

Call for Applications: SUMMER SCHOOL:

„SOCIAL GAMING: FROM COOPERATION IN (ONLINE) GAMING TO GAME CO-CREATION“

University of Konstanz (Germany), University of Utrecht (Netherlands)

Not only since the corona pandemic video games – according to Al Gore the "New Normal" (Tsai 2017) – are becoming increasingly relevant in our digitised society. Various forms of community building (Taylor 2003; Pearce, Artemesia 2009; Quandt, Kröger 2014), peer-to-peer exchange, DIY practices (e.g. Bulok, Lemieux 2017: 35-41), formation of new communicative and cooperative skills (Payr 2008; Sharritt; Aune, Suthers 2011; Hewet 2020) and negotiation practices, and game-based trust-building strategies (e.g. via *Among Us*) as well as leadership qualities (Salovaara et al. 2005) bear witness to this development. Nevertheless, the socio-cultural potential of games as an everyday practice is still neglected in favor of other research foci like narrative structures and aesthetic value (Denizel, Sansal, Tetik 2021), identity constructions (e.g. Gray, Voorhees, Vossen 2018), addictive dimensions (Griffiths, Pontes 2020) or effects on violent behavior (e.g. Ferguson 2018). With our Summer School we want to bridge this research gap: Based on our common interest in playful social interactions in the context of cooperative (online) games, we propose to explore how the social, creative and at the same time productive potential in the practice of games can be theoretically grasped, cooperatively applied, and further developed in processes of co-creation (Banks 2013). By focusing on the social-cooperative potential of play, the Summer School will counteract an increasing social polarization on a scientific and intercultural level and promote empathy and alternative perspectives on a phenomenon that is often misunderstood.

Students (B.A./M.A.), PhD students and teachers from various disciplines interested in research on digital games (media, cultural and social sciences as well as computer science, etc.) will cooperate and explore the potential of (online) gaming in theory and practice and apply the knowledge thus acquired in different forms of co-creative gaming sessions together with experts from game development, game design and game production. In close cooperation with the Media Lab, the GameLab and the Binational Center for Qualitative Methods at the University of Konstanz, we offer a combination of on- and offline teaching and practical courses.

In order to prepare for the Summer School, basic literature, video tutorials, or FAQs will be offered on the communication platform ILIAS (<https://ilias.uni-konstanz.de/>). The Summer School itself unfolds in three phases:

1. Self-study (April-June, off-/online): The participants prepare for the practical game sessions (instructions for the Discord server, tutorials for video recording, tutorials for videographic evaluation, etc.) as well as for the teaching units (relevant research literature, digital teaching modules on (auto-)ethnographic methods, cooperative game development and design, on (online) games, etc.) by means of the material provided on the communication platform ILIAS.

2. In three game sessions (April-June, online) the participants and the teaching staff meet on a Discord server. Games will be proposed and selected according to criteria like cooperativeness, quality, competition, recording possibilities, game duration, number of players, etc. The game sessions will be recorded by video, field notes will be taken afterwards. The collected data will be made available to all participants for data evaluation and analysis (during the online teaching week).

3. The preparation period, which is essentially online, is followed by an **offline teaching week (July, offline)** combining theoretical courses with data sessions and practice-oriented units (co-creation) taught by different colleagues (for more detailed information see the schedule on <https://seriousgamingkn.wordpress.com/>).

The **certificate of achievement (6 ECTS)** consists of a keynote presentation (group or individual work, max. 15 minutes) and a written paper (excerpt, data analysis, concepts for co-creative design, etc., max. 5000 words) that has to be submitted by September 30th, 2022.

Literature

- Banks, J. (2013): *Co-Creating Video Games*. London and New York: Bloomsbury.
- Boluk, S., Lemieux, P. (2017). *Metagaming: Playing, Competing, Spectating, Cheating, Trading, Making, and Breaking Videogames*. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP.
- Denizel, D., Sansal, D. E., Tetik, T. (2020): *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Narrative Aesthetics in Video Games*. Berlin et al.: Peter Lang.
- Ferguson, C. J. (2018): *Video Game Influences on Aggression, Cognition, and Attention*. Cham, CH: Springer.
- Gray, K. L., Voorhees, G., Vossen E. (2018). *Feminism in Play*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Griffiths, M. D, Pontes, H.M (2020): A History and Overview of Video Game Addiction. In: M. N. Potenza, K. Faust, D. Faust (eds.): *The Oxford Handbook of Digital Technologies and Mental Health* (pp. 18-33). New York: Oxford UP.
- Hewet, K.J.E. (2020): Embracing Video Games for Strategic Thinking, Collaboration, and Communication Skills Practice. In L. Haas (ed.): *Disciplinary Literacy Connections to Popular Culture in K-12 Settings* (pp. 184-202). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Payr, S. et al. (2008). Game-Based Development of Collaboration Competences. In J. Luca, E. Weippl (Eds.): *Proceedings of ED-MEDIA 2008--World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia & Telecommunications* (pp. 4554-4563). Vienna, Austria: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved December 14, 2021 from <https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/29020/>.
- Pearce, C., Artemesia (2009): *Communities of Play. Emergent Cultures in Multiplayer Games and Virtual Worlds* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Quandt, T.; Kröger, S. (eds) (2014): *Multiplayer. The Social Aspects of Digital Gaming*. New York, London: Routledge.
- Salovaara et al. (2005): Playmakers in multiplayer game communities: their importance and motivations for participation. *ACE '05: Proceedings of the 2005 ACM SIGCHI International Conference on Advances in computer entertainment technology* (pp. 334–337). Retrieved December 14, 2021 from <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/1178477.1178540>.
- Sharritt, M., Aune, K. R., Suthers, D. D. (2011): Gamer Talk: Becoming Impenetrably Efficient. In M. M. Cruz-Cunha et al. (eds.): *Business, Technological, and Social Dimensions of Computer Games: Multidisciplinary Developments* (pp. 252-271). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Taylor, T.L. (2006): *Play Between Worlds: Exploring Online Game Culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Tsai, C. (2017): Al Gore: Games are the New Normal. Huffpost. Retrieved December 14, 2021 from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/al-gore-games-social-good_b_881017.

FURTHER INFORMATIONS:

TEACHING TEAM:

- Prof. Dr. Steffen Bogen, Art Studies and Game Development, Konstanz
- Dr. Frank Furtwängler, Game Development, Konstanz
- Ass.Prof. Dr. Hanna Hauptmann, Information and Computer Science, Utrecht
- Prof. Dr. Christian Meyer, Sociology, Konstanz
- Prof. Dr. Beate Ochsner, Media Studies, Konstanz
- Dr. Markus Spöhrer, Media Studies, Konstanz
- Dr. habil. Stefan Werning, Culture and Media Studies, Utrecht

APPLICATION FORM:

Please send a **CV** and a (max.) **500-word letter of motivation** (outlining your education by date, explaining your interest in cooperative online gaming and a research question) to us (serious.gaming@uni-konstanz.de) by

20th February 2022

Notifications of acceptance or rejection will be sent out by 15th March 2022 (please note that a submission can still be rejected in the reviewing process).

ACCOMODATION/CATERING AND TRAVEL COSTS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

For our international, non-German participants we can offer accommodation for the 6 nights in Konstanz à 43,70 Euro per night including catering (hostel with shared rooms). We can subsidize the accommodation costs, the outstanding costs have to be covered individually by each participant. Please let us know in your application for the Summer School, if you would like to make use of this offer.

For international students traveling to us from outside Germany, we can offer a mobility grant in order to (partly) cover the travel costs.

We will also be offering an additional cultural programme including university and city tours, language 1x1, etc.

DATES & DEADLINES:

- Application: **20th February 2022**
- Notification of acceptance: **15th March 2022**
- Online Sessions: **April-June 2022** (3 sessions, exact dates to be announced)
- Offline-Session: **24th July-30th July 2022**

Nota bene:

By participating in the Summer School, you also agree to participate in the 3-stage evaluation of the event.