

Dungeons and Dragons: Self-Exploration Through Collaborative Storytelling

IDH2930, Class Number 2335

Class Periods: Wednesday period 9, 4:05pm – 4:55pm

Location: LIT 0119

Academic Term: Spring 2023

Instructor:

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Office Hours: By appointment

Peer Instructor:

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Office Hours: TBA, by appointment

Course Description

Dubbed “The World’s Greatest Roleplaying Game,” Dungeons and Dragons has been inspiring people all over the world to explore the limits of their imagination ever since its release almost 50 years ago. This course will analyze the most recent fifth-edition Dungeons and Dragons player’s handbook as a tool for navigating themes, dilemmas, and worlds that are impossible to experience outside of a game. Students will gain a foundational knowledge of the game’s rules, learn how to create compelling characters, encounters, and stories, and will have the opportunity to play through several game modules as hands-on practice for these concepts. No prior experience necessary!

Course Objectives

- Discuss the history of Dungeons and Dragons, mostly focusing on its social impact
- Learn the basic rules of Dungeons and Dragons and similar role-playing games
- Learn how to create a cohesive character and party of characters
- Build combat, roleplay, and puzzle encounters for a variety of character levels, and learn how to properly distribute loot and experience points for those encounters
- Learn how to develop collaborative storytelling and improvisation strategies to create engaging and memorable NPCs, moments, storylines, and player characters
- Create a safe, fun, and stimulating gaming environment for participants/players

Materials and Supply Fees

There are **NO REQUIRED MATERIALS** for this course.

Recommended Materials:

- A set of the seven major dice: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20, d100 (one extra d10 will allow us to make a d100, using one d10 for the ones and tens place, respectively)

Required Textbooks

There is no required textbook for this course. A large collection of rule books is nice to have but is often prohibitively expensive. Students will make use of online resources where necessary.

Recommended Textbooks

Player’s Handbook 5th Edition, Wizards of the Coast, 2014, ISBN: 9780786965601

This book is recommended and is **not required**. Students will be able to succeed in this course without purchasing a copy of the *Player’s Handbook*, as much of the information contained within it can be found online for free. If a student does decide to purchase, only the 5th edition will be acceptable. All other editions are not related to—and sometimes radically different from—the course material we will cover.

Course Schedule

Week 1:	Drop-Add, Syllabus, Introduction
Week 2:	Building Your Character
Week 3:	Building a Cohesive Party
Week 4:	Worldbuilding and Setting
Week 5:	Rules of Play
Week 6:	Encounter Building, Part 1: The Basics
Week 7:	Rewards, Experience Points, and Loot
Week 8:	Creating and Using the Environment
Week 9:	Maintaining the Story
Week 10:	Designing Compelling NPCs
Week 11:	Puzzles, Riddles, and Traps
Week 12:	Encounter Building, Part 2: Advanced
Week 13:	Designing the Game for the Players
Week 14:	Improvisation
Week 15:	Final Report Due , Wrapping Up and Final Thoughts

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy

Attendance for this course is required. Since we only meet once per week, missing class entails missing valuable instructional time. Students are allowed 1 unexcused absence, after which the student will begin to lose points in Attendance. Exceptions can be made for extenuating circumstances, university-approved excuses, or other situations that will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Homework Assignments will be assigned a late penalty of 10% for 1 day late, 30% for 2 days late, and 50% for 3 days late. After 3 days have passed, a score of 0 will be assigned. The Final Report will not be accepted late. If at any point you need an extension on an assignment, please reach out. We want to help and will do so where we can.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click here to read the university attendance policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Total Points	Percentage of Final Grade
Homework	20 each	60%
Participation/Attendance	100	10%
Final Report	100	30%
		100%

Group Work

Dungeons and Dragons is an activity that *must* be done in groups. Throughout this course we may split students up into groups for discussion, to work together on assignments, or for in class activities.

Homework

There will typically be only one assignment per week for this course, and it will be related to the material covered the previous week. Depending on the assignment, students may be required to give a brief explanation of their homework to the class, one minute or less in length. This spoken explanation will be ungraded, it simply functions as a way for students to share their work with each other for discussion.

Final Report

The Final Report will be due the last week of class. Prompts for the Final Report will be announced several weeks before the due date. The length of the Final Report will be roughly 1000-1200 words, and more details will be made available in Canvas.

Grading Policy

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
90 – 100	A	4.00
80 – 89	B	3.00
70 – 79	C	2.00
60 – 69	D	1.00
0 – 59	E	0.00

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, Assault, or Violence

If you or a friend has been subjected to sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or violence contact the **Office of Title IX Compliance**, located at Yon Hall Room 427, 1908 Stadium Road, (352) 273-1094, title-ix@ufl.edu

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>.

COVID-19

- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus.
- If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect, you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.
- Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu.
<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling; <https://career.ufl.edu>.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Student Complaints Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>; <https://care.dso.ufl.edu>.

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>.