FOR APPROVAL   **PUBLIC**   **OPEN SESSION**

TO:	UTSC Academic Affairs Committee
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DATE:	February 06, 2025
AGENDA ITEM:	5

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Minor Modifications: Undergraduate Curriculum Changes, Humanities UTSC (For approval)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

The UTSC Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) "is concerned with matters affecting the teaching, learning and research functions of the Campus (AAC *Terms of Reference*, section 4)." Under section 5.6 of its *Terms of Reference*, the AAC is responsible for approval of "major and minor modifications to existing degree programs."

The AAC has responsibility for the approval of major and minor modifications to existing programs as defined by the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP, Section 3.1 and 3.3).

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For Approval] (February 06, 2025)**

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

No previous action in governance has been taken on this item.

HIGHLIGHTS:

This package contains minor modifications to the undergraduate curriculum submitted by the UTSC Humanities academic units listed below. These changes require governance approval. Minor

modifications are defined as adjustments that do not substantially alter program or course learning outcomes but may involve modest changes to the structure of a program or course. Upon approval, these updates will be implemented for the 2025-2026 academic year.

- Department of English (Report: Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Humanities for Approval)
    - 4 New Courses:
        - ENGB40H3: Video Games and Literature
        - ENGD33H3: Studies in Storytelling Games
        - FLMC55H3: The Documentary Film
        - FLMD94H3: Theories and Practices of Documentary Film
    - 1 Course Change:
        - ENGC41H3: Video Game Narratives

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no significant financial implications to the campus operating budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved:

THAT the proposed Humanities undergraduate curriculum changes for the 2025-26 academic year, as detailed in the respective curriculum report, be approved.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

1. Report - Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Humanities for Approval

University of Toronto Scarborough
2024-25 Curriculum Cycle
Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Humanities for
Approval
February 06, 2025

English (UTSC), Department of

4 New Courses - No Committee

ENGB40H3: Video Games and Literature

Description:
What is the relationship between "literature" and video games? This class will explore how we can read this relatively new – but increasingly dominant – media against and alongside more established literary forms like prose, poetry, and film, and will give students the opportunity to practice critical close reading skills. The course will focus on thematic and formal resonances between digital texts ("games") and traditional texts ("literature"), and will also explore questions of direct adaptation (books that become games, games that become film, etc.).

Exclusions: SMC198

Enrolment Limits: 80

Recommended Preparation: ENGA01H3

Delivery Method: Hybrid

Methods of Assessment:
Students will be evaluated using the following methods: - Participation in virtual small-group discussion sessions (4-6 per term, utilizing the hybrid delivery model and alternating between online discussions and asynchronous work like discussion boards) [Outcomes 2-3] - In-class and asynchronous low-stakes responses (a combination of personal reflection and lecture absorption) [Outcomes 2, 3, 4, 5] - Quizzes (on content and as close reading practice) [Outcomes 1, 4] - Final project (taking the form of either a comparative essay or a critical-creative endeavor such as an adaptation proposal or game story skeleton) [Outcomes 2, 3, 4]

CNC Allowed: Y

Credit Value: fixed: 0.5

Learning Outcomes:
In this course, students will: 1. Identify major historical and technological developments in the video game form, and the literary and cultural impact of these developments. 2. Discuss the ways in which video games both uphold and challenge our notions of "literature" and what constitutes a "literary" text. 3. Explore specific relationships between games and more traditional forms (e.g., a story or novel adapted into a video game, a video game adapted into film, etc.). 4. Practice the core skill of critical close reading, using literary lenses and a visual culture toolset. 5. Reflect on their own expectations and valuations of "literature" through writing on their individual reading/watching/playing experiences.

Course Experience: University-Based Experience

Topics Covered:
Topics that will be covered in the course include: - The history and evolution of the video game form - How decision-based gaming and interactive narrative modes work across a range of different game forms - The complications video games offer to our understanding of "authorship," authorial control, and the author-reader relationship - Intertextual resonances (thematic and structural) between video games and literary forms like prose, poetry, and film - Specific adaptation and interpretation questions (problems, possibilities) when adapting a piece of static media (e.g., a novel or story) into a video game - Specific adaptation and interpretation questions (problems, possibilities) when adapting a video game into film or television - Gaming culture and communities, including the problems and debates generated over recent years (especially around diversity, representation, and ethics of violence and sensation)

Rationale:
After running ENGC41H3 three times (since 2021), it is increasingly clear of the need for this course to introduce students' theme and content at a B-level to help to introduce students to topics earlier and better prep them for C-level courses in this topic. Also, the video game form is too capacious for a single class to cover, and therefore, ENGC41H3 enrollment was overburdened. This B-level course will allow for a more introductory look at how video games relate to

literature, clearing the way for the C-level to focus more deliberately on narratological questions. Furthermore, the advent of UTM's minor program in Games Studies invites the other campuses to continue increasing the frequency and variety of video game courses. The enrollments for ENGC41H3 is high and thus due to the demand for this topic there is justification for this new course. Moreover, this course's title and intent nicely follow on from the department's core introductory lecture ENGA01H3 course and reflect the other B- and C-level offerings in the curriculum, such as ENGB30H3, ENGB52H3 and ENGC16/17H3 and ENGC46H3. This course is a University-Based Experiential Learning classification due to reflective assignments (such as the personal reflections and the final essay) that meet the requirements for this tagging.

Rationale on Hybrid model:
This course will be scheduled as a 2hr + 1hr weekly meeting format, with the 2hr block being an in-person lecture on course content, and the 1hr block alternating between online discussion sessions (e.g., topic prompts, close reading workshops, etc.) and asynchronous work (e.g., contribution to discussion boards). A limited number of online sessions may also be reserved for liveplay demonstrations or other digital gaming opportunities.
The hybrid model allows for two main benefits:
1. Closer direct engagement with video games (e.g., livecast of gameplay, which isn't always possible in the classroom setting due to machinery restrictions, and participation through chat and other digital tools)
2. Virtual discussion sessions can be sectioned into smaller groups, both through breakout rooms and by alternating synchronous meetings with asynchronous work – this will allow students in a larger lecture course the opportunity to interact in more intimate discussions with each other, and with the professor, TAs, and guest experts.

Consultation:
DCC Approval: September 13, 2024
RO Approval: Shelby V, December 6, 2024
EL Consultation: November 25, 2024
PSY Consultation: November 18, 2024
Consultation with Andrew Cooper, Psychology, Nov 17, 2024

Resources:
The B-level course will be taught by permanent faculty and will require TA support to assist in the administration of the course which will be covered by the department's existing budget.

Overlap with Existing Courses:
At the St George campus, BMS433 Video Games and Culture and WDW335 From Book to Map to Video Game offer some overlap but their focus is not specifically literary, and they also offer the topics and approaches more suited to advanced-level courses. ENG263 Play and Games focuses more on elements of game studies, including game design and theories of play, and therefore is not a significant overlap with this course
SMC198 is also not specifically literary, but in the department's consultations with the lead instructor (Felan Parker) there is sufficient overlap in content to add as an exclusion to ENGB40H3
Consultation with Prof Andrew Cooper (Psychology) regarding his newly proposed course PSYB83H3: Psychology and Video Games established that this course and his are substantially different. Whereas this course focuses on intersections between video games and literary texts, PSYB83H3 brings empirical research in philosophy to bear on video games.

Programs of Study for Which This Course Might be Suitable:
English Literature (Specialist, Major, Minor)
Film Studies (Major, Minor)

Instructor:
Sonja Nikkila

Proposal Status:
Under Review

ENGD33H3: Studies in Storytelling Games

Description:

An advanced study of games as interactive storytelling vehicles. Possible topics and approaches might include: a sustained look at a single video game or closely related set of games; tracing a thematic or structural element across different games; or exploring collaborative storytelling formats like table-top roleplaying games. Note: This is a highly interactive course, in which students will play a variety of different game forms – while no gaming skill is expected or required, presence and willingness is.

Prerequisites: 1.0 credit at the C-level in ENG or FLM

Enrolment Limits: 22

Recommended Preparation: ENGB4H3 and ENGC41H3

Delivery Method: In Person

Methods of Assessment:

As with the topics, these will vary based on the semester's approach, but the core assessments will reflect our department's D-level expectations:
- Direct engagement and self-directed inquiry (the seminar format itself resting more heavily on student questions, suggestions, and discussions) [Outcomes 1-2]
- Research demonstrations like annotated bibliographies (individual or collaborative) [Outcome 3]
- Analytic writing assignments, showcasing the understanding and application of critical theory, research, and/or formal textual interpretations [Outcomes 2-3]
- Communication skills through individual or group presentations, leading seminar discussion, visual media displays like posters, etc. [Outcomes 2, 3, 4]
- Creative work demonstrating the students' experiential understanding of the form – this could be through the proposing of a game, the creation of a game segment, or the playing of a collaborative storytelling game like Dungeons & Dragons. This assignment includes a reflection on their EL experience in relation to course objectives, particularly LOs 1 and 2. [Outcomes 1, 2, 4]

CNC Allowed: Y

Credit Value: fixed: 0.5

Learning Outcomes:

In this course, students will:
1. Deepen their understanding of the formal problems (and possibilities) of studying games as literature

2. Analyze (in writing) and discuss (in seminar) specific gaming forms and their narrative affordances
3. Conduct scholarly research on games and gaming narratives, using both traditional academic routes (e.g., library resources) as well as broader media literacy skills to find information from outside the academy (e.g., open web journalism, middle-state publication)
4. Directly experience gaming narratives in various ways, in individual or collaborative settings: by playing games, by constructing games, and/or by engaging with gaming communities (such as at conventions or clubs)

Course Experience: University-Based Experience

Topics Covered:
Topics may vary from semester to semester, but could include:
- A sustained critical exploration of a single game throughout the semester (including creating playthrough commentaries and critical analyses).
- Tracing a thematic or formal question through a variety of games (for instance, exploring questions of how race, gender, nation, sexuality, or disability is represented).
- Focusing on a particular gaming genre or subgenre to explore its literary, cultural, and material impacts. This "stream" of the course would allow for students to express their understanding by ultimately creating their own game (or at least the rudiments thereof).

Rationale:
After running ENGC41H3 three times (since 2021), it is increasingly clear of the need for this course. The video game C-level course is limited for a single class to cover and was overburdened by trying to do too much. This D-level course will allow for more sustained critical and theoretical explorations of particular games or topics, which cannot fit into the structural narratological coverage required by ENGC41H3. The advent of UTM's minor program in Games Studies invites the other campuses to continue increasing the frequency and variety of video game courses. If the proposed new B-level course goes through, it makes curricular sense to have a "cluster" of games-focused courses at three different levels. Moreover, this class's title and intent fits with the department's D-level "Topics" and "Studies" courses, offering significant instructional flexibility, and the ability to adapt to issues that might arise in the gaming world. The University Based experiential learning aspect of this course includes having students do creative projects in which they produce games themselves and write an accompanying reflective piece on the narrative possibilities of interactive storytelling games, exploring issues such as the impact of gaming experiences on how they see power and control working in storytelling and how collaborative storytelling challenges or complicates traditional ideas of authorship.

Consultation:
DCC Date: September 13, 2024
RO Date and rep Name: Shelby Verboven, December 6, 2024
EL Consultation: November 25, 2024

Resources: The seminar will be taught by permanent faculty, with no TA support needed. No external resources required.

Overlap with Existing Courses:
Depending on the semester offered, there may at times be overlap with courses like ENG319 Sexuality, Race, and Gender in Video Games and Gaming Culture (at UTM) or BMS433 Video Games and Culture; but the department's ongoing work with the tricampus Games Studies Group will work to keep this seminar differentiated from other offerings.

Programs of Study for Which This Course Might be Suitable:
English Literature (Specialist, Major, Minor)
Film Studies (Major, Minor)

Instructor:
Sonja Nikkila

Proposal Status:
Under Review

FLMC55H3: The Documentary Film

Description:

This study of films from major movements in the documentary tradition including ethnography, cinéma vérité, social documentary, personal documentary, and "reality television". Schools of thought and major debates in the history of documentary studies will also be introduced.

Prerequisites: 6.0 credits, including 0.5 credit in FLM or ENGA10H3 or ENGA11H3

Exclusions: CIN312Y1

Enrolment Limits: 50

Recommended Preparation: FLMB71H3 or ENGA02H3

Delivery Method: In Person

Methods of Assessment:
- Tests/quizzes (1, 2, 4)
- Analytical Essays (2, 3, 4)
- Short Viewing Responses (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Research exercises (4)

CNC Allowed: Y

Credit Value: fixed: 0.5

Learning Outcomes:
Students will:
1. Gain an understanding of the history and features of the documentary genre
2. Be able to identify the features and history of a variety of sub-genres in documentary
3. Learn to closely analyze and write persuasively about documentary
4. Learn the vocabulary and methodologies of documentary studies

Topics Covered:
- History of the documentary film
- Development and examples of a variety of sub-genres and forms in documentary (e.g. cinema verité, ethnographic documentary, social documentary,

- personal documentary, etc.)
- Major documentary filmmakers
- Vocabulary, methodologies, and critical and theoretical approaches to documentary studies
- Writing analytically about documentary film

Rationale:

To support the departments upcoming Film Studies Major program (Fall 2025), the department is introducing this course to align with C-level goals across this program and other programs offered in English. Courses focused on genre are generally offered at the C-level – where they learn the forms, features, and history of a genre before having the opportunity to engage in more in-depth ways with theories and methods at the D-level. This proposed C-level will give students a more foundational course in the documentary genre, better preparing them for that D-level course and other D-level film courses.

Consultation:

DCC Date: September 13, 2024
RO Approval: Shelby V, December 6, 2024

Resources: The course will be taught and led by Alice Maurice and other faculty members from the English department. TAs resources or additional funding is not required.

Overlap with Existing Courses:

CIN312Y1: The Documentary Film directly overlaps with this course in terms of subject matter and is listed as an exclusion.

Programs of Study for Which This Course Might be Suitable:

Film Studies, English, Journalism, Media Studies

Instructor:

Alice Maurice (and other)

Proposal Status:

Under Review

FLMD94H3: Theories and Practices of Documentary Film

Description:

The study of theories, methodologies, and artistic approaches to documentary film. This course takes a critical and creative approach to the study of documentaries and includes a hands-on video production component. Advanced theoretical readings and topics will explore the tensions between reality and representation, art and politics, technology and narrative, film and audience, and trust and exploitation in documentary filmmaking.

Prerequisites: 1.0 credit at C-level in ENG or FLM courses

Exclusions: (ENGD94H3), CIN312Y1

Enrolment Limits: 22

Recommended Preparation: Additional 0.5 credit at the B- or C-level in FLM courses or FLMC55

Delivery Method: In Person

Methods of Assessment:

Methods of assessment (I've matched the assessment type to the learning outcomes above):
Analytical Essays (1, 2, 3)
Short Viewing Responses (2, 3, 4)
Reading Responses (1, 2)
Short video projects (2, 4)

CNC Allowed: Y

Credit Value: fixed: 0.5

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:
1. Gain knowledge of advanced theories in Documentary Studies
2. Gain a strong understanding of the relation between theory and practice in documentary filmmaking
3. Learn about diverse historical and contemporary practices and methods in documentary filmmaking
4. Be able to produce and reflect on short documentary projects

Course Experience: Partnership-Based Experience

Topics Covered:

The study of the theories, methodologies, and artistic approaches to documentary film. This course takes a critical and creative approach to the study of documentaries and includes a hands-on production component. Advanced theoretical readings and topics will explore the tensions between reality and representation, art and politics, technology and narrative, film and audience, and trust and exploitation in documentary filmmaking.

Rationale:

This new course is a significant revision of ENGD94H3, a long-standing and important offering in the department's Film program, which has previously been counted as an elective for the Minor in Film Studies. Last year, when the department revised course codes for courses counting toward the minor, ENGD94H3 was inadvertently excluded from the list. The proposed new course corrects this oversight and introduces substantive updates to the course content.
1. The prerequisites for this course align with other D-level FLM courses in the department. While ENGC55H3 is recommended, it is not a formal prerequisite, but it would be beneficial for students.
2. This course includes an Experiential Learning (EL) component, reflecting ENGD94H3's long-standing creative and hands-on production focus, which involved local filmmakers. However, this aspect was not clearly conveyed in the course title and description. The updated course title and description more accurately reflect the course's content, emphasizing its EL component. While it remains a critical, "documentary studies" course, the advanced theoretical content and EL component are more clearly highlighted. The course will feature a practical, hands-on video production element, with assignments including short video exercises and a mini documentary. Additionally, students will participate in a workshop and/or mentoring sessions with local filmmakers and arts professionals, sharing their short videos with mentors.
3. Compared to ENGD94H3, the learning outcomes (LOs), topics covered, and assessment methods have been updated to better align with the course content. LOs 2-3 and the short video project emphasize practical approaches, while LO 1 and the Analytical Essay focus on advanced theoretical content. Reading and

viewing responses correspond to the relevant learning outcomes, with reading responses reflecting LO1, and viewing responses aligning with LOs 2-4. As an elective for the Film Studies Minor (and potentially the new Film Studies Major), this course allows students to explore the documentary genre in depth. It builds upon the proposed C-level Documentary Film course by adding a comprehensive theoretical, historical, and practical dimension to the study of documentary. The theoretical and historical elements are integrated into LOs 1-3 and are assessed through essays, reading responses, and viewing responses.

Consultation:
DCC Approval: September 2024
RO Approval: Shelby V.; October 24 2024
EL Dean's Office consultation: November 25, 2025
Consulted with Kay Kim, Management, since ENGD94H is listed as a prerequisite for MGSC12H3, January 07, 2025.

Resources:
ENGD94H3 resources are being transferred over to this course, and therefore, no additional TA or resources are required.

Programs of Study for Which This Course Might be Suitable:
English, Film Studies, Journalism, Media Studies

Instructor:
Alice Maurice

Proposal Status:
Under Review

1 Course Modification - No Committee

ENGC41H3: Video Game Narratives

Title:

Previous: Video Games: Exploring the Virtual Narrative

New: Video Game Narratives

Description:

Previous: How do video games connect to English literature? In what ways can they be "read" and assessed as storytelling texts? How do video game narratives reflect historical, cultural, and social concerns? Although active playing will be a required part of the course, students of all video game experience levels are welcome.

New: In what ways can video games be "read" and assessed as storytelling texts? And how do those video game narratives reflect historical, cultural, and social concerns? Students will explore game narratives by learning about critical and structural approaches, but also through personal reflective practices. Although active playing will be a required part of the course, all video game experience levels are welcome.

Enrolment Limits:

Previous: 60

New: 45

Recommended Preparation:

Previous: ENGA01H3 and ENGA02H3

New: ENGA01H3 and ENGA02H3 and ENGB40H3

Methods of Assessment:

Previous:
• In-class participation. Class discussions will allow students to express and experiment with critical interpretations of video games (for instance, exercises such as structured debates on the talking points and controversies in gaming communities)
• "Playgroup" participation (on the model of Facilitated Learning Groups). These groups will be constructed with the intention of giving all students the opportunity to play and discuss games, regardless of skill level. They will also be a more efficient way of using any campus gaming resources. Finally, the self/peer evaluation structure will help develop students' interpersonal and collaborative abilities.
• Quizzes. These low-stakes tests will evaluate students' knowledge of video game history, technological developments, vocabulary, and narrative concepts.
• Essay. This will be an argumentative close reading essay creating a game (or games) as a literary text available to our discipline's modes of analysis.
• Group project assignment. The goal of the final project will be to produce a video game narrative (and, based on student interests and abilities, possibly some basic game construction or visual storyboarding).

New:
The methods of assessment still include participation and engagement, "play group" participation, and an essay. The bulk of writing is done through weekly play journals, where students reflect upon their experience playing and participating in storytelling ventures. The group project is now a collaborative storytelling venture through a Dungeons & Dragons campaign. Quizzes have been removed.

Learning Outcomes:

Previous:
1) Identify major historical and technological developments in video games and the causes for these developments.
2) Understand the evolution of video games into the present gaming phenomenon, and the consequent effects on the world of English literature.
3) Identify narrative themes and concepts in video games, including character development (and how players connect to characters in-game), plotting, space/time, genre, collaborative authorship, and the nature of "reading" in an interactive storytelling mode.
4) Using the components above, produce critical interpretations of video games.
5) Construct a close reading of a video game or games, in order to shape an argument about the effects of different narrative styles and techniques.
6) Create an original game narrative that showcases the elements of video game storytelling encountered in the course and provide a rationale explaining their creative decisions.

New:
The learning outcomes will now focus more exclusively on the learning and applying of critical narrative analysis and will no longer include more "introductory" elements like the historical and technological survey of how video games have developed as a storytelling media. Outcomes will also more deliberately highlight the reflective and interactive element of the course, through weekly play journals and engaged play experiences.

Course Experience:

Previous: None

New: University-Based Experience

Rationale:

1. Changes to title, description, Learning outcomes, and methods of assessments – are done for the following reasons:
- To narrow down an overburdened course that was attempting to be both an introduction to the literary study of video games as well as an investigation of specific narratological elements, the new learning outcomes reflect this narrowing of themes and topics covered in this course.
- To reflect the new proposed B- and D-level ENG video game courses, especially the B-level ("Video Games and Literature"), which will make space for the media history and evolutions of the form.
Consultation with Prof Andrew Cooper (Psychology) regarding his newly proposed course PSYB83H3: Psychology and Video Games established that this course and his are substantially different. Whereas this course focuses on narrative structure, analyzing games from a literary perspective, PSYB83H3 brings empirical research in philosophy to bear on video games.

2. The enrollment number was reduced to 45 to align with all the Department of English courses, wherein C-level courses are capped at 45.

3. The prerequisites are changing to align with other C-level courses in English. ENGA01H3 and ENGA02H3 are recommended preparations because they introduce students to university level literary studies and essay writing. ENGB40H3 is recommended preparation as an introduction to the video game genre. This course is helpful but not necessary (not a formal prerequisite) since we would like this course to remain open to many interested students. Experience in ENGB40H3 is not assumed.

4. The course modifications include adding reflective assignments (play journaling) where students reflect on their experience using games and creating storytelling ventures. Consultation with the EL office confirmed that this now satisfies the category of University Based Experiential Learning.

Consultation:
Psychology Consultation regarding the newly proposed PSYB83H3: Psychology and Video Games, Nov 17, 2024
DCC Approval: September 13, 2024
RO Approval: Shelby V. December 6, 2024
EL Consultation: November 25, 2024

Resources: None

Programs of Study for Which This Course Might be Suitable:
English Literature (Specialist, Major, Minor)
Film Studies (Major, Minor)

Instructor:
Sonja Nikkila

Proposal Status:
Under Review