechanics. You will demonstrate knowledge of these skills through the design and production of games from initial concept to playable prototypes.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Interactive online learning activities.	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Scheduled face to face workshops.	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
ONLINE			
Learning materials – Interactive online learning activities.	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Scheduled online workshops (Recorded).	2hrs	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

- Player experience
- Introduction to game design theory
- Game target audiences
- Game impact
- Game design and development processes
- Playtesting

2.   What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3.   What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4.   How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	GRADUATE QUALITIES Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Analyse and describe games in terms of player experience, game design theory, impact, and target audience.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
2 Work as part of a team to iteratively design, develop, and present a game accounting for player experience, game design theory, impact, and target audience.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
3 Document the game design and development process in terms of player experience, game design theory, impact, and target audience.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker

5.   Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the UniSC 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)

You need to be computer literate, have experience in online research and have skills in using text editing and presentation software. Experience playing digital and non-digital games is beneficial but not necessary.

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

In weeks 1 - 5 students will work in groups on mini game design tasks. Students will produce a mini game design document and playtest reports similar to those produced for task 2. Students will receive formative feedback on these documents. The first document will be submitted by week 3 with feedback given by or during week 4.

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	Written Piece	Individual	30%	1200 words	Refer to Format	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Oral and Written Piece	Individual and Group	30%	2000 words, 5 - 10 minute video	Week 10	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Artefact - Creative, and Oral	Individual and Group	40%	20 minute presentation and demonstration	Exam Period	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check and in class

All - Assessment Task 1: Game Analysis

GOAL:	To analyse games in terms of game design theory presented in the course.	
PRODUCT:	Written Piece	
FORMAT:	A sample analysis will be provided in Canvas. The first analysis will be due in week 5. The remaining analyses will be due in week 8.	
CRITERIA:	**No.**	**Learning Outcome assessed**
	1 Makes connections between existing games, game design theory, and player experience.	1
	2 Communication: clearly conveying ideas; demonstrates understanding of format, text type, audience and basic conventions of the game design discipline.	1
	3 Reflects on learnings.	1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 2: Game Plan & Early Prototype

GOAL:	To create materials associated with the design and early development of an original game.
PRODUCT:	Oral and Written Piece
FORMAT:	Students will be required to submit game documentation and a short video about your group's game featuring an early prototype. Templates for documentation will be available on Canvas. A content list for the short video will be available on Canvas. Practice tasks will be done in weeks 1-5 with formative feedback given.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Creates game design documentation relating their original game to game design theory, player experience, impact, and target audience.	1 2 3
	2	Collaboration: identifies and defines roles and responsibilities for group; delivers output to the group that enables the completion of the game design documentation.	2
	3	Communication: clearly conveying ideas; demonstrates understanding of format, text type, audience and basic conventions of the game design discipline.	3
	4	Reflects on learnings.	2
	5	Solves game design problems using playtesting.	2 3

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration

All - Assessment Task 3: Finished game prototype and presentation

GOAL:	To create, demonstrate, and present a playable game prototype explaining links between the game's design, player experience, target audience and impact.
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Creative, and Oral
FORMAT:	Game prototype will include all materials required to play the game (e.g. game board, dice, cards, game rules) and a set of playtest reports. Prototype presentation and demonstration will occur during the first week of the exam block. Each student will contribute a reflection.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Collaboration: identifies and defines roles and responsibilities for group; delivers output to the group that enables the completion of the game prototype and presentation.	2
	2	Communication: clearly conveying ideas; demonstrates understanding of format, text type, audience and basic conventions of the game design discipline.	2
	3	Conveys links between the game prototype and its player experience, target audience, and impact.	1
	4	Reflects on learnings.	2
	5	Creates a playable game prototype.	2
	6	Solves game design problems using playtesting.	2 3

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration

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. 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 Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

> There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

You will be playing and reviewing digital games in your own time. Therefore, it is expected that you will be able to access gaming equipment as required. You will also be required to purchase your own equipment to make your own non-digital game prototypes. This could include board game components, cards or items required for creating prototypes of physical activity games. If studying online, you may also need to purchase boardgame simulation software.

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 Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:
(a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
(b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

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 submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

(a) One day: deduct 5%;

(b) Two days: deduct 10%;

(c) Three days: deduct 20%;

(d) Four days: deduct 40%;

(e) Five days: deduct 60%;

(f) Six days: deduct 80%;

(g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: 07 5430 1168 or using the SafeZone app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone 07 5456 3864 or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call 07 5430 1226 or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. 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.

10.6. 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.

10.7. 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.

10.8. 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
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The Student Charter sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10.General Enquiries

In person:

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

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au