

Fall 2023 ITLS-4420-001 Syllabus

ITLS 4420- Developmental Esports

Meeting Time & Location

Thursdays 12:30pm-2:30pm; Distribution (official campus map location) which is the USU Esports Center.

Course Description

This course is designed for students seeking an understanding of and skill development in esports games. Skill development will occur through active participation in games with classmates as well as time spent watching expert game play. Note that like the USU Esports club this class is meant for both casual and competitive gamers.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will progress in the following **objectives**:

1. [knowledge] *Gain a basic understanding* of Esports games. Acknowledging that some titles take years to master, you will understand the relevant terminology and how each game fits into larger genre categories, and the game mechanics including (if relevant) various roles/positions within the game.
2. [application] *Learn to apply course material* by playing and/or coaching Esports games. This is a hands on class in which the bulk of our time will be spent on direct and intentional game play, including reflection, or supporting the game play and development of others.
3. [acquiring skills] *Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team* both inside and outside of game play. Inside game play you will learn more about game specific roles and/or shifting responsibilities. Outside of game play you will develop facility in mentor/mentee interactions.

Progress on the objectives above will be manifested in the following **outcomes**:

1. At family holidays you will be able to respond with compelling stories about why taking a development esports class can be helpful to you or others.
2. You will be able to look back on end of unit reflections and see your own progression as a mentor, or as a player (especially of games that are new to you), or as a team member.

Larger context. Experiences in this class are most applicable to gameplay. They are also relevant to Esports adjacent activities, such as using your growing knowledge of games in shoutcasting, coaching, journalism, coordinating programs, marketing/media about Esports, event hosting, etc . . .

Instructor

Dr. Andrew Walker (Andy)

Email: andy.walker@usu.edu (mailto:andy.walker@usu.edu)

Discord tag: countzero900

The best way to reach me is via email. I'm old. I did take the enormous step of activating notifications on my phone for discord, it's a good tool for all of us as it provides a connection mechanism to the USU Esports club.

Course Resources

There will be no required readings/books to buy for this course.

"Free" Esports club membership - The college of education does not have any course fees. You will get a "free" membership to USU Esports pulled from the college differential tuition that all students pay into (instead of course fees). This requires a proactive step on your part that we'll do on day one of class.

Course Requirements

Each student will:

1. Show up to class with the intention of participating in the game we are playing as well as the discussions
2. Participate in the games and answer the discussion at the end of each unit
3. Respect all in the class and show up with a good attitude to the game that we are playing

Evaluation Methods and Criteria

There are no tests or quizzes for this class. Each unit (consisting of one game per 2 week span) will have one Professional Game from that weeks game that you will be required to watch. After the second week there will be a discussion that you will be required to do. They will be worth 1 point each, and will require 1 COMPLETE SENTENCE" about that unit to get the point.

Each unit will contain a total of **3 points**:

Showing up to class: **1 point/week (2 points total)**

Discussion: **1 point**

Absences. Life happens and you may not be able to make it a particular week. I would like to know in advance mostly because I care about students and sometimes there are University resources that may be helpful. This is a challenging class to do make-up work in so the pressure valve is attending Esports events. You can get make-up credit for attending USU Esports Events (**1 point** per event), up to four makeup points can be applied to your grade. You will need to DM me a photo of you at the event in order to receive a makeup point.

Grade Scheme

This class is a P/F class. You need to earn a grade of **60% in order to pass**. It is in everyone's best interest for that to happen. Note you are not graded on the quality of your play but on your engagement with the class.

Course Schedule/Outline

Aug 31:	Syllabus/Discord/Club signup/Chess
Sept 7:	Intro to League of Legends
Sept 14:	League of Legends/Intramural
Sept 21:	Intro to Rocket League

Sept 28:	Rocket League/Intramural
Oct 5:	Intro to Valorant
Oct 12:	Valorant/Intramural
Oct 19:	Intro to Overwatch 2
Oct 26:	Overwatch 2/Intramural
Nov 2:	Intro to Halo
Nov 9:	Halo/Intramural
Nov 16:	Intro to Counterstrike 2
Nov 23:	THANKSGIVING BREAK
Nov 30:	Counterstrike 2/Intramural
December 7:	Class Reflection & Free play

Assumption of Risk

All classes, programs, and extracurricular activities within the University involve some risk, and certain ones involve travel. The University provides opportunities to participate in these programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students should not participate in them if they do not care to assume the risks. Students can ask the respective program leaders/sponsors about the possible risks a program may generate, and if students are not willing to assume the risks, they should not select that program. By voluntarily participating in classes, programs, and extracurricular activities, a student does so at his or her own risk. General information about University Risk Management policies, insurance coverage, vehicle use policies, and risk management forms can be found at: <http://www.usu.edu/riskmgmt/> (<http://www.usu.edu/riskmgmt/>)

Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. (<http://libguides.usu.edu/rc>)

Classroom Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article5>) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (<https://www.usu.edu/policies/403/>) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University's Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
 - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually;"
 - Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
 - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
 - Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
 - Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
 - Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.
- **Falsification:** altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- **Plagiarism:** representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6>)

Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

General Overview

USU strives to provide an environment for students and employees that is free from discrimination (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/non-discrimination>) and sexual misconduct (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/sexual-misconduct/Sexual-Misconduct-Terms>). If you experience sexual misconduct or discrimination at any point during the semester inside or outside of class, you are encouraged to contact the USU Title IX Coordinator via Distance Education room 400 in Logan, 435-797-1266 (tel:1-435-797-1266), titleix@usu.edu (<mailto:titleix@usu.edu>), or at [equity.usu.edu/report](https://www.usu.edu/equity/report) (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/report>). You can learn more about the USU resources available for individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct at [sexualrespect.usu.edu](https://www.usu.edu/sexual-respect/) (<https://www.usu.edu/sexual-respect/>). Resources for individuals who have experienced discrimination are listed at [equity.usu.edu/resources](https://www.usu.edu/equity/resources) (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/resources>).

Required Reporting of Sexual Misconduct

The instructor is designated by USU as a "reporting employee (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/sexual-misconduct/employees#reporting>)." This means that if you share information about sexual misconduct (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/sexual-misconduct/Sexual-Misconduct-Terms>) (sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual assault, relationship violence, or sex-based stalking) with the instructor, they *will report* that information to the USU Title IX Coordinator. The instructor is also required to tell you about designated confidential resources (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/sexual-misconduct/confidential-resources>), supportive measures (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/Supportive-Measures>), and how you can file a report (<https://www.usu.edu/equity/report>) with the USU Title IX Coordinator.

Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (<http://www.usu.edu/drc/>) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu (<mailto:drc@usu.edu>)). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

Respect for Diversity

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: <https://studentaffairs.usu.edu> (<https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/>), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu (<mailto:studentservices@usu.edu>), TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: <https://www.usu.edu/involvement/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services> (<https://www.usu.edu/involvement/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services>), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
- Access and Diversity: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu> (<http://accesscenter.usu.edu/>), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu (<mailto:access@usu.edu>); TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture> (<http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture>), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315

- LGBTQA Programs: <http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa> (<http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa/>), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: <https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity> (<https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity/>), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:

The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: <https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode> (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/>)

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7>).

Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:

- Student Conduct (<http://www.usu.edu/studentconduct>)
- Student Code (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/>)
- Academic Integrity (<https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6>)
- USU Academic Policies and Procedures (<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=546>)
- Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility Policy (<https://www.usu.edu/policies/403/>)

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

General Health Protocols

The cold, flu, COVID-19, and other illnesses can have an impact on the health of our university community. USU welcomes the wearing of masks in all university buildings and encourages taking measures to mitigate risk as recommended by federal and state public health officials: getting vaccinated, staying home if you are sick (even with mild symptoms), and frequent hand washing.

Mental Health

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (<https://counseling.usu.edu>).

Students are also encouraged to download the "SafeUT App" (<https://safeut.org/>) to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.

Personal Diversity Statement

As a department that I am grateful to be a part of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences does a lot of research that is centered around broadening participation. Gaming is an area where the community is very much interested in being inclusive and also has a lot of regrettable gatekeeping, misogyny, homophobia, etc... some of that is baked right

into the games, some of it is about who is making games, and how they are discussed in the media. I am always up for a respectful discussion. I do encourage us to be actively welcoming to all. If you say something insensitive I'm likely to chat you up about it. I'm terrible in the moment so it may take me a week to think and circle back. I will because it is important to me. I approach those conversations with kindness and questions.

If you hear something I missed I'd love to hear about it and I will ask what you think would be helpful as a next step before widening the discussion. If you are not comfortable talking to me (which is perfectly fine) I encourage you to use the resources listed above.

I'll bore you with a couple stories in our first class related to this and why you can personally benefit from being inclusive even and especially as an ally for others.