

Journal 29

Honors Uncommon Reads Course

IDH2930 Section 19346

Time: Mondays, Period 4 (10:40 - 11:30am)

Location: Little Hall - 117

Spring 2026

Instructors

Dr. Kristen Apraiz

kapraiz@coe.ufl.edu

Office Hour: Monday 9am - 10am Norman Hall 2609 or by zoom

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Course Description

Journal 29, by Dimitris Chassapakis, is a collection of original, escape-room-like puzzles centered around the mysterious disappearance of a team of excavators working on a confidential project. The book requires readers to submit solutions online in order to receive "keys" that they need to solve some subsequent puzzles. Students in this course will engage with the book through frequent collaborative puzzle-solving. They will also discuss elements of good puzzles, the importance of diversity on puzzle-solving teams, the role of a storyline in puzzle-based games, and the ways in which puzzle-solving and logic connect to careers in a wide range of disciplines. Additionally, students will use their experiences with the puzzles in Journal 29 to create their own themed puzzle book game as a class.

Required Textbook

Chassapakis, D. (2017). **Journal 29: Interactive Book Game**. Primedia eLaunch LLC.

ISBN-10: 1635871727

Students should also bring a phone or computer and a pencil to each class meeting.

Course Calendar

Dates	WEEK	GOALS	IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
1/12 - 1/16	Week One	-review class expectations and assignments -get to know fellow puzzle solvers	-review syllabus -puzzles	-obtain book -puzzle solver profile
1/19 -	Week	No Class Martin	N/A	

1/23	Two	Luther King, Jr. Day		
1/26 - 1/30	Week Three	-orient ourselves to the book -start developing/exercising puzzle-solving skills	-puzzle-solving in small groups -sharing strategies and solutions - Puzzles 1-9	-assigned puzzles -puzzle-solving reflection #1
2/2 -2/6	Week Four	-continue developing/exercising puzzle-solving skills	-students present answers to homework puzzles -puzzle-solving in small groups, 10-18 -sharing strategies and solutions	-assigned puzzles -puzzle-solving reflection #2
2/9 - 2/13	Week Five	-determine the role that diversity in thinking and in puzzle-solving groups plays in the puzzle-solving process	-students present answers to homework puzzles 19-27 - puzzle solving in small groups, puzzles	-assigned puzzles -puzzle-solving reflection #3
2/16 - 2/20	Week Six	-continue exercising puzzle-solving skills	-students present answers to homework puzzles -puzzle-solving in small groups, 28-36 -sharing strategies and solutions	-assigned puzzles -puzzle-solving reflection #4
2/23 - 2/27	Week Seven	-continue exercising puzzle-solving skills	-students present answers to homework puzzles -puzzle-solving in small groups, 37-46	-assigned puzzles - puzzle-solving reflection #5
3/2 - 3/6	Week Eight	-determine what makes a “good” puzzle -determine what distinguishes a challenging puzzle from an unfair puzzle	-students present answers to homework puzzles -puzzle-solving in small groups, 47-55	-assigned puzzles -puzzle-solving reflection #6 look over past completed puzzles from the book and think about what you

				liked/what you didn't like/what makes a puzzle "good" or "fair"
3/9 - 3/13	Week Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -determine how to effectively incorporate a storyline into a puzzle book/activity -introduce puzzle-creation assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -puzzle-solving in small groups, 56-63 -introduce project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -submit ideas for puzzle-creation project
3/16 - 3/20	Week Ten	Spring Break		
3/23 - 3/27	Week Eleven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -apply what you've learned to create a class puzzle book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -creating/refining puzzles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -submit 5 puzzles -review two other students' puzzles
3/30 - 4/3	Week Twelve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -apply what you've learned to create a class puzzle book -collaborate to make individual work into a cohesive final project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -brainstorming/deciding on a storyline for the book -begin linking puzzles with key words and adding in the storyline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -select/submit 3 puzzles that you want in the final book and complete peer review
4/6 - 4/10	Week Thirteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -apply what you've learned to create a class puzzle book -collaborate to make individual work into a cohesive final project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -link puzzles with key words and add in the storyline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Check #1: Story Outline -work on finishing the book
4/13 - 4/17	Week Fourteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -apply what you've learned to create a class puzzle book -collaborate to make individual work into a cohesive final project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -link puzzles with key words and add in the storyline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Check #2: Puzzle Connections -work on finishing the book
4/20 - 4/22	Week Fifteen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -make connections between the puzzle-solving done in class and the problem-solving done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -puzzle sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -final project submission -project reflection -career reflection

		in future careers -celebrate everyone's accomplishments and recognize their hard work on their puzzles		
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Week Fifteen is currently designated as a Flex Week. It will be utilized if classes are canceled unexpectedly or if the instructors determine that an additional week is needed for a particular course activity. Please plan to attend class for all fifteen weeks until notified otherwise by the instructors and check Canvas regularly to ensure that you receive all important announcements regarding this class's meetings.

Assignment Descriptions

Puzzle Solver Profile: For this assignment, students will be responsible for writing a personal “puzzle solver profile” detailing their previous experience solving puzzles and participating in puzzle-solving games, their puzzle-solving strengths, and their reasons for taking a puzzle-solving course in college.

Puzzle-Solving Reflections: These assignments require students to reflect on the process of solving the assigned homework puzzles. Students will not be graded on whether or not they were able to successfully solve the puzzle. Instead, they will be graded based on whether or not they provide evidence of trying several strategies and thinking deeply about the puzzle in their reflections.

Puzzle-Creation Assignment: The puzzle-creation assignment is the major summative assessment in this course. It requires students to work as a class to put together a puzzle-solving game in a book using what they've discussed in class. Students will be provided with multiple class sessions to work on this assignment together. Additionally, students will also be required to regularly submit components of the project to ensure they are making sufficient progress. These components are described in more detail below.

- **Puzzle-Creation Ideas:** Students will submit ideas that they have for the puzzles they will create. Ideas can be fully-developed puzzles, rough sketches of puzzles, or components of puzzles, such as ideas for strategies to be used in the solutions.
- **Puzzle Submissions and Peer-Reviews:** Students will be required to submit at least five puzzles with clear solutions on Canvas within 24 hours after the class period dedicated to creating puzzles ends. Students will be assigned two classmates to peer-review puzzles for. Students should provide respectful feedback on both the strengths of their classmates' puzzles as well as potential ways to improve the puzzles.
- **Puzzle Selection:** Each student will select three of the puzzles they individually created that they wish to include in the final book and submit them.
- **Progress Checks:** Students will be required to submit written evidence that they are meeting important checkpoints on the puzzle-creation assignment.
- **Final Product:** Students will submit their final puzzle-game book for evaluation. The final product must include three puzzles from each student, a cohesive storyline, and a “key submission” method for playing similar to that used in Journal 29.

- **Project Reflection:** Students will reflect on how they drew upon key course concepts while working on their final projects as well as on the challenges that they faced during the process of creating the final project.

Career Links Assignment: Students will conclude the course by writing a reflection on what they learned through the course and how their learning can help them in their future careers or interests.

Participation: Each class period, the instructors will evaluate student participation according to the rubric included below. At the end of the semester, the lowest participation grade will be dropped. **Unexcused absences will result in a zero for that class's participation grade.**

Category	2	1	0
Preparedness	The student comes to class with all required materials.	The student comes to class with some required materials.	The student comes to class without any required materials.
Respect	The student treats peers, instructors, and alternate viewpoints with respect.		The student does not treat peers, instructors, and/or alternate viewpoints with respect.
On-Task Activity	The student actively participates in all class activities and discussions.	The student is occasionally off-task but is generally engaged in class activities.	The student is consistently off-task (doing homework, texting, sleeping, etc.).

Evaluation of Grades

Assignment	Percentage
Participation	25%
Puzzle-Solving Reflections (includes Puzzle-Solver Profile)	35%
Career Links Assignment	5%
Final Project	35%

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade
93.4-100	A

90.0-93.3	A-
86.7-89.9	B+
83.4-86.6	B
80.0-83.3	B-
76.7-79.9	C+
73.4-76.6	C
70.0-73.3	C-
66.7-69.9	D+
63.4-66.6	D
60.0-63.3	D-
0.0-59.9	F

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards Honors Completion Requirements. Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Requirements module to earn Honors Milestone / Completion credit.

Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Much of this class is dependent on in-class discussions and puzzle-solving activities. For this reason, attending class sessions is extremely important. Attendance will factor into your weekly participation grade. Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the Undergraduate Catalog

(<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>) and require appropriate documentation.

Assignments should be handed in by their posted due dates on Canvas. Assignments will be accepted after the due date, but the grades on these assignments will be lowered by 10 percentage points for each day they are late unless prior approval has been given by a student instructor.

Class Demeanor

Please observe general classroom etiquette (arriving on time, cell phones away, etc.). Students are expected to be respectful of each others' opinions in all discussions and to put forth their best effort in all class activities.

Honors Program contact information:

- Honors Program, Honors Village Building 4 (our new location starting in late fall 2025), 352-392-1519
- Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu
- Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/UFHonorsAdvising>
- Honors Program Event Calendar: <https://www.honors.ufl.edu/news--events/calendar-of-events/>

UF Academic Policies and Resources:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>