Simulation + Play—The Art and Science of Pretend
Games, Models, and Performance | Culture, Art and Technology 3A |
Spring 2019, UC San Diego | T + TH 3:30-4:50PM, Peterson Hall 110

Professor
Ash Eliza Smith, aes002@ucsd.edu | Office Hours: TH 5-6PM @ The Faculty Club, and by appointment and online here: https://ucsd.zoom.us/my/ash.e.s

In partnership with:
UCSD Design Lab, Stephanie Elyse Sherman, creative-designlab@ucsd.edu

Teaching Assistant Instructors
Casey Polacheck, Visual Arts, cpolacheck@ucsd.edu (10AM, 11AM)
Ekaterina (Katya) Prokhorova, Global Policy + Strategy, eprokhor@ucsd.edu (11AM, 2PM)
Haley Daigle, Latin American Studies, hdaigle@ucsd.edu (8AM, 9AM)
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Matteus Guzzo, Visual Arts, mguzzo@ucsd.edu (5PM, 7PM)
Michael Ano, Visual Arts, mano@ucsd.edu (6, 7, 8 PM)
Michael Matsuno, Music, mmatsuno@ucsd.edu (8AM, 10AM)
Manel Palos Pons, Communication, mapalos@ucsd.edu (12PM, 1PM)
Tina Hyland, Literature, thyland@ucsd.edu (5PM, 6PM)

Course Description
Simulations are ways of modeling, faking, or duplicating the real world. From video games to military technology, from driving to flight simulators, from amusement park rides to special effects, from theater to virtual reality, simulations are used to tell stories in our world. At the heart of many simulations are the acts of play and performance. How does culture, art, and technology shape play, simulation, and reality? What are the limits and possibilities? In this course, we will study the theory and practice of simulated play in everyday life and in interactive experiences.
This course will be in partnership with the UCSD Design Lab. You will learn how to talk, write, design and play critically. You will be asked to play-test, user-test, speculate, use observation as research, rapid prototype, write reviews of simulations and design your own interactive experiences. Sections will double as a design studios where you will conduct collaborative research, workshop and eventually design a game, play or simulation for your final project.

Learning Objectives

- Introduction to Art and Design Practice through Research, Collaborative Research and Methods.
- Develop skills for analyzing and thinking critically about simulation and play.
- Use world building and storytelling to build simulations or games that think critically about the present.
- Develop skills for analyzing underlying arguments for and in simulations and games.

(L01: Technical, L02: Critical, L03: Rhetorical, L04: Research Practice)

Course Website

Important information for the class can be found on the course website at [http://ted.ucsd.edu/](http://ted.ucsd.edu/). Your user name and password is the same used to login to Tritonlink. A copy of this syllabus, assignment details, video links, and important reminders will be posted to the site.

**The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus during the course of the quarter. Any changes made will be posted to an updated syllabus on the TED website.**

Course Readings

Almost all course readings, listening materials and videos will be posted on our class web site [http://ted.ucsd.edu](http://ted.ucsd.edu) as indicated in the schedule of readings. **Complete readings before the class for which they are assigned.** In many cases you will need to complete them in order to your Blog Assignment.

Proxy Server

Please note: Some articles linked via TED and reserves websites may only be accessed through UCSD IP addresses. To access the reserves materials off campus you must use UCSD’s “proxy server.” Alternatively, you may login from off-campus using the Virtual Private Network.

Materials Needed

Suggested if you are serious about wanting to pursue making Games: *Game Design Workshop (3rd Edition)* by Tracy Fullerton -- (2nd Edition is available [here](#)).

**Apps & Accounts**

- Install the [CiteThisForMe Web Citer](#) (or equivalent) use Chicago style
- Google Drive or Dropbox Account

**Assessment: Assignments + Grade Breakdown**

**Participation, Contribution + Playtesting:** 15%

- **Art + Tech Event** attendance + write-ups: 5% (+ 2 Extra Credit Points)

**Blog Writing + Responding:** 25%

**Design Research Project + Paper:** 55%
  - Project Design: 25%
  - Research Paper + Project Portfolio *(includes smaller research assignments that are turned in as Blog assignments)*: 30%

Refer to the linked prompts and rubrics within this syllabus for more specific details regarding each assignment.

**Participation + Contribution**

Both lecture and section attendance is mandatory as well as playtesting inside and outside of section. Any absences must be cleared with the instructor or TA in advance, or justified with written documentation (e.g. letter from team, etc.). I do not differentiate between mental and physical health and in either case please be in communication with your TA and me. Absences may affect your overall course grade. More than 3 absences may be grounds for failure in the course. Attendance may be taken in lecture or you may be given a brief assignment as part of class participation. (See participation grading criteria at bottom of syllabus for more info).

**Laptops:** If you need to use a laptop in lecture please sit in the first three rows of the lecture hall.

**3 Art + Tech + write-ups**

You will attend three Art + Tech events or exhibitions throughout the quarter from [this list](#). After attending you will respond to the prompt below within one week and write a detailed and well-written analysis. For more detailed instructions on the deliverables (what, when, how) please go [here](#).

- **Extra Credit**
  
  After you complete your 3 required Art + Tech Events then you can attend up to 2 more Art + Tech Events as Extra Credits which will be added to your overall final course grade. A- can become an A etc.!!
Design-A-Hack-A-Thon (Counts as 3 Art + Tech PLUS 2 EXTRA CREDIT POINTS plus AND 10 Art Tech Design Innovation Credits)

The Pepper Canyon Mobility Hub Designathon will bring together 200+ interdisciplinary students, neighbors, and future transit users from UCSD and across San Diego to develop services, solutions, and speculations that will help transform the Pepper Canyon Trolley Station on UCSD’s campus, currently under construction, into a dynamic multimodal mobility hub. Designathons are intensive, immersive events where interdisciplinary teams design solutions to real world challenges. Designathons deploy user-centered design techniques including observation, prototyping, testing, iteration, and storytelling. Our design process encourages empathy for all kinds of mobility users and participants, and this designathon will facilitate collaboration, competition, and co-operation between teams.

Blog Writing

There will be weekly or bi-weekly prompts that engage with the course material as well as offer an opportunity to practice game design, game review and writing for your research paper. Even though you should embrace this space with the spirit of the ‘Shitty First Drafts’—take the writing that you do here as an opportunity to practice and draft for your research paper. In this space you will work on synthesizing passages of reading from the course with your own writing as well as leaning into the topics that spark an interest in you that you want to pursue further. Smaller parts of your research paper will also be turned in as Blog posts.

In many cases you will have the ability to choose to work alone or with a team. You should establish temporary teams in section that assures that everyone who does not have a smart phone is on a team with people who have smart phones that have the capability to download apps.

Because this course is adaptive to your needs and wants—prompts will be updated/added weekly with specific details. All posts will be due by Tuesday morning at 8AM. You must also read the posts of everyone else in your section and respond to the post of at least one other person in your discussion section by the following day. *Your sections and blogs will serve as a location to discuss experiences and brainstorm ideas. The blogs are a means of fostering group accountability and conversation. It’s also a great place to figure out collaborators.

Design Research Project + Paper + Portfolio
Simulation Design: You will research and design a simulation that will be played or experienced on location (location will be assigned by sections) with the other members of your team. During weeks 9 + 10 you will playtest your simulation during lecture with your classmates to get feedback on your design. You may use any platform to create your simulation. Your simulation might take the form of a game, a program, a virtual world, theater, a science experiment—to name a few.

Research Paper: You will complete a 4-6 pg. (1000-1500 words* not including footnotes or Biblio.) research paper on the simulation + play subject of your choice. You can write about any topic although you must use a critical lens and must be making an argument. Go really deep and thoroughly on one point. This is a short paper! Although not imperative, it is wonderful if this paper theorizes and analyzes an aspect or theme that connects to the simulation that your group is designing, as this may streamline and support your overall research process. Within the topics of play and simulation, consider: various Cultures and subcultures, the Art of designing and disrupting, and new kinds of Technology that mediates and influences. You will begin with a broad topic area of your own choosing and repeatedly refine and revise over the course until you are ready to make a persuasive argument about, and focused analysis of, some more specific aspect of your topic. Whatever starting topic you choose, we will work together to figure out the right scope, angle and resources you will need to turn your initial idea into a feasible, original and interesting research question. You will be asked to complete smaller research assignments along the way that will be a part of the overall grade of this assignment.

- Use 2 or more sources (at least one Academic source)
- Give your research paper a TITLE!
- You may draw on your own simulation + play experience as RESEARCH!
- You may include screenshots, diagrams and images within your paper.
- Chicago Style. (footnotes, endnotes with a Biblio)
- Include a Bibliography at the end AND an Inspirational Bibliography (sources that you do not use directly in your paper but that have influenced your research (yes even that Netflix show—perhaps)

Research Portfolio and Designer Statement: You will turn in a portfolio that includes the documentation and components of the design, with a collaborative simulation design statement during week 11. Think about connections between the research paper topic and your simulation design—even if it seems far field—how does it connect to the simulation design that you created? (@ 250 - 500 words collaboratively plus the individual writing components)

*Note: This breakdown is also incorporated into the larger weekly breakdown below

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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION DESIGN</th>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 Topics (Ideas Draft)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Refine Topic Statement and proof of working bibliography</td>
<td>Decide on a Team and give your Lab a Name :)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Brainstorming + Playing</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Paper Outline + meet w/ TA's</td>
<td>Pitch projects + meet w/ TA's</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Research Paper Due - Wed in Section</td>
<td>Prototypes + Feedback</td>
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Course Outline — *Tentative Schedule*: (Subject to Change—Always check back for most up to date information)

### Week 1—Building a World: Simulation and Game Design

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>READ + WATCH</th>
<th>PLAY + WRITE</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/2</td>
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<tr>
<td>TH 4/4</td>
<td>The Definition of Play &amp; The Classification of Games by Roger Caillois (Chapters 1 &amp; 2 pgs. 3-36)</td>
<td>Blog #1 + Response Play: Pokemon Go Play: 200 RPG</td>
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Optional Reading: *Are we living in a computer simulation?* Nick Bostrom

### Week 2— Performance, Re-enactment, the Virtual and the Hyperreal

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<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/9</td>
<td>Play - Joker in the Deck” from Performance Studies: An Introduction (pgs. 89 - 122)</td>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Simulation (pgs. 133-141)</td>
<td>Blog #2 + Response</td>
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<td><strong>Suggested:</strong> The Pleasure of Limits by Ian Bogost (begin on page 7: “Limits Create Possibility Spaces”)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TH 4/11</td>
<td>They Say, I Say Part 6 (“Doing Research”)</td>
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**Week 3—Simulation in Science: Behavior, Observation, Learning in Design Research**

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<th>DAY</th>
<th>READ + WATCH</th>
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<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION DESIGN</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/16</td>
<td>Guest Lecture: Contextual Robotics, Human Centered Design Research, Data Coding, Primate Cinema</td>
<td>Blog #3 + Responses</td>
<td>3 Topics (Ideas Draft)</td>
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<td>Design Thinking Bootcamp</td>
<td>Play: Driving Game or Simulator</td>
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<td>TH 4/18</td>
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**Week 4— Formal Elements of Simulation + Games**
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<th>PLAY + WRITE POST</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION DESIGN</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/23</td>
<td><strong>Beyond Dungeons and Dragons: can role play save the world?</strong></td>
<td>Blog #4 + Responses</td>
<td>Refine Topic Statement and proof of working bibliography</td>
<td>Decide on a Team and give your Lab a Name :)</td>
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<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Empathy, from How to do things with Videogames (pgs. 18-23)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
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<td><strong>We Asked Game Designers If the CIA’s El Chapo Board Game Is Any Good</strong></td>
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<td>- Read: Finite and Infinite Games, JP Carse</td>
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<td><strong>TH 4/25</strong></td>
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**Week 5 — Locative Play + Psychogeography + Ubiquitous Computing**

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<th>DAY</th>
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<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION DESIGN</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 4/30</td>
<td><strong>The Future of Context-Aware Gaming” a report by the Institute for the Future</strong></td>
<td>Blog #5 + Responses</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>Brainstorming + Playing in Section (With Your TEAM in Sections this week, PRINT OUT +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Open House” by Mark Weiser, computer scientist</td>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Creating Critical Play by Mary Flanagan</td>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Los Angeles Tests the Power of ‘Play Streets’</td>
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**TH 5/2**

LECTURE CANCELED = ATTEND DONNA HARAWAY MOVIE AND TALK
(SECTIONS ARE HAPPENING AS USUAL)

### Week 6 —Life and Death, Health and War - State Simulation

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<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>READ + WATCH</th>
<th>PLAY + WRITE POST</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION/GAME DESIGN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 5/7</td>
<td>Playing War: How the Military Uses Video Games</td>
<td>Blog #6 + Responses</td>
<td>Paper Outline + Meet With TA’s</td>
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<td>On Deprofessionalizing Surgery by Benjamin Bratton</td>
<td>Play Games: <a href="#">Here</a></td>
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<td>TH 5/9</td>
<td>Pitch projects + meet w/ TA’s ---Project Template for Pitch here</td>
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<td><strong>Conceptualizing</strong> (Chapter 6), <strong>Prototyping</strong> (Chapter 7) These chapters will be your practical road map guide for the next few weeks as you create your Game Design. <em>(from the Game Design Workshop.)</em></td>
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**WEEK 7 -- Futures of Simulation: Play, Labor, Gamification, AI + Biohacking**

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<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION/GAME DESIGN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T 5/14</td>
<td>AI Is Dreaming Up New Kinds of Video Games</td>
<td>Blog #7 + Responses</td>
<td>Prototyping + Feedback in Section</td>
<td>Use: <strong>Prototyping</strong> (Chapter 7), <strong>Digital Prototyping</strong> (Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY</td>
<td>READ + WATCH</td>
<td>PLAY + WRITE POST</td>
<td>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</td>
<td>FINAL SIMULATION/GAME DESIGN</td>
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| T 5/21 | Machine Learning Guest Lecture | Blog #8 + Responses | Prototyping + Feedback in Section | Print Out + Use:  
- Playtesting (Chapter 9).  
(from the Game Design Workshop.) AND Read: A Primer for Playtesting |
| TH 5/23 | Automation topics:  Labor  Economy  Infrastructure -- technical, physical  Behavior  Logistics  Production  Intervention  Ethics  Experiential  Outmoded | | Papers returned with feedback | Prototyping + Feedback in Section |
### Week 9 — SIM JAM --- Showcase/Playtest

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<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>READ + WATCH</th>
<th>PLAY + WRITE POST</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION/GAME DESIGN</th>
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</table>
| T 5/28 |             |                   | Do more research, refine, Go to writing hub and bring receipt to your TA | Sign Up Instructions  
Sign Ups  
Lecture: SIM/GAME JAM --- Showcase + Playtest - |
| TH 5/30 |             |                   |                       | Sign Up Instructions  
Sign Ups  
Lecture: SIM/GAME JAM --- Showcase + Playtest - |

### Week 10 —SIM JAM --- Showcase/Playtest

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<th>DAY</th>
<th>READ + WATCH</th>
<th>PLAY + WRITE POST</th>
<th>FINAL RESEARCH PAPER</th>
<th>FINAL SIMULATION/GAME DESIGN</th>
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</table>
| T 6/4 |             |                   |                       | Sign Up Instructions  
Sign Ups  
Lecture: SIM JAM --- Showcase + Playtest - |
| TH 6/6 |             |                   |                       | Sign Up Instructions  
Sign Ups  
Lecture: SIM JAM --- Showcase + Playtest - |
**POLICIES**

1. **ATTENDANCE**

On-time attendance in lecture and section is required. Please notify your TA if you must be absent for illness or family emergency. Excessive absence (more than three class sessions, either lectures or sections) may be grounds for failing the course. Excessive tardiness will also impact your grade and may be grounds for failure.

2. **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Contributions to class discussions and active participation in small group work are essential to both the momentum of the course and the development of your ideas. This requires that you come to class prepared (having completed assigned reading and writing) and ready to participate in class activities. Because CAT 3 is based on collaborative, project-based learning, you are also expected to contribute as a responsible member of a group. See the participation evaluation rubric below for more information.

3. **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION**
A. Due Dates

An assignment may receive an F if a student does not participate in every phase of the development of the project and meet all deadlines for preliminary materials (proposals, drafts, etc.). Failure to submit any of the graded course assignments is grounds for failure in the course. If a final draft, plus required addenda, is not submitted in class on the date due, it will be considered late and will lose one letter grade for each day or part of a day past due (A to B, etc.). Assignments are due in hard copy and or via email/link (online assignment). You must submit your assignments directly to your TA; you will not be able to leave papers for your TA at the Sixth College Offices. Any late submissions must be approved by your TA and/or faculty instructor well in advance of the due date.

4. CAT GRADING CRITERIA – PARTICIPATION

Here is a description of the kind of participation in the course that would earn you an A, B, C, etc. Your TA may use pluses and minuses to reflect your participation more fairly, but this is a general description for each letter grade.

A – Excellent
Excellent participation is marked by near-perfect attendance and rigorous preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions and activities with enthusiasm and insight and you listen and respond thoughtfully to your peers. You submit rough drafts on time, and these drafts demonstrate a thorough engagement with the assignment. You respond creatively to the feedback you receive (from both your peers and TA) on drafts, making significant changes to your writing between the first and final drafts that demonstrate ownership of your own writing process. Finally, you are an active contributor to the peer-review and collaborative writing processes.

B – Good
Good participation is marked by near-perfect attendance and thorough preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions with specificity and make active contributions to creating a safe space for the exchange of ideas. You submit rough drafts on time, and these drafts demonstrate thorough engagement with the assignment. You respond effectively to the feedback you receive (from both your peers and TA) on drafts, making changes to your writing between the first and final drafts. You are a regular and reliable contributor to the peer-review and collaborative writing processes.

C – Satisfactory
Satisfactory participation is marked by regular attendance and preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions when prompted and participate in classroom activities, though you may sometimes be distracted. You are present in lecture and section, with few absences, and have done some of the reading some of the time. You submit rough drafts on time and make some efforts toward revision between the first and final drafts of an assignment. You are involved in peer-review activities, but you offer minimal feedback and you may not always contribute fully to the collaborative writing process.
D – Unsatisfactory

Unsatisfactory participation is marked by multiple absences from section and a consistent lack of preparation. You may regularly be distracted by materials/technology not directly related to class. You submit late or incomplete drafts and revise minimally or only at a surface level between drafts. You are absent for peer-review activities, offer unproductive feedback, or do not work cooperatively in collaborative environments.

F—Failing

Failing participation is marked by excessive absences, a habitual lack of preparation, and failure to engage in the drafting, revision, and collaborative writing processes.

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the General Catalog, and online at http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academicintegrity/policy.html. All students must read and be familiar with this Policy. All suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to UCSD’s Academic Integrity Coordinator. Students found to have violated UCSD’s standards for academic integrity may receive both administrative and academic sanctions. Administrative sanctions may extend up to and include suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the assignment or failure of the course. Specific examples of prohibited violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following:

Academic stealing refers to the theft of exams or exam answers, of papers or take-home exams composed by others, and of research notes, computer files, or data collected by others.

Academic cheating, collusion, and fraud refer to having others do your schoolwork or allowing them to present your work as their own; using unauthorized materials during exams; inventing data or bibliography to support a paper, project, or exam; purchasing tests, answers, or papers from any source whatsoever; submitting (nearly) identical papers to two classes.

Misrepresenting personal or family emergencies or health problems in order to extend deadlines and alter due dates or requirements is another form of academic fraud.

Claiming you have been ill when you were not, claiming that a family member has been ill or has died when that is untrue are some examples of unacceptable ways of trying to gain more time than your fellow students have been allowed in which to complete assigned work.
Plagiarism refers to the use of another's work without full acknowledgment, whether by suppressing the reference, neglecting to identify direct quotations, paraphrasing closely or at length without citing sources, spuriously identifying quotations or data, or cutting and pasting the work of several (usually unidentified) authors into a single undifferentiated whole.

**Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity.**

6. **UCSD’s PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY**

The CAT program affirms UCSD’s Principles of Community, and expects all students to understand and uphold these principles, both in their daily interactions and in their spoken, written and creative work produced for CAT classes:

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UCSD community. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UCSD strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the University and the well being of its constituents. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.

- We value each member of the UCSD community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual’s effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.
- We affirm each individual’s right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
- We value the cultural diversity of UCSD because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures, by both individuals and the University as a whole.
- We are a university that adapts responsively to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.
- We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.
- We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and, we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.
- We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UCSD. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect.
- We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.
- We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles.
- We represent diverse races, creeds, cultures, and social affiliations coming together for the good of the University and those communities we serve. By working together as members of the UCSD community, we can enhance the excellence of our institution.
**Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity and the Principles of Community.**

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