Games and Gamification Course Example

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I worked with several colleagues as the Project Manager/Content Expert/Instructional Designer to design, develop, and run this course. The audience for this course is faculty who are exploring the course concepts for potential adoption in their course(s).
The course has four modules. As this is a course on educational games and gamification, gaming concepts are used within the course:

- Self-checks (Minions) as well as a written assignment (Boss) in each module that must be completed to proceed.
- Subsequent Modules are locked until the previous Module is completed by taking the Boss quiz.
- Points are used to track course progress.
- An opt-in Leaderboard.
- Bonus information.
- Inventory (extra information) a student can access after completing a Module.
- A running story about a faculty member exploring games and gamification that is presented in parts. New parts are available as each Module is unlocked.

Sample Screenshots

OL 3500.01 Gamification in Online Teaching and Learning, Mar2023

SHALL WE PLAY A GAME?

Welcome to the Course!

This is a course about games and what it means to "gamify" your teaching. It's something of an immersive experience in order to plant you in the language and culture of gaming. By doing this, the goal is for you to rethink

Games Definitions Summary

- Games are a voluntary activity.
- Games have goals.
- Games have rules. Rules impose obstacles that prevent the player from reaching their goal through the most efficient means.
- Games have conflict.
- Games involve decision making.
- Games are an artificial representation of reality. They are safe, and they are outside ordinary life (make believe).
- Games are a form of art.

Figure 1.7. Image of game pieces by Ajmint.

Minion 01

Module 1 is ruled by the What Are Games? Dragon and his minions (servile dependents, followers, or underlings). You have encountered a minion. Defeat this minion by answering the following questions.

Bonus! Text-based Adventures

It was a dark and stormy night. Things were kinda dead down at the morgue, so I hung a few corpses from the ceiling - to keep my spirits up.

Thus begins one of the worst novels ever written. Even so, don't you want to read just a bit more? Stories in games are important. There is the story as written and the gamer's interpretation of the story. As Gee (2003) writes, games foster deep learning by:

- enabling us to participate in a story, discovering skills we didn't know we had.
- motivating us to persist. The game and story MUST conclude!
- encouraging us to share the stories they embody, and thus encourage others to participate. This is great in educational environments. You can even use them in writing-intensive courses as part of an assignment!

So weaving stories into your courses is very useful, especially if you can make them interactive and somewhat choice driven. Here's an example:

It was a dark and stormy night. Things were kinda dead down at the morgue, so I hung a few corpses from the ceiling - to keep my spirits up.

Do you:

1. Realize you are a total sicko and return the corpses to their appropriate slabs in the morgue?
2. Take a selfie with them and blast it out on social media?

Result for choice 1: Well, you suffered a minor mental aberration, but are grateful you are back to normal. Then one of the dead (you named him Garcia) sits up...

Brains! Part 1

Speaking of stories, it's quite popular in games to propel the narrative with mini-stories or "tween" scenes that stitch sections of the game together. You can do the same thing in a course by writing a story that is related to the course content, breaking it up into pieces, and then presenting the pieces as the course progresses. So, here is the first part of a story related to *this* course.

Brains! Or How I Learned to Survive in Higher Ed After The Zombie Apocalypse

I'm Professor Nittany, and I feel it's time I share my story of how I learned to survive in Higher Education after the Zombie Apocalypse.

Course Outline

Module 1: What are Games? - START HERE!

- Module 1 Intro
- Module 1 Overview
- Social! Who are You? - Discussion Topic
- Opt-in for Leaderboard
- Game Definition
  - Educational Game Definition

- Minion 08 - Self-check
- Social! Gamify Your Teaching - Discussion Topic
- Brains! Part 3 - Progressive Story
- Games in HE Summary
- Games in HE Boss - Assignment
- Don't Forget! - Inventory Reminder

Module 3: Gamification

- Module 3 Intro
- Module 3 Overview
- The Psychology Behind Gamification
- Specific Gamification Techniques
  - Achievements
  - Minion 09 - Self-check
  - Badging
  - Behavioral Momentum
  - Bonuses
  - Cascading Information
  - Minion 10 - Self-check
  - Community Collaboration
  - Discovery
  - Levels
  - Points
  - Minion 11 - Self-check
  - Progression
  - Skill Trees
  - Status
- Social! Team Up - Discussion Topic
- Brains! Part 4 - Progressive Story
- Designing for Gamification
- Minion 12 - Self-check
- Examples of Gamification
- Gamification Summary
- Gamification Boss - Assignment
- Don't Forget! - Inventory Reminder

Module 4: Integrating Games Into Your Courses

- Module 4 Intro
- Module 4 Overview
- To Game or Not to Game?
- Brains! Part 5 - Progressive Story
- Understanding Your Audience
- Alignment

- Minion 13 - Self-check
- 15 pts
- COTS vs. Custom Games
- The Unexpected
- Competition vs. Cooperation
- Minion 14 - Self-check
- Strategies for Game Integration
- Assessment of Games
- Accessibility in Games
- Minion 15 - Self-check
- Next Steps
- Brains! Part 6 - Self-check
- Social! Give a little, Take a little. - Discussion Topic
- Integrating Summary
- Integrating Boss - Assignment
- Don't Forget! - Inventory reminder
- Course Completion
- More Faculty Development Resources

Inventories

- Module 1
  - Mod 1 - Games Definition
  - What are Games? Readings Treasure
  - Mod 1 - What are Games? Bib Treasure
- Module 2
  - Mod 2 - Games in HE Readings Treasure
  - Mod 2 - Games in HE Bib Treasure
- Module 3
  - Mod 3 - Gamify Basics.pptx
  - Mod 3 - Gamification Bib Treasure
- Module 4
  - Mod 4 - Integrating Readings Treasure
  - Mod 4 - Integrating Bib Treasure