

| Course Code and Title | |
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| MLI26C738 Global Game Industry | 6 cr |
| Learning Outcomes and Content | |
| <p>Learning outcomes for this course, upon successful completion, include the ability to: 1) gain an up-to-date overview of the dynamics and trends of the game industry, its historical origins and future directions, 2) understand managerial practices in game companies and analyze specific matters associated with global games distribution, 3) evaluate game company internationalization strategies through platforms, 4) analyze game design and customer service from an ethical point of view, and design alternative, improved solutions based on this, and 5) experiment, through prototyping, with how gameful elements can be integrated across different organizational functions and industries.</p> <p>Content: Since the beginning of the 21st century, the game industry has grown rapidly, surpassing the film and music industries in global revenue. Located at the intersection of technological innovation and artistic creativity, the game industry is constantly renewing itself and pushing forward existing business models. With the proliferation of Internet and digital distribution, the game industry is truly global, innovative and digital, providing a rich context for revisiting international business studies. This course will address various issues that are central to managing successfully a gaming firm, such as: business model and business development strategy; fundamentals of monetization and analytics of games, user acquisition approaches and marketing; localization and global expansion as well as ethical game design.</p> | |
| Instructor Name and Profile | |
| <p>Solip Park Solip is a doctoral researcher at Aalto University School of Arts, Design, and Architecture - Department of Arts and Media, while also a project researcher at the University of Jyväskylä. Solip's current research interest focuses on immigrants and expatriates in the video game industry and cultural diversity in game productions. She is also the author and artist of the "Game Expats Story" comic series and has two master's degrees: one from Carnegie Mellon University in the USA (Master of Entertainment Technology), and Aalto University in Finland (Master of Arts), where she was announced as the winner of Game Thesis Competition 2020 by Finnish Game Research Society. Prior to her academic career, Solip worked at game companies and startup scenes in the USA, South Korea, and Finland, focusing on project management and international relations. http://www.parksolip.com/</p> | |
| Email Address | |
| solip.park@aalto.fi | |
| Office Hours | |
| Every day before class, except Friday, between 12:00-13:00 or by appointment. | |

Required Reading & Resources

Readings:

Wolf, M. J. P. (2015). Video Games Around the World. MIT Press. – “Introduction” and “Finland” chapter.

Neogames. “The Game Industry of Finland Report 2022” <https://neogames.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/FGIR2022report.pdf>

Centre of Excellence in Game Culture Studies. “Finnish Player Barometer 2020” – English Abstract chapter. <https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/123831/978-952-03-1786-7.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Vimpari, V., Kultima, A., Hämäläinen, P., & Guckelsberger, C. (2023). “An Adapt-or-Die Type of Situation”: Perception, Adoption, and Use of Text-To-Image-Generation AI by Game Industry Professionals. ArXiv Preprint <https://arxiv.org/abs/2302.12601>

Dyer-Witthford, N., & De Peuter, G. (2006). “EA Spouse” and the Crisis of Video Game Labour: Enjoyment, Exclusion, Exploitation, Exodus. Canadian Journal of Communication, 31(3), 599–617. <https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2006v31n3a1771>

Ozimek, A. (2021). Supporting the Global Digital Games Industry: Outsourcing Games Production in Poland and Estonia. In M. Will-Zocholl & C. Roth-Ebner (Eds.), Topologies of Digital Work: How Digitalisation and Virtualisation Shape Working Spaces and Places (pp. 51–76). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80327-8_3

Xiao, L. Y. (2023). Breaking Ban: Belgium’s Ineffective Gambling Law Regulation of Video Game Loot Boxes. Collabra: Psychology, 9(1), 57641. <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.57641>

Neogames “Games Market Study: China, Japan and South Korea” https://neogames.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CHI_JPN_KR_GamesMarketStudyNeogames2020.pdf

Anonymous author. (2022). Reverse Engineering North Korea’s Gaming Economy: Intellectual Property, Microtransactions, and Censorship. Game Studies, 22(1). <https://gamestudies.org/2201/articles/anonymous>

Daiiani, M., & Keogh, B. (2022). An Iranian Videogame Industry? Localizing Videogame Production Beyond The “Global” Videogame Industry. Media Industries, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.89>

Jin, D. Y. (2020). Historiography of Korean Esports: Perspectives on Spectatorship. International Journal of Communication, 14(0), Article 0. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/13795>

Aguado-Delgado, J., Gutiérrez-Martínez, J.-M., Hilera, J. R., de-Marcos, L., & Otón, S. (2020). Accessibility in video games: A systematic review. Universal Access in the Information Society, 19(1), 169–193. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-018-0628-2>

Lopez-Fernandez, O., Williams, A. J., Griffiths, M. D., & Kuss, D. J. (2019). Female Gaming, Gaming Addiction, and the Role of Women Within Gaming Culture: A Narrative Literature Review. Frontiers in Psychiatry, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2019.00454>

Karhulahti, V.-M., Siutila, M., Vahlo, J., & Koskimaa, R. (2022). Phenomenological Strands for Gaming Disorder and Esports Play: A Qualitative Registered Report. Collabra: Psychology, 8(1), 38819. <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.38819>

Park, S., Kultima, A., Lehtonen, M. J., & Krath, J. (2022). Everywhere but Nowhere: Development Experiences of the International Game Developers in Finland during the Covid-19 Pandemic and Remote Work. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 6(CHI PLAY), 233:1-233:14. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3549496>

Online sources (video, etc)

Gamer Motivation Profile test. What type of gamer are you? <https://apps.quantifoundry.com/surveys/start/gamerprofile/>

“The Gamer Motivation Profile: Model and Findings” by Nick Yee. <https://youtu.be/gDvaBpfs1A>

“Kati Alha: Free-to-play Games – A Critical View” from Games Now! 2022 <https://youtu.be/TN2DNewRi94>

“League of Legends Championship final 2023 – match1” <https://youtu.be/t7R6KDE0ejs>

“We Entered the World of Microsoft Excel eSports & Got Our Asses Beat” <https://youtu.be/N2QC6VQXo8U>

Course Schedule

Deduction due to an absence on the first day of the course: 5 points (on a 100-point scale) will be deducted from the student’s final raw score before converting it to the final grade. If a student is absent on the first day due to illness, and provides the Manager of Academic Operations with a medical certificate, the 5-point deduction will be waived. The Manager of Academic Operations will then inform the instructor of the waived deduction.

| Session # and Date | Topic/s | Assignment/s |
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| | | *Pre-assignment: Read/watch the materials. Write your thoughts, takeaways, and remaining questions from these materials within 150-300 words, and submit it to MyCourses at least 1 hour before coming to the lecture (11:59 AM Finnish time). |
| Session 1: 9-Oct. 2023 | Introduction & Course Practicalities Basic terminologies in games Global game industry overview | Answer pre-survey for team building: LINK *Students can complete the pre-survey in the class. |
| Session 2: 10-Oct. 2023 | How it started: The Video Game History The Finnish game history Group activity: Team formation | Pre-assignment: Wolf, M. J. P. (2015). <i>Video Games Around the World</i> . MIT Press. – “Introduction” and “Finland” chapter. |
| Session 3: 11-Oct. 2023 | Game development process (aka, how games are made?) Game development outside the industry Group discussion: Game biz analysis | Pre-assignment: Neogames. “The Game Industry of Finland Report 2022” AND Centre of Excellence in Game Culture Studies. “Finnish Player Barometer 2020” – English Abstract chapter. |
| Session 4: 12-Oct. 2023 | Game Business Model: How game companies make money Emerging topics in game business: P2E, Generative-AI Group discussion: AI to design games | Pre-assignment: “Kati Alha: Free-to-play Games – A Critical View” from Games Now! 2022 OR Vimpari, V., Kultima, A., Hämäläinen, P., & Guckelsberger, C. (2023). “An Adapt-or-Die Type of Situation”: Perception, Adoption, and Use of Text-To-Image-Generation AI by Game Industry Professionals. <i>ArXiv Preprint</i> |

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| <p>Session 5: 13-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Understanding "gamers" – people who play games</p> <p>Understanding "game developers" – people that make games</p> <p>Group discussion: game job titles in your language</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: First, take the Gamer Motivation Profile test. What type of gamer are you?</p> <p>AND THEN</p> <p>Watch "The Gamer Motivation Profile: Model and Findings" by Nick Yee.</p> |
| <p>Session 6: 16-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Company excursion, a visit to Supercell in Helsinki (13:00 – 16:00).</p> <p>Separate instructions will be shared closer to date.</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Prepare 1-2 questions to the game company that we are going to visit: Do your research. Either play their games (or at least watch their games' trailer, videos), Google search about their recent projects, etc.</p> |
| <p>Session 7: 17-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>North American (+ English-speaking) game industry overview</p> <p>The AAA game industry overview</p> <p>Group discussion: case study</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Dyer-Witheford, N., & De Peuter, G. (2006). "EA Spouse" and the Crisis of Video Game Labour: Enjoyment, Exclusion, Exploitation, Exodus. <i>Canadian Journal of Communication</i>, 31(3), 599–617.</p> |
| <p>Session 8: 18-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>European game industry overview & value-chain in the single market</p> <p>Guest speaker 1: Laura Piispanen – "Finnish game jam ecosystem & Quantum Game Jams"</p> <p>Group presentation (group A,B) & case study</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Ozimek, A. (2021). Supporting the Global Digital Games Industry: Outsourcing Games Production in Poland and Estonia. In M. Will-Zocholl & C. Roth-Ebner (Eds.), <i>Topologies of Digital Work: How Digitalisation and Virtualisation Shape Working Spaces and Places</i> (pp. 51–76). Springer International Publishing.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Xiao, L. Y. (2023). Breaking Ban: Belgium's Ineffective Gambling Law Regulation of Video Game Loot Boxes. <i>Collabra: Psychology</i>, 9(1), 57641.</p> |
| <p>Session 9: 19-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>(East) Asian game industry history</p> <p>The (current) status of the (East) Asian game industry</p> <p>Group presentation (group C,D & case study)</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Neogames "Games Market Study: China, Japan and South Korea"</p> |

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| <p>Session 10: 20-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Researching and/or excavating games</p> <p>Games outside the "global" context</p> <p>Group presentation (group E, F) & case study</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Anonymous author. (2022). Reverse Engineering North Korea's Gaming Economy: Intellectual Property, Microtransactions, and Censorship. <i>Game Studies</i>, 22(1).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Daiiani, M., & Keogh, B. (2022). An Iranian Videogame Industry? Localizing Videogame Production Beyond The "Global" Videogame Industry. <i>Media Industries</i>, 9(1).</p> <p>Submit group presentation slides to be uploaded to MyCourses by 20 October 2023, 23:59 PM Finnish time.</p> |
| <p>Session 11: 23-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Esports culture and its history</p> <p>Sportification in esports</p> <p>Group discussion: Game events in Finland</p> | <p>Pre-assignment:</p> <p>IF you don't know what esports is: <i>try</i> watching this first (maybe with your friends?) "League of Legends Championship final 2023 – match1"</p> <p>IF you already know what esports is: watch this "We Entered the World of Microsoft Excel eSports & Got Our Asses Beat"</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Jin, D. Y. (2020). Historiography of Korean Esports: Perspectives on Spectatorship. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>, 14(0), Article 0.</p> |
| <p>Session 12: 24-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>When games have fails/failed us</p> <p>Dark games and gaming disorder</p> <p>Group discussion: Ethical game dev & biz</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Karhulahti, V.-M., Siutila, M., Vahlo, J., & Koskimaa, R. (2022). Phenomenological Strands for Gaming Disorder and Esports Play: A Qualitative Registered Report. <i>Collabra: Psychology</i>, 8(1), 38819.</p> |
| <p>Session 13: 25-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Diversity and inclusivity in games</p> <p>Diversity, equity, and inclusivity in game workplaces</p> <p>Pitch-day rehearsal & peer feedback (all groups)</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Lopez-Fernandez, O., Williams, A. J., Griffiths, M. D., & Kuss, D. J. (2019). Female Gaming, Gaming Addiction, and the Role of Women Within Gaming Culture: A Narrative Literature Review. <i>Frontiers in Psychiatry</i>, 10.</p> |
| <p>Session 14: 26-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Guest speaker 2: Lobna Hassan – "Game accessibility"</p> <p>Games with purpose</p> <p>Group discussion: Make accessible games</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Aguado-Delgado, J., Gutiérrez-Martínez, J.-M., Hílera, J. R., de-Marcos, L., & Otón, S. (2020). Accessibility in video games: A systematic review. <i>Universal Access in the Information Society</i>, 19(1), 169–193.</p> |

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| <p>Session 15: 27-Oct. 2023</p> | <p>Covid-19 & War: What is changing?</p> <p>Final pitching at Aquarium (TBA) (all groups)</p> <p>*Detailed pitching schedule will be announced later. We advise to bring your friends and teachers.</p> | <p>Pre-assignment: Park, S., Kultima, A., Lehtonen, M. J., & Krath, J. (2022). Everywhere but Nowhere: Development Experiences of the International Game Developers in Finland during the Covid-19 Pandemic and Remote Work. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 6(CHI PLAY), 233:1-233:14.</p> <p>Submit pitch deck and presentation slides to MyCourses by 27 October 2023, 23:59 PM Finnish time</p> <p>Submit your final report to MyCourses by 27 October 2023, 23:59 PM Finnish time</p> |
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| Grading | |
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| Course Requirements | Weighting (%) or maximum points |
| Pre-assignment (read materials and write takeaways) | 30% |
| Reflection report (excursion reflections) | 10% |
| Final report (analysis, peer-evaluation, reflections) | 20% |
| Group project #1 (group presentation, Week 2) | 20% |
| Group project #2 (one-pager & pitch, Week 3) | 20% |
| Total | 100 |
| Conversion scale | Final grade (official scale) |
| 90 - 100 | 5 |
| 80 - 89 | 4 |
| 70 - 79 | 3 |
| 60 - 69 | 2 |
| 50 - 59 | 1 |
| 0 - 49 | 0 |

| ECTS STUDENT WORKLOAD | |
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| <p>This course is a 6 ECTS unit course, following the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) guidelines of Aalto University School of Business. The number of hours the average student is expected to work in the course is 160 (including in-class and out-of-class work).</p> | |
| Types of Hours | Number of Hours |
| Contact hours (on- and off-campus): | 45 |
| Out-of-class hours: | 115 (Sum of fields below) |
| Pre-assignments reading & writing | 35 |
| Reports preparation & submission | 30 |
| Group projects (meetings, research, preparation, etc.) | 50 |
| Total of all student workload (contact and out-of-class) hours: | 160 |

ACADEMIC POLICY STATEMENTS

CODES OF CONDUCT

Academic excellence and high achievement levels are only possible in an environment where the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity are maintained. Students are expected to abide by the Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity, other relevant codes and regulations, as well as the canons of ethical conduct within the disciplines of business and management education.

In addition, the BScBA Program has strict exam regulations in force which must be followed in all test-taking situations.

TEXTBOOK POLICY

All required textbooks and other course materials are the responsibility of the student. It is the expectation of faculty that all students will have access to the textbooks and other reading material. If a student is not able to purchase his/her own copy of the textbook or other required reading materials, it is nonetheless the student's responsibility to find a way to complete the reading for the course.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Class attendance and participation are considered integral parts of teaching and learning at the BScBA program in Mikkeli. Therefore, regular class attendance is required of all students and attendance records are kept for each class. Students are also expected to be in class on time.

If the student participates in the final exam/assessment, it will be graded and counted towards the final grade.

The attendance policy of the BScBA program provides that:

- 1) **A maximum of three absences of any kind** is allowed for a 3-week, 6-credit course. Four or more absences will result in being dropped from the course.
- 2) Whenever taking an absence, **the student bears the risk of missing class**, and the consequences, which may include a lower participation grade, missing a graded activity, etc. It is up to the course instructor to decide whether or not a graded activity can be completed later.
- 3) **An absence on the first day of the course** will result in 5 points (on a 100-point scale) being deducted from the student's final raw score before converting it to the final grade. If a student is absent on the first day due to illness, and provides the Manager of Academic Operations with a medical certificate, the 5-point deduction will be waived. The Manager of Academic Operations will then inform the instructor of the waived deduction.
- 4) **A student getting to class after the session has started** will not be able to enter the classroom until the first break and will get an absence for the day.
- 5) It is expected that **students marked present for the day are in class the entire time**. Students leaving class early may be marked absent.
- 6) **The instructor may include class participation as a component of the grade**; up to 15% of the total points that can be earned toward the final grade.
- 7) **The instructor may identify up to three days of the course (in addition to the first day) as mandatory**, ie taking an absence on those days would have a direct impact on the course grade.

The instructor for the course will take attendance in classes. The decision to drop a student from a course will be made by the instructor, who will inform Mari Syväoja, Manager of Academic Operations: mari.syvaoja@aalto.fi.

Addition to the attendance policy of the BScBA Program, Mikkeli Campus:

- This addition concerns absences in addition to the normal maximum of three that would fall under a category called **Medical and Family Emergency cases**.
- Students who want to use this option to complete a course must fulfil these criteria:
 - The total absences of the student will exceed the normally allowed three absences due to a major medical problem or family emergency.
 - The student will be absent no more than 5 days; exceeding that number of days will result in dropping the course.
 - Documentation or a detailed explanation concerning the entire period of the emergency (such as a medical certificate) is provided to the Manager of Academic Operations.
- The case-by-case solution will be coordinated by the Manager of Academic Operations, who will deal with the documentation and discuss with the instructor to find a pedagogical solution enabling the student to continue in the course. In case the MAO is on leave, the student should contact the other study office staff.
- The solution must not cause a significant increase in the instructor's workload. The grading elements for the course may be reviewed, and additional assignments may be arranged if feasible. However, a shifting of grading proportions may occur. The course grade might be affected due to the student missing some in-class activities.

Additional Information

The course is intended to provide an outline of the global game industry and requires students to have no pre-knowledge of the game industry prior to this course. However, playing some Finnish video games before or during the course would still be very useful to better understand the course materials.