



Computer Science (COMP) 282

Social Aspects of Games, Leisure, and Entertainment (Revision 1)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision

Delivery mode:

Individualized study online

Credits:

3

Area of study:

Science

Prerequisites:

None. Programming and web research experience desirable but not essential.

Precluded:

None

Challenge:

COMP 282 is not available for challenge.

Faculty:

[Faculty of Science and Technology](#)

Overview

COMP 282 is a course about why people play games, their social effects, and how to design them to achieve the social effects that you want. It covers a range of academic and practical issues that allow you to explore the nature of leisure, social gaming, the effects of games in society, and ways that they can be built and integrated into social systems.

There is a very strong focus throughout on reflection and creative individual engagement with the ideas and theories that inform the course rather than dry academic facts: this course is about developing your own knowledge and understanding in ways that you can use as part of the creative process of game design.

Outline

COMP 282 consists of four units:

Unit 1: Games, Leisure, and Society

This unit investigates the nature of leisure, its personal and social roles, and its relevance to you. It involves a fair bit of reading and writing, much of which is examining and reflecting on your own experience. Its purpose is to encourage you to think about the nature of leisure, especially games, in a broad social context and to begin to think about underlying patterns, reasons and ways of thinking about things that we do for fun, how they affect us, and how they affect others around us. There is a particular focus on the border between games and other leisure pursuits.

Unit 2: Social Gaming

This unit explores issues in games involving two or more people. Once again, it requires a combination of reading and thinking about what you have read in the context of your own experience, with a range of exercises that challenge you to examine ways that the design of games and the processes that surround them affect the ways that people participate in them.

Unit 3: Social Effects of Games

In this unit, you will research the ways game playing can affect individuals physically and psychologically, and the broader effects of such effects on society, whether or not the games are intended to be social. As in the other units, there is a personal element to this in which we ask you to think about your own experience, but this unit requires more self-guided research and academic analysis of literature on the subject.

Unit 4: Design and Application

This unit requires you to apply the lessons learned in previous units to the design of a social game or game-like system. We do not require you to actually build this game—the purpose is to integrate and synthesize what you have learned into a design, not to write a program. It introduces a framework for thinking about social design to help identify the ways that games can affect and be affected by the presence of people.



Learning outcomes

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- analyze games in terms of their social effects.
- analyze the effects of game-like features in non-game systems.
- classify and distinguish a variety of genres of social game.
- analyze the effects of game design on social behaviour.
- design game features to affect social interaction.
- assess the causes and effects of antisocial behaviour in games.
- independently research issues in social games as well as their effects.
- apply theories and models of social behaviour to the design of computer games.
- design a social game.


Evaluation

The evaluation of this course is based entirely on a portfolio of evidence to show that you have met the learning outcomes. Because you may find evidence of every outcome in each unit, there are no individual marks for specific unit work, but you are expected to provide a mapping of the work you have done to the learning outcomes at the end, and a grade will be awarded for each learning outcome. Additionally, evidence must be supplied of having attempted all required learning activities.

To **receive credit**  for COMP 282, you must achieve a course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)** .

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to

Materials

This course either does not have a course package or the textbooks are open-source material and available to students at no cost. This course has a [Course Administration and Technology Fee](#) , but students are not charged the Course Materials Fee.

The course materials for COMP 282 are all in electronic format housed in the Moodle learning management system and also shared in Athabasca's social networking site, the Landing.




Special Course Features

The course involves extensive use of social software components, such as wikis and blogs, and students are asked to share work with others. Social interaction is highly encouraged and, while not strictly essential to successful completion of the course, may be used as evidence of having met the course learning outcomes.

Engagement with external social sites and systems, including creating accounts and interacting on such systems, is strongly recommended and may be used to provide evidence of having met the learning outcomes. Students will have full freedom to choose which systems they engage with, and whether and how they engage with them. Students should nonetheless be aware that care is needed in their selection due to concerns of privacy and online safety.

COMP 282 can be completed at the student's workplace or home. COMP 282 is an elective course in all undergraduate programs offered by the School of Computing and Information Systems.

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) 
- › [Program planning](#) 
- › [Request assistance](#) 

› [Support services](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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