

## New Proposal

Date Submitted: 11/17/21 4:29 pm

Viewing: : **Game Studies Minor, GR**

Last edit: 01/21/22 11:28 am

Changes proposed by: Lisa Bievenue

### In Workflow

1. **U Program Review**
2. **1468 Head**
3. **LP Dean**
4. **University Librarian**
5. **Grad\_College**
6. **Provost**
7. **Senate EPC**
8. Senate
9. U Senate Conf
10. Board of Trustees
11. IBHE
12. HLC
13. DMI

### Approval Path

1. 11/17/21 4:37 pm  
Deb Forgacs  
(dforgacs):  
Approved for U  
Program Review
2. 11/17/21 4:44 pm  
Karin Readel  
(kereadel):  
Approved for 1468  
Head
3. 11/17/21 4:45 pm  
Emily Knox  
(knox): Approved  
for LP Dean
4. 11/17/21 5:28 pm  
John Wilkin  
(jpwilkin):  
Approved for  
University  
Librarian
5. 12/08/21 2:46 pm  
Allison McKinney  
(agrindly):  
Approved for  
Grad\_College

6. 12/08/21 5:06 pm  
Kathy Martensen  
(kmartens):  
Approved for  
Provost

## Proposal Type

Proposal Type:  
Minor (ex. European Union Studies)

## Administration Details

Official Program Name	Game Studies Minor, GR	
Sponsor College	Information Science, School of	
Sponsor Department	Informatics	
Sponsor Name	Lisa Bievenue	
Sponsor Email	bievenue@illinois.edu	
College Contact	Emily Knox	College Contact Email
	knox@illinois.edu	
College Budget Officer	Vicki Van Uithoven	
College Budget Officer Email	vlvanu@illinois.edu	

List the role for rollbacks (which role will edit the proposal on questions from EPC, e.g., Dept Head or Initiator) and/or any additional stakeholders. *Purpose: List here who will do the editing work if proposal needs rolled back. And any other stakeholders.*

Does this program have inter-departmental administration?  
No

## Proposal Title

Effective Catalog Term  
Fall 2022

Provide a brief, concise description (not justification) of your proposal.

Establish a Game Studies Graduate Minor as an Informatics Program in the School of Information Sciences.

List here any related proposals/revisions and their keys. *Example: This BS proposal (key 567) is related to the Concentration A proposal (key 145) and the Concentration B proposal (key 203).*

This proposal is connected to the Game Studies GR Minor Electives List Key 1072 as well as the Game Studies and Design, UG Minor key 1069 and the Game Studies and Design, UG Minor Electives list Key 1070

## Program Justification

Provide a **brief** justification of the program, including highlights of the program objectives, and the careers, occupations, or further educational opportunities for which the program will prepare graduates, when appropriate.

Informatics and the School of Information Sciences, (with the support of the College of Media, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Engineering, and the College of Fine and Applied Arts), propose the establishment of an interdisciplinary Game Studies & Design Graduate Minor with the objective of fostering graduate level critical, theoretical, and methodological approaches to game studies. This degree has been designed for students who have been admitted to the Graduate College in any campus program, whose research or professional interests intersect with the study and design of games, gaming, game design and the digital, VR/XR and AI technologies involved with the crafting of interactive systems and interfaces relevant to the game, film, education, and media industries, as well as a range of other emerging professions.

Students who pursue this graduate minor will have the advantage of joining an interdisciplinary community of faculty and graduate students who are thinking critically about and conducting research on the history, cultural meaning, social impact, ethics, educational uses, theoretical basis, and increasingly significant role of games, gaming, and interactive media in a diverse society, or who are pursuing interests in advanced methodological, computational, aesthetic, and design aspects of games broadly defined. This versatile minor is intended to offer interdisciplinary support for game-related research being done within students' primary disciplines. Students whose work is unrelated to games will also benefit from this minor, since it offers them training in and experience with cutting edge technologies and design processes as well as a critical lens through which to understand these new technologies.

Interested students must submit a completed Game Studies & Design Graduate Minor Application which includes a one page "Statement of Purpose" explaining their interest in the program, and how it fits into their current or future research or career plans. Students completing a graduate minor must submit a curriculum change request to the Graduate College prior to graduation in order for this credential to appear on their transcripts. Students in any graduate program may apply. The program requires at least 13 credit hours of graduate level coursework of which 9 credit hours must be at the 500 level. For most students this will be fulfilled with one semester of GSD 500, one semester of GSD 501/502, and then either the other course in the 501/502 sequence or GSD 510, Game Studies Research and Design Lab. Approved courses at the 500 level offered by participating units will also serve. The remaining elective course may be taken at the 400 or 500 level from a list of approved courses.

#### Required Courses Hours

GSD 500: Graduate Colloquium in Game Studies & Design 1

GSD 501: Graduate Seminar in Game Studies 4

or GSD 502: Graduate Seminar in Game Design

(if both courses are taken the second serves as an elective in the minor)

An approved elective game studies course at the 500 level 4

An approved elective game studies course at the 400/500 level 4

## JUSTIFICATION:

The game industry market value for 2018 was estimated at \$134.9 billion in 2018, a 10.9% increase over 2017.<sup>1</sup> The estimated size of the 2019 game market is \$152 billion, demonstrating a clear upward trend.<sup>2</sup> New technologies are also creating new markets; cloud-based gaming, for example is projected to grow in value to \$4 billion by 2023.<sup>3</sup> Game studies programs do not only serve students with ambitions towards the thriving video game industries (which offer careers for designers, programmers, graphic artists, sound technicians, composers, writers, developers of virtual reality, augmented reality and artificial intelligence technologies, among other emerging fields). Training in game studies and its technologies are relevant to many other tech-related professions; increasingly VR simulations are being used in medical, educational, or business fields, for example.

Academic programs in game design and game studies are thriving both nationally and internationally. Many of our peer institutions, like USC, and NYU, as well as smaller schools in our region with whom we compete for top students, like De Paul, and Bradley, have highly ranked game studies programs that have been in place, in some cases, for decades. To date, the University of Illinois has been absent from the landscape of game-related academic programs. However, our faculty and academic units have responded to the growing need and manifest student interest in game-related topics through course development. Across our campus from the School of Information Science to Computer Science in the College of Engineering, to the Colleges of Education, Media, LAS, and FAA, departments currently offer courses that are directly or indirectly related to game design and game studies. Topics include, for example, new media and interactive narrative studies, animation, and educational technologies. Multiple units are exploring the teaching of and with virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, key areas of study in game studies programs.

Although our peer institutions typically offer multiple tracks of undergraduate and graduate degrees in game design and game studies, our situation is unique. On our campus, so many units have already begun to develop coursework across relevant areas that no single unit can “claim” game studies as their own, nor would one discipline be able to provide adequate training for their students with only their own course offerings. To be successful, a game studies program on our campus must be interdisciplinary, and it requires an agile, organizational structure that can leverage the substantial existing resources in courses, faculty expertise, and institutional infrastructure, while also identifying key areas for growth. A successful model for such a flexible academic collaboration lies in Informatics which offers both an interdisciplinary PhD program and an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor (the second highest declared minor on campus). These degrees are administered by Informatics, while being academically overseen and staffed by an interdisciplinary faculty housed in diverse colleges and departments.

Following their template, we propose to create the Game Studies & Design Graduate Minor as a new program within Informatics, overseen by a Steering Committee

Please note that we do not propose this Graduate Minor as a step towards the eventual creation of a Ph.D.-granting program in game studies. A student interested in pursuing advanced graduate work in the area will be advised to choose a "home" unit/program that best suits their professional interests in the wider field: Education, for research on gameful pedagogies, Computer Science for the development of virtual and augmented tools and technologies, English, Comparative Literature, ICR, or History for critical approaches to game narratives, Art & Design for exploration in game aesthetics or New Media, Information Science for projects involving data-driven simulations in the design of "serious games," Kinesiology or Psychology for research on the physiological and cognitive benefits of play, and so on. By gathering together students with disparate disciplinary training, but common interests in game studies broadly understood, the Minor program will provide a community, academic and design support, and an infrastructure through which Graduate Minor students can share resources, and discover opportunities for collaborative research and design.

1 <https://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2018-12-18-global-games-market-value-rose-to-usd134-9bn-in-2018>

2 <https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/the-global-games-market-will-generate-152-1-billion-in-2019-as-the-u-s-overtakes-china-as-the-biggest-market/>

3 <https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/global-cloud-gaming-market-report-consumer-engagement-spending-revenues-2020-2023>

Please include how the proposed minor requires some depth in the subject, but not as extensive as the major.

NA

## Instructional Resources

Will there be any reduction in other course offerings, programs or concentrations by your department as a result of this new program/proposed change?

No

Does this new program/proposed change result in the replacement of another program?

No

Does the program include other courses/subjects impacted by the creation/revision of this program?

Yes

Required courses

Explain how the inclusion or

removal of the  
courses/subjects  
listed above  
impacts the  
offering  
departments.

The departments can expect enrollment in these courses (see Appendix A of the Program of Study uploaded file) to increase. Each department has approved the inclusions of their course(s) as specified in the attached Letters of Support.

Attach letters of [All letters.pdf](#)  
support or  
acknowledgement  
from other  
departments.

## Program Regulation and Assessment

Briefly describe the plan to assess and improve student learning, including the program's learning objectives; when, how, and where these learning objectives will be assessed; what metrics will be used to signify student's achievement of the stated learning objectives; and the process to ensure assessment results are used to improve student learning. (Describe how the program is aligned with or meets licensure, certification, and/or entitlement requirements, if applicable).

The Graduate Minor in Game Studies & Design has two core learning objectives, and one elective-based objective. After completing requirements for the degree, all students should be:

- Conversant with the predominant theoretical and methodological approaches to interdisciplinary game studies research;
- Able to think and write critically about the history, cultural meaning, social impact, ethical issues, and increasingly significant role of games, gaming, and interactive media in a diverse society.

Based on student's elective choices, they may also:

- Understand advanced principles of game design and be able to apply the logical thinking skills (computational, algorithmic, or narrative-based) sufficient to create a design document and to prototype a game, or game-like app or simulation.

These student learning objectives correspond with three assessment questions that will guide a yearly collection of data that will be used for assessing our students' successful attainment of our key learning outcomes:

- Do our Graduate Minors demonstrate familiarity with a broad range of theoretical and methodological approaches to academic game studies research?
- Can our Graduate Minors articulate the cultural meaning, social impact, ethical issues, and increasingly significant role of games in a diverse society?
- Have our Graduate Minors, who elect training in game design, successfully attained the skills, and comprehend the advanced principles of game design sufficient to create design documents and prototype games?

The Game Studies & Design Program Coordinator will collect data that reflects on the success of the Graduate Minor as a whole, and on the fulfillment of our student learning objectives. At the programmatic level, the Program Coordinator will track the number of students enrolled in the minor, students' demographic information, the distribution of students across colleges and major fields of study, courses taken, as well as post-graduate employment information, which will be used to update advising materials provided to students in the program.

At the course level, various measures of student performance, and attainment of learning objectives will be used, including a self-assessment form filled out by students upon declaration of the minor, and another upon completion of the degree requirements, regarding their experience with and mastery of concepts and skills. Grades, homework assignments, class papers and presentations, class projects as well as other exhibitions and presentations of student work will take place on a regular basis, and will provide an additional source of data.

Evaluation of the program will take place in a two year rotation between (year one) macro-level analysis of curriculum, and (year two) a more focused scrutiny of course content/syllabi. In both years, an agile "Assessment and Action," process will occur

our stated outcomes. An Assessment and Action report will be prepared each Spring by the Program Coordinator, with the support of the Curriculum Committee, which will be shared with the Steering committee and the Director of Informatics.

Is the career/profession for graduates of this program regulated by the State of Illinois?

No

## Program of Study

*"Baccalaureate degree requires at least 120 semester credit hours or 180 quarter credit hours and at least 40 semester credit hours (60 quarter credit hours) in upper division courses" (source: <https://www.ibhe.org/assets/files/PrivateAdminRules2017.pdf>). For proposals for new bachelor's degrees, if this minimum is not explicitly met by specifically-required 300- and/or 400-level courses, please provide information on how the upper-division hours requirement will be satisfied.*

An undergraduate minor should consist of at least 16 - and no more than 21 hours - of course work, with at least 6 hours of 300- or 400- level courses. Except clearly remedial offerings, prerequisite courses within the sponsoring unit count towards the total; prerequisite courses outside the sponsoring unit do not count toward this total. The unit sponsoring the minor and that unit's college may set educationally necessary prerequisites for eligibility for the minor within these constraints. Does this proposal meet these criteria?

Yes

All proposals must attach the new or revised version of the Academic Catalog program of study entry. Contact your college office if you have questions.

For new [GRADGameStudiesMinorProgrammaticDetail.pdf](#)  
programs, attach  
Program of Study

### Catalog Page Text - Overview Tab

Text for Overview tab on the Catalog Page. This is not official content, it is used to help build the new catalog page for the program. Can be edited in the catalog by the college or department.

The Game Studies Graduate Minor serves students whose graduate research or professional interests intersect with the study and design of games, gaming, game design, digital narratives and storytelling, and the digital, VR/XR and AI technologies involved with the crafting of interactive systems and interfaces relevant to the game, film, education, and media industries, and a range of other emerging professions. The minor will foster critical thinking and research on the history, cultural meaning, social impact, ethics, educational uses, theoretical basis, and increasingly significant role of games, gaming, and interactive media in an inclusive and diverse society, as well as advanced methodological, computational, aesthetic, and design aspects of games broadly defined. This versatile minor is intended to offer interdisciplinary support for game-related research being done within students' primary disciplines. Students whose work is unrelated to games will also benefit from this minor, since it offers training in and experience with cutting edge technologies and design processes as well as a critical lens through which to understand these new technologies.

Statement for Programs of Study Catalog

## Course List

Code	Title	Hours
Required Colloquium 1		1
<a href="#">GSD 500</a>	Colloquium in Game Studies	
Required Seminar		4
<a href="#">GSD 501</a>	Seminar in Game Studies	
<a href="#">GSD 502</a>	Seminar in Game Design	
If both courses are taken the second serves as an elective in the minor		
Required Electives		8
An approved elective game studies course at the 500 level		
An approved elective game studies course at the 400/500 level		
Minimum Total Hours		13

## Other Requirements

### 1

Students are required to take this course only once for credit. In subsequent semesters students will be encouraged to sit in, as will affiliated Game Studies faculty from across campus. Graduate students enrolled in the Graduate Minor will be expected to return to the seminar at least once, towards the end of their program, to share their work. This transformation in role from student to speaker will serve to provide community, continuity, mentorship, and professional development for Graduate Minor degree students.

## Program Features

Academic Level Graduate

Is this minor?

An interdisciplinary study focusing on a single theme

Is This a Teacher Certification Program?

No

Will specialized accreditation be sought for this program?

No

Other than certification via the students' degree audits, is there any additional planned mechanism to award/honor successful completion of the minor?

No

## Delivery Method

This program is available:

On Campus - Students are required to be on campus, they may take some online courses.

## Enrollment

Will the department limit enrollment to the minor?

No

Describe how the department will monitor the admission to/enrollment in the minor.

A Game Studies Coordinator/Advisor will promote the minor, advise students, and handle all aspects of enrollment.

Are there any prerequisites for the proposed minor?

No

Number of Students in Program (estimate)

Year One Estimate

20

5th Year Estimate (or when fully implemented)

100

## Budget

Will the program or revision require staffing (faculty, advisors, etc.) beyond what is currently available?

No

Additional Budget Information

The proposed Game Studies Graduate Minor will be administered as a new program within Informatics, an interdisciplinary degree-granting unit hosted by the School of Information Sciences, alongside an undergraduate Game Studies & Design Minor. The Graduate Minor will receive from the iSchool the same kinds of administrative support that Informatics currently receives. However, just as Informatics administers and governs its existing academic programs independently, so will the Graduate Minor be independently administered by a Program Coordinator and a Steering Committee chaired by the Director of Informatics. Academic oversight for the Minor will be provided by an interdisciplinary faculty-led Curriculum Committee, with its Chair and members drawn from each college providing courses to the degree (currently Information Science, Education, FAA, LAS, Media, and Engineering).

This plan employs the same organizational and administrative structure as Informatics' existing Minor and PhD degree programs. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for the day-to-day management of both the Undergraduate and Graduate Minor degree programs, including advising students, and coordinating with academic units and their advising programs. The projected cost for a full time Program Coordinator, with one 50% FTE assistant, including an operating budget to cover basic office supplies and advertising expenses, is estimated to be \$120,000 (not including overhead expenses). This is the same budget as proposed in the undergraduate Game Studies & Design Minor (CIM-P proposal 1069), and is not an additional budget. These positions will report to the Director of Informatics. Lisa Bievenue, the Director of Informatics Programs, will take on the responsibilities for the Game Studies Program Coordinator position in an acting capacity until it can be filled.

Attach File(s)

## Financial Resources

How does the unit intend to financially support this proposal?

The Game Studies Graduate Minor will be a new degree program in Informatics which is hosted by the School of Information Sciences; accordingly, both the proposed undergraduate and graduate Minor programs will receive the same general administrative support that the existing Informatics degree programs receive. The salaries for the Program Coordinator and an administrative assistant, will be shared with the undergraduate Minor program and would be supported by IU cost recovery from three high enrollment core courses for the undergraduate Game Studies & Design Minor, which will be controlled by Informatics.

The 1 credit hour required Graduate Seminar will be facilitated by the Game Studies Program Coordinator. Elective courses will be staffed and funded by tenure track, specialized teaching and adjunct faculty in their home departments, which will receive the IUs for them. Because so many courses that support the Graduate Minor are taught by the faculty in the units where the courses originate, and because these courses, by design, serve their disciplinary majors as well as GSD minors, the costs associated with future course development and teaching will be likewise distributed.

Will the unit need to seek campus or other external resources?

No

Attach letters of support

## Resource Implications

### Facilities

Will the program require new or additional facilities or significant improvements to already existing facilities?

No

### Technology

Will the program need additional technology beyond what is currently available for the unit?

No

### Non-Technical Resources

Will the program require additional supplies, services or equipment (non-technical)?

No

## Resources

For each of these items, be sure to include in the response if the proposed new program or change will result in replacement of another program(s). If so, which program(s), what is the anticipated impact on faculty, students, and instructional resources? Please attach any letters of support/acknowledgement from faculty, students, and/or other impacted units as appropriate.

## Library Resources

Describe your proposal's impact on the University Library's resources, collections, and services. If necessary please consult with the appropriate disciplinary specialist within the University Library.

At present, all but a few of the courses exist. Over the several years that those courses have been developed, taught, and refined, the University Library's resources proved sufficient to support the developing programs. In our discussions with personnel in the Library, the understanding and support for popular culture, gaming, and game design includes members of the Library's faculty, with one already holding degrees in 3D Animation/Game Design and Media Studies.

In addition to housing an extensive collection of games in the Undergraduate Library, the Library provides access to the most widely recognized, top journals in game studies. These include: ACM Transactions on Modeling and Computer Simulation, Computers in Entertainment: CIE, EAI endorsed transactions on serious games, Eludamos journal for computer game culture, Entertainment Computing, GAME: The Italian Journal of Game Studies, Games and Culture, Games for Health Journal, JMIR Serious Games, International Journal of Serious Games, Loading..., New Media & Society, Science, Technology, & Human Values, and Simulation and Gaming.

Moreover, commercial resources are supplemented by other, relevant titles that are open-access and available on-line:

- Analog Game Studies – open access at <https://press.etc.cmu.edu/index.php/product/analog-game-studies-volume-i/>
- International Journal of Computer Game Research – open access at <https://gamestudies.org>
- Transactions of the Digital Games Research Association – open access at <http://todigra.org/>
- Well Played – open access at <https://press.etc.cmu.edu/index.php/publication-tag/well-played/>

Based off of our assessment, we believe that the University Library presently provides sufficient resources to ensure that the creation of these degree programs will have minimal financial impact on current operations. Should the program expand in future years, the Library encourages its coordinators to robustly engage in discussions of any expanded support needs for Library resources and services.

## EP Documentation

EP Control Number

EP.22.077

Attach Rollback/Approval Notices

This proposal requires HLC

No

inquiry

## DMI Documentation

Attach Final  
Approval Notices

Banner/Codebook  
Name

Program Code:

Minor Code	Conc Code	Degree Code	Major Code
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Senate Approval  
Date

Senate  
Conference  
Approval Date

BOT Approval  
Date

IBHE Approval  
Date

HLC Approval  
Date

Effective Date:

Attached  
Document  
Justification for  
this request

Program Reviewer  
Comments

**Deb Forgacs (dforgacs) (04/05/21 2:48 pm):** Rollback: requested.

**Kathy Martensen (kmartens) (04/23/21 2:48 pm):** Rollback: See email of 4/23/21 at approx. 2:45 p.m. RE: GSD courses.

**Allison McKinney (agrindly) (05/11/21 8:28 am):** Rollback: The Graduate College Executive Committee has requested some clarification. Per Graduate College policy on graduate minors, "The minor should consist of at least 12 graduate hours of course work in the sponsoring department(s). At least 8 to 12 graduate hours of the minor should be courses at the 500-level." With the current electives listing, how will students satisfy that requirement?