

## ASSIGNMENT

### Learning Objectives

*By completing this assignment, students will be able to:*

- identify, research, and represent to an outside audience a significant socio-cultural problem of students' choice
- demonstrate audience awareness in public-facing genres by clearly communicating the purpose of writing and choosing appropriate rhetorical means to make arguments
- practice critical thinking skills using a hands-on critical making approach
- experience designing a multimodal artifact that functions as a call for action
- practice the professional writing genre of proposal to pitch an idea

### ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW: FORESIGHT GAME DESIGN AS ADVOCACY

Our theme for this progression is climate change mitigation and imagining the future(s) of environmental change. You will work in teams of three members to collaboratively create a board game designed to explore imaginary futures of climate change. You will research your topic, brainstorm the project, collaboratively write a proposal, and compose and peer review the game design. As a game, it should be dynamic, imaginative, and fun; however, we will aim to shift the focus from interactive entertainment to interactive learning. Your game's goal will be to educate players about climate change and inspire them to reassess their daily choices that impact our environment.

#### **Rationale:**

We have long known that games (both digital and analog) have far more functions than simply serve as a fun activity: they transmit cultural knowledge, reflect societal values, and reinforce social norms. Gameplay is often designed to embrace and uncritically perpetuate problematic ideologies such as colonialism, militarism, or sexism (think about combat video games, or gender roles in games, etc.) However, the opposite is also true: games have the power to help us critically reassess and adjust our values and to educate players through the process of playing.

Recent research in critical game studies shows that games can create impactful learning and community-building experiences, which makes board games a great medium for critical thinking and advocacy. You will explore the potential of tabletop games to make a persuasive argument that would encourage players to critically think about their environmental footprint and moves them to action.

#### **REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF THIS ASSIGNMENT**

##### **Research Report:**

The goal of the research report is to inform your team about the issue that your game will focus on. You need to understand more nuances about this issue in order to design possible future scenarios for the game.

- Each team member will research and write up a research report on a designated aspect of the topic (the team assigns which aspect of the issue team members will research)
- Each research report needs to include at least 4 sources of different kinds (academic, journalist, opinion, background)
- Each research report should be at least 4 pages long and should follow MLA format, with the Works Cited page (not included in the 4-page count)
- Each team member's research report will be graded individually (10% of your final grade for the course)

### **Proposal:**

Address this document to potential publishers or organizations interested in possibly adopting your game: your goal is to convince them that the game is effective, entertaining, and well-designed and is ready to be presented to larger audiences.

- Collaboratively written
- 4—5 pages
- Include a theory section where you engage with the class readings about critical play to provide a theoretical foundation for your proposal
- Include a problem statement section to represent the specific issue that the game will address
- Articulate the educational goals of the game (What do you hope the players will learn about the issue?) Make sure to explain *how* the game would work to achieve the educational goals
- Clearly describe the proposed game format and rules
- Reference your influences and inspirations: give credit to the game(s) that served as the model(s) for your project
- Clearly state which components of the game would need to be professionally produced (e.g., how you envision the graphic design of the cards or the board; which elements of the game would need to be included in the printed version, how many elements are included in the set, etc.)

### **Game Materials**

This includes the collaboratively created elements of your game (e.g., cards, assets, tokens, board, etc.) Game materials do not have to be “professionally” designed: you are creating a playable prototype. In other words, the visuals need to be functional, but do not have to look perfect. You will not be graded on technical quality of the game pieces, but on how well they function in the game.

### **Additional (ungraded, but required) documents:**

#### **Teamwork Agreement and Project Tracking**

- Collaboratively written

[This file is supplemental material to Andrievskikh, *Student-Created Tabletop Foresight Games as Advocacy: Exploring Alternatives to the Op-Ed Genre in First-Year Writing Courses*, prompt 8.1 (2024), doi: 10.31719/pjaw.v8i1.169]

- Should include a chart to keep track of each member's contributions and rules for teamwork and accountability
- Who is responsible for which part of research
- How the work on the project is split up among the team members
- Should include notes from each class meeting and team meetings outside of class.

### **Final Reflection**

- Each team member writes their own reflection
- At least 2 pages long
- Reflect on your team's work process and accountability
- Reflect on your learning of critical thinking, research, and writing skills
- Talk about the rhetorical choices your team made in creating the game
- Tell the story of the idea and your process, including revisions
- Include self-assessment of effectiveness, clarity, and educational potential of the game that your team created.

### **Revision:**

You will submit a draft of all written documents first and will later revise and resubmit based on instructor and peer feedback and the final version of your game design.

### **Grading:**

Research report: 10% of your final grade for the course

Project Proposal: 10%

Game Materials and Pitch / Presentation: 10%