

IDH 3035: Is Esports for all?

Instructor: Evangelia Prevolis | Pronouns: she/her/hers | prevolie@fiu.edu | 305.348.6108
Spring 2023 | Thursdays 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm | Location: Graham Center 288

Course Overview

eSports is taking the world by storm. In 2022, it is reported that the eSports market will surpass \$1.5 billion in revenue and is also garnering the attention of professional sports leagues, olympic committees, colleges, and many local governments. eSports relevance continues to boom with the availability of virtual reality headsets and more global popularity for their most profitable games. As the growth of the industry increases so does a disparity of access and representation amongst specific populations. The equity debate, still present in college sports and professional sports, is one of great value when discussing eSports. In this course, students will not only learn about the esports industry, they will also engage in the play experience and get a deeper insight into the esports ecosystem. In the course, students will play esports games as gamers but will also look at the experience as designers and critical thinkers. Students will explore financial, legal & ethical, philosophical, marketing, and operational issues surrounding the eSports industry and answer two questions: 1) Is eSports for all? And 2) What can they do to ensure it is? Some thought provoking questions the course will prompt students to debate/consider are:

- Is diversity and representation limited by access?
- Which populations need more support?
- Is lack of regulation a contributing factor?
- Are there gaps or opportunities that should be considered as the industry evolves?
- Why do we find instances of sexual harassment and racism ever present in virtual environments?
- Who is to blame for the bias of an algorithm?

This course takes a look at current trends, controversies, global acquisitions and industry culture and introduces concepts regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.

Is eSports for all? A reflective prompt that will shape each course module to spark debate, innovation and strategy on how the eSports industry can be influenced.

Course Objectives

- Describe eSports at the competency level that allows interpretation and leveraging industry research and data insights
- Develop thoughtful arguments and critically evaluate the industry through a DEI lens
- Identify gaps, opportunities, and threats to develop basic strategies in marketing, data analysis, sponsorships, event experiences, communications, and media relations
- Identify key and interrelated experiences, both historically, currently, and projected as it pertains to specific populations related to eSports and gaming

- Examine current regulatory structure

Expectations of this Course

This is a hybrid course, which means most of the course work will be conducted online. Therefore, expectations for performance in a hybrid course are the same as a traditional course. In fact, hybrid courses require self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- Review the getting started page located in the course modules
- Review and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines
- Log into the course 3 times per week
- Respond to emails within 2 days
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

The instructor will:

- Log into the course 4 times a week
- Respond to discussion postings within 3 days of the deadlines
- Respond to emails within 48 hours
- Grade assignments within 5 days of the assignment deadline

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-send-a-message-to-a-user-in-a-course-in-the-Inbox-as-a/ta-p/502> to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

Learning Community Ground Rules

In this class, we will learn together as members of a learning community. To ensure our community develops, thrives, and sustains, the following ground rules should be observed.

As a member of our learning community, we agree to:

1. **Respect one another & keep an open mind.** Our beliefs, values and ideas may differ because we draw from different experiences. We will discuss, question, and challenge ideas in this class, but we need to be careful that we are not creating an unsafe or unproductive space. We challenge ideas, not individuals.
2. **Challenge our own beliefs, values, and ideas.** We need to be open to challenging our own prejudices, assumptions, and interpretations. We also need to expect to discuss things that we may not have expressed, and it is okay to feel uncomfortable!
3. **Allow others to change their minds.** In the give-and-take of collaborative learning, we are open to learning from our peers' knowledge and experiences. We also allow others a safe environment to consider new possibilities, learn and grow.

4. **Be mindful of how we communicate our ideas.** Understand that communications shared through text have a higher likelihood of being misinterpreted than when we speak to one another. Therefore, when you type a thought or a comment, please read it carefully before submitting it, if you question the way it is worded, read it out loud to yourself. If you still question the way it's phrased, rewrite it.
5. **Contribute regularly to the conversation** to ensure other members of the community have ample opportunity to read/listen, reflect, and respond to your ideas- the contributions of each individual play a role in the collective strength and diversity of our community.

By participating in our community, you agree to be familiar with and abide by these ground rules. If, at any time, you feel that any of these ground rules have been violated by a member of our community, I encourage you to bring your concern directly and immediately to me.

*The learning community ground rules are adapted from Michelle Pacansky-Brock's Digital Citizenship Community Ground Rules

Deliverables

Attendance

A primary learning method in this course is based upon reflective analysis of the course content (readings, case studies, articles and class discussion). This learning method requires active participation in discussions so that ideas and beliefs can be shared, supported, possibly challenged, and even reconstructed based upon new ideas and insights. Simply attending class without contributing to the discussion is not really "attending" class. You must be present to participate in this course fully.

If you need to miss a class, please let me know before the day of class (unless it's an emergency). Attendance in class will earn you one point towards your goals. Missing more than one class will cause your class participation grade to suffer.

Assignments

Requirements	# of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Attendance	14	1	14	20%
Game Journal	4	8	32	40%
Create your player profile	1	5	5	5%
Event Music Playlist	1	5	5	5%
Group project esports event	1	10	10	15%
Attend an esports event	1	5	5	5%
Game Reviews	3	5	15	10%

- 1. Attendance**
- 2. Game journal:** Semester long reflective activity where students exercise contemplative practices, introspective investigation, and deep analysis exploring their evolution of the topics presented in class within the games they play.
- 3. Create your player profile:** Students will explore ideas about visuals, vital stats and other mentions in their ideal player profile.
- 4. Event Music Playlist:** Students will explore the power of eSports' influence in the music industry and will Journey map their music playlist for their eSports event.
- 5. Group project eSports event:** Students will leverage knowledge, strategies, and resources shared in the course to prepare a proposal for an esports event. Students will create marketing collateral, design event management and programming, propose fiscal model, and select game(s) to be played. Student will ensure they incorporate how their particular event addresses the course prompt: Is esports for all?
- 6. Attend an eSports event**
- 7. Game Reviews**

Week 1	Introduction to eSports Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● History of eSports ● Fad vs Staple ● Is it a "real" sport ● How do they differ from traditional sports/games as we know them? 	https://www.ted.com/talks/anthony_betrus_esports_is_real_sports
Week 2	Introduction to eSports Part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Game types (MOBA, FPS, 	Player profile

	Battle Royale, ets) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow the money ● Structure 	
Week 3	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Intro to DEI ● Current status ● Significance 	
Week 4	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current problems ● Future issues ● Failed solutions 	
Week 5	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Traditional Marketing vs. eSports Marketing ● Who is telling the story ● Who are we telling the story to ● Current Issues in eSports Marketing 	Journal #1
Week 6	Data Part I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coded Bias 	
Week 7	Data Part II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who is playing? ● Where are they playing ● Future growth 	Journal #2
Week 8	Spring Break	
Week 9	Event Experiences Part <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Event planning 	Start group work on event Event Playlist
Week 10	Communications and Media Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current Industry standards ● International communication ● Fans with disabilities 	
Week 11	Financial and Economic Issues in eSports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial Management in eSports ● Economic impact of eSports 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current financial and economic issues in eSports Management 	
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and Ethical Considerations in eSports Management • A. Legal Issues in eSports Management • B. Ethical Issues in eSports Management (Sexism, Cultural Appropriation, Addiction, etc) 	Journal #3
Week 13	<p>Future of eSports and eSports Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Trends • Opportunities for Growth and Expansion 	Journal #4
Week 14	Game Reviews	
Week 15	Final Projects	
Week 16	Final Projects	