

Group Project 2: Serious Games - Designing a game that makes a difference.

Objective: In this group project, your team (6 - 7 students each) will design and document a **Serious Game** — a game created not just for entertainment, but to **teach, train, inform, or inspire positive change**.

Like the examples discussed and played in class: e.g., [The Oregon Trail](#), [Spent](#), etc.

Your final deliverables will include:

1. A **Game Design Document (GDD)** (Length: 5–10 pages) that clearly communicates your design vision.

Suggested Sections:

- **Game Overview** (Title, tagline, short description)
- **Target audience** (demographics, player types, etc.)
- **Genre** (simulation, puzzle, RPG, etc.) & **Platform** (PC, mobile, web, board)
- **Mechanics and rules**
- **Narrative and Setting** (if applicable) - Story premise, characters, progression
- **Serious purpose/learning objective**
- **How gameplay reinforces that learning**
- **Art and Aesthetic Direction** (Style reference, tone, and user interface sketches (if applicable))
- **Prototype and Technical Notes**
- **Tools used and Limitations** (if applicable)
- **Testing and Feedback Summary**
- **Results of Playtesting, Player Feedback, and Revisions Made**

2. A **playable prototype or interactive demo** (digital or paper-based).

3. A **list of each team member's role(s) and contributions**.

Possible Game Themes (*You are encouraged to choose a topic that you personally care about — passion drives quality.*)

- Environmental awareness (climate, recycling, conservation)
- Mental health or mindfulness
- Civic education (voting, social justice, community action)
- Public health or safety
- Cultural awareness and empathy
- Accessibility or inclusion
- STEM learning (science, math, coding)
- History and heritage exploration

Project Phases

Phase	Goal	Description
1. Topic Proposal and Research	<i>Concept Pitch (1 page)</i>	Identify a real-world issue, learning goal, or behavior change your game will address. Include the intended audience and a brief description of the gameplay idea.
2. Core Design Development	<i>GDD Draft</i>	Create a working Game Design Document (2–5 pages): overview, purpose, core loop, mechanics, story, genre, art style, platform, audience.
3. Prototype Development	<i>Playable Demo or Prototype</i>	Create a simple version that showcases your main mechanics and demonstrates how learning or impact occurs. Can be digital (Unity, Processing, etc.) or analog (board/card prototype).
4. Playtesting and Iteration	<i>Test Session + Feedback Notes</i>	Gather feedback from peers. Document what worked, what didn't, and what was improved.
5. Submission	<i>Final GDD + Revised Prototype</i>	Submit a polished GDD (5–10 pages) and revised game prototype

Project Schedule

- Phases 1 (Topic Proposal and Research) and 2 (Core Design Development) - **10/30**
- Phase 3 (Prototype Development) - **11/6**
- Phase 4 (Playtesting and Iteration) - **11/13**
- Phase 5 (Submission) - **11/25 by EOD**

Submit the following to Brightspace (**only one member from each group is required to submit by EOD on November 25th**):

- Final Game Design Document (5–10 pages)
- Playable or interactive prototype (digital file, link to game (if applicable), or PDF print-and-play)
- Team member contribution list (roles, etc.)

Grading Criteria

Category	Weight	What's Evaluated
Concept & Purpose	20%	Relevance, clarity, and achievability of a serious goal
Game Design Quality	25%	Mechanics, engagement, balance, and creativity
Game Design Document (GDD)	25%	Completeness, structure, professionalism, clarity
Prototype Functionality	20%	Playability, demonstration of a serious goal, coherence
Iteration & Reflection	10%	Evidence of testing, revision, and design reasoning