

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	CHC2M54P
Subject Title	Discovering Chinese History and Culture in Video Games 電子遊戲中的中國歷史與文化
Credit Value	3
Level	2
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Objectives	<p>Video games have become increasingly sophisticated in representing history and culture. The impact of <i>Black Myth: Wukong</i> around the world has forcefully demonstrated that video games have become a significant part of the lives of many people and, therefore, a mainstream media to transmit Chinese history and culture in modern society. Today, most likely, members of younger generations first engage with history through video games rather than in the classroom or through books. Therefore, this course of digital humanities takes video games as cultural products worthy of academic attention. Students will examine a number of video games with Chinese historical themes to learn how these games represent China's past, and to what extent, the past matters to the games. Students will examine classic games, like <i>Prince of Qin</i>, and newer titles, such as <i>Total War: Three Kingdoms</i>, as well as games that take advantage of Hong Kong's past, like <i>Sleeping Dogs</i>. As part of the learning process, students will write their own historical video game scripts based on primary research. Students will finish the course with a critical understanding of historical representation in video games, and also with an appreciation for the richness and diversity of Chinese history and culture.</p> <p>電子遊戲在呈現歷史和文化方面變得越來越成熟。《黑神話：悟空》在全球範圍內的影響力強有力地證明了，電子遊戲已成為許多人生活中的重要部分，並且是現代社會中傳播中國歷史和文化的重要媒介。如今，年輕一代很可能首先通過電子遊戲而不是課堂或書籍來接觸歷史。因此，本數字人</p>

	<p>文課程將電子遊戲視為值得學術界關注的文化產品。本課的學生將研究多款具有中國歷史主題的電子遊戲，他們要了解這些遊戲如何呈現中國的過去，以及「過去」在遊戲中有多大程度的重要性。學生將在本課中研究經典遊戲，如《秦殤》，以及較新的作品，如《全面戰爭：三國》，還有一些有香港歷史背景的遊戲，如《香港秘密警察》。作為學習過程的一部分，學生將基於自己的研究撰寫一個歷史類電子遊戲的劇本。在課程結束後，學生將對電子遊戲如何呈現中國歷史有批判性的理解，並對中國歷史和文化的豐富性和多樣性有更深的認識。</p>
<p>Intended Learning Outcomes (Note 1)</p>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Better understand the historical representations in video games; Critically analyze historical video games; Better appreciate the richness and diversity of Chinese history and culture; Write a historical video game script; Fulfil Chinese Reading and Writing Requirements.
<p>Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus (Note 2)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese gaming culture before the video game era <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To contextualize the impact of video games on China, this class provides an introduction to China's traditional games like Mah-jong, Go, and Chinese Chess, as well as the attitudes of Confucian scholars' attitude towards gaming. Electronic heroin? Modern Chinese gaming culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a long time, video games were depicted as "electronic heroin" in China, leading the government to ban gaming consoles between 2000 and 2014. This class aims to explain why video games were perceived negatively in China and how public perception is now changing. Historical accuracy and video games <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common approach for historians when reviewing historical video games and other cultural products, such as historical novels and films, is to debate their historical accuracy. While this class will emphasize the importance of using reliable information in historical games, it will also move beyond mere critique to explore the new possibilities that video games offer, compared to books and films, for engaging with history. Historians in the video game industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On paper, historians seem to have little to do with the gaming industry. However, one of the earliest video games, The Oregon Trail, was developed by historians to teach history. This class will review the long history of historians' involvement in the gaming industry. Time and space in video games with Chinese historical themes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and space are the two fundamental elements in any historical story. This class will discuss how historical video games represent these two elements to create meaningful interactions with China's past for players. <p>6. Narrative in video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical video games, like history books and films, can produce narratives about the past. Although video games are interactive, game developers can make arguments through the historical elements they choose to represent and the gameplay they design. This class will use Chinese historical games as examples to discuss the opportunities and challenges that games offer in telling historical stories compared to books and films. <p>7. Uncertainty and counterfactual in video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In teaching history, it is significant and challenging to help students understand the uncertainty in history and the idea that history can be different. Historical video games can create alternative histories. For example, in a strategy game about China's Three Kingdoms period, players can use the Shu Kingdom to unify China instead of the Jin Kingdom. This class will discuss what alternative history in video games can teach us about history. <p>8. Ecology and environment in video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China's historical environment is crucial for understanding the possible choices and actions of historical agents. Books and films often fall short of recreating this environment, whereas modern computational technologies enable video games to do so and allow players to interact with historical settings. This class will discuss how effectively historical video games have utilized these environments. <p>9. Gender and ethnicity in video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical video games about a diverse and complex country like China inevitably need to represent its ethnic minority groups and female population. This class will discuss how minorities and women are represented in Chinese historical video games and whether they are portrayed as historical actors with their own agency. <p>10. Violence in video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence is unfortunately common in history, and it is also a prevalent element in gameplay. This class discusses the differences between video game violence and historical violence and whether the former can help us understand the latter. <p>11. Chinese history in international games</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many international video games incorporate themes related to Chinese history. Examples include the Civilization series, Total War: Three Kingdoms, the Romance of the Three Kingdoms series, and Assassin's Creed Chronicles: China. This class will discuss how these games represent Chinese history and how they can help us understand the notions of colonization and decolonization.
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	<p>12. Players and video games with Chinese historical themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historical narratives that video games generate are shaped by the rules set by game developers. However, due to the interactive nature of video games, players also have a strong influence over those narratives. So, how exactly do games influence players' understanding of history? What methods can we currently use to study this impact? This class will discuss these issues. <p>13. The future of the digital past</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chinese gaming industry and culture are evolving rapidly. The industry is already worth more than 300 billion RMB as of 2023, and with the publication of the country's first triple-A game, Black Myth: Wukong, in 2024, it is expected to grow even further. More games about China's history and culture are likely to be developed and published. What can China's gaming past tell us about its future? What role would gamers in Hong Kong play in China's gaming future? This class will discuss these issues. <p>1. 前電子遊戲時期中國遊戲文化</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 為了了解電子遊戲對中國的影響，本節課將介紹中國的傳統遊戲，如麻將、圍棋和象棋，以及儒家學者對遊戲的態度。 <p>2. 電子海洛因？現當代中國遊戲文化</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 長期以來，電子遊戲在中國被形容為「電子海洛因」。政府甚至在 2000 年至 2014 年間禁止遊戲主機的生產和銷售。本節課旨在解釋為什麼中國公眾對電子遊戲的看法曾經非常負面，以及公眾觀念現在是如何改變的。 <p>3. 歷史信息的準確性與電子遊戲</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 歷史學家在審視歷史類電子遊戲和其他文化產品（如歷史小說和電影）時，常見的方法是討論其是否符合史實。雖然本節課依然會強調在歷史類遊戲中使用可靠信息的重要性，但也將超越單純的批評，探索電子遊戲相比於書籍和電影為大眾提供了怎樣的與歷史互動的新可能性。 <p>4. 電子遊戲產業中的歷史學家</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 從表面上看，歷史學家似乎與遊戲產業關係不大。然而，最早的電子遊戲之一《俄勒岡之旅》就是由歷史學家開發，用於歷史教學的。本節課將回顧歷史學家參與遊戲產業的悠久歷史。 <p>5. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的時間與空間</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 時間和空間是歷史故事中的兩個基本元素。本節課將探討歷史類電子遊戲如何呈現這兩個元素，從而為玩家創造與中國的過去有意義互動。 <p>6. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的敘事</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 歷史類電子遊戲與歷史書籍和電影一樣，可以創造關於過去的敘事。儘管電子遊戲具有互動性，遊戲開發者仍可以通過他們對歷史元素的選擇性呈現和對遊戲玩法的設計來表達觀點。本節課將以中國歷史類遊戲為例，討論遊戲在
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	<p>講述歷史故事方面相比於書籍和電影所帶來的機遇與挑戰。</p> <p>7. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的不確定性</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 在教授歷史時，幫助學生理解歷史的不確定性，以及歷史可能有不同的面貌是既重要又具挑戰性的。歷史類電子遊戲可以創造假設的歷史。例如，在一款關於中國三國時期的策略遊戲中，玩家可以使用蜀國來統一中國，而不是晉國。本節課將討論電子遊戲中的假設歷史能夠教會我們什麼關於歷史的知識。 <p>8. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的生態與環境</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 中國的歷史環境對於理解歷史人物的行為至關重要。書籍和電影往往難以重現這種環境，而現代技術使電子遊戲能夠做到，並讓玩家與歷史環境互動。本節課將討論歷史類電子遊戲在多大程度上有效利用了這些環境。 <p>9. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的性別與族群</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 關於中國這樣多元且複雜的國家的歷史類電子遊戲，不可避免地需要呈現其少數民族和女性群體。本節課將討論少數民族和女性在中國歷史類電子遊戲中的呈現方式，以及他們是否被描繪為具有自主行動能力的歷史角色。 <p>10. 中國歷史類電子遊戲中的暴力</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 暴力在歷史上不幸地很常見，也是遊戲玩法中普遍存在。本節課將討論歷史類電子遊戲中的暴力與歷史暴力之間的差異，以及前者是否能幫助我們理解後者。 <p>11. 國際遊戲中的中國歷史</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 許多國際電子遊戲融入了與中國歷史相關的主題，相關的例子有《文明》系列、《全面戰爭：三國》、《三國志》系列和《刺客信條編年史：中國》。本節課將討論這些遊戲如何呈現中國歷史，以及它們如何能幫助我們理解殖民化和去殖民化的概念。 <p>12. 玩家與中國歷史類電子遊戲</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 電子遊戲所塑造的歷史敘事，受遊戲開發者設定的規則影響很大。然而，由於電子遊戲的互動性，玩家對這些敘事也有很大的影響力。那麼，遊戲究竟如何影響玩家對歷史的理解？我們目前可以使用哪些方法來研究這種影響？本節課將討論這些問題。 <p>13. 電子遊戲的未來</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 中國的遊戲產業和文化正在迅速發展。截至 2023 年，遊戲產業的價值已超過 3000 億人民幣，隨著首款國產三 A 級遊戲《黑神話：悟空》在 2024 年的發佈，預計遊戲業產值將進一步增長。未來也會有更多關於中國歷史和文化的遊戲被開發出來。中國的遊戲歷史能告訴我們什麼關於其未來的信息？香港的玩家在中國電子遊戲的未來中將扮演什麼角色？本節課將討論這些問題。
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<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p> <p><i>(Note 3)</i></p>	<p>Lectures:</p> <p>Although this course is about video games with Chinese historical themes, lectures are still the primary teaching methodology. The instructor will use lectures to introduce China's gaming culture and what chances video games offer us for engaging with history compared to other formats like books and films. However, a key feature of video games is interactivity. A lecture about video games would create countless possibilities for the instructor to ask students how they feel and what they think when they play, resulting in an essentially interactive lecture style.</p> <p>Tutorials:</p> <p>Tutorials can encourage teamwork and active learning. In tutorials, students will be divided into small study groups. Each study group will need to study selected reading materials, play designated games, and present their reflections. Instructors and teaching assistants will ask study groups questions like how the games use history, and what they would do differently if they were the game developers. Through tutorials, we want students to develop a skill and habit of thinking critically about historical video games.</p> <p>Term paper:</p> <p>By the end of the semester, students will write a 2000 to 3000-word script for a Chinese historical game they envision. In the paper, students will need to explain what historical materials they used, why they make those choices, what they want players to feel or learn when the game is over, and how they plan to achieve their goals. Working on such term papers will further sharpen students' ability to think critically about video games. The game scripts they develop could even become real historical games.</p>
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**Assessment Methods
in Alignment with
Intended Learning
Outcomes**

(Note 4)

Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)				
		a	b	c	d	e
1. Quizzes	30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2. Tutorial Presentation	30%	✓	✓	✓		✓
3. Term Paper (10% graded by the CLC and 30% by the subject instructor)	40%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Total	100 %					

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

In the Quizzes section, students will answer some essay questions. This is an opportunity to test students' mastery of the curriculum and encourage them to reflect on what they have learned from the classroom teaching, reading materials, and playing.

In the Tutorial Presentation section, instructors will divide students into small study groups. Each group selects a historical video game to play and study designated reading materials. The materials will help students to better understand the historical period their game represents and to analyse games. And students are expected to complete all the required readings on the reading list in order to fulfil the reading requirement.

Students are required to submit a term paper of 2,000- 3,000 words with detailed footnotes and references to fulfil the coursework requirement. Students must obtain a D or above on the writing assignment to pass the subject.

Class contact:

- Lecture

26 Hrs.

Student Study Effort Expected	▪ Tutorial	13 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ CLC writing support activities	4 Hrs.
	▪ CLC reading support activities	4 Hrs.
	▪ Reading, writing, and self-study	65 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	112 Hrs.
Reading List and References	<p>Required Reading (Total 364 pages):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 米金升、陳娟，《遊戲東西: 電腦遊戲的文化意義研究》。廣西：廣西師範大學出版社，2006。 (Chinese Reading Requirement: pp. 3-58, 219-231) 2. 蔡豐明，《遊戲史》。上海：上海文藝出版社，2007。 (Chinese Reading Requirement: pp. 1-35, 183-201) 3. 何威、劉夢霏，《遊戲研究讀本》。上海：華東師範大學出版社，2020。 (Chinese Reading Requirement: pp. 1-61, 165-251) 4. 孫靜，《嬉遊志：透過電子遊戲看世界》。北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店，2024。 (Chinese Reading Requirement: pp. 71-86, 134-148, 289-304) 5. Chapman, Adam. <i>Digital Games as History: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice</i>. New York: Routledge, 2016. (PP: 3-55) <p>Games to Play and Discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 國戰：列國志傳 2. 秦殤 3. 三國志 11 4. 全面戰爭：三國 5. 刺客信條編年史：中國 6. 決戰朝鮮 7. 香港秘密警察(Sleeping Dogs) 8. 黑神話：悟空 <p>Reference List:</p>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 葛兆光，《宅茲中國：重建有關「中國」的歷史論述》。北京：中華書局，2011。 2. 葛兆光，《何為中國？疆域、民族、文化與歷史》。香港：牛津大學出版社，2014。 3. 許倬雲，《說中國》。桂林：廣西師範大學出版社，2015。 4. 鄧廣銘、田餘慶、戴逸，《中國通史：從上古傳說到漢代》。香港：開明書店，2021。 5. 鄧廣銘、田餘慶、戴逸，《中國通史：從三國到遼代》。香港：開明書店，2021。 6. 鄧廣銘、田餘慶、戴逸，《中國通史：從宋代到元代》。香港：開明書店，2021。 7. 鄧廣銘、田餘慶、戴逸，《中國通史：從明代到中華民國》。香港：開明書店，2021。 8. 米金升、陳娟，《遊戲東西：電腦遊戲的文化意義研究》。廣西：廣西師範大學出版社，2006。 9. 蔡豐明，《遊戲史》。上海：上海文藝出版社，2007。 10. 李婷，《離線·開始遊戲》。北京：電子工業出版社，2014。 11. 佐佐木智廣，支鵬浩譯，《遊戲劇本怎麼寫》。北京：人民郵電出版社，2018。 12. 何威、劉夢霏，《遊戲研究讀本》。上海：華東師範大學出版社，2020。 13. 孫靜、鄧劍，《中國遊戲研究——遊戲的歷史》。上海：華東師範大學出版社，2023。 14. 袁書營，《小遊戲與大歷史——從「老鷹捉小雞」到人類的文化視界》。南京：江蘇人民出版社，2024。 15. 孫靜，《嬉遊志：透過電子遊戲看世界》。北京：生活·讀書·新知三聯書店，2024。 16. 何威、曹書樂：〈從「電子海洛因」到「中國創造」：《人民日報》遊戲報導（1981-2017）的話語變遷〉，《國際新聞界》，2018年第5期，頁57-81。 17. 王濤：〈數字史學的價值與前景〉，《探索與爭鳴》，2021年第10期，頁27-29。 18. 盧雅懷：〈歷史遊戲研究：作為數位史學發展新方向〉，《數位人文研究》，2024年第2期，頁3-26。 19. 安德魯·威廉姆斯，柴秋霞譯，《數字遊戲史：藝術、設計和交互的發展》。上海：復旦大學出版社，2021。
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	<p>20. McCall, Jeremiah. <i>Gaming the Past: Using Video Games to Teach Secondary History</i>. New York: Routledge, 2011.</p> <p>21. Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture. McCall, Jeremiah. <i>Gaming the Past: Using Video Games to Teach Secondary History</i>. New York: Routledge, 2011.</p> <p>22. Martino Fine Books, 2014.</p> <p>23. Kempshall, C. <i>The First World War in Computer Games</i>. 2015th edition. Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York, NY: Palgrave Pivot, 2015.</p> <p>24. Goldberg, Daniel. <i>The State of Play: Creators and Critics on Video Game Culture</i>. Edited by Linus Larsson. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2015.</p> <p>25. Chapman, Adam. <i>Digital Games as History: How Videogames Represent the Past and Offer Access to Historical Practice</i>. New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.</p> <p>26. Sicart, Miguel. <i>Play Matters</i>. Cambridge, Massachusetts London: The MIT Press, 2017.</p> <p>27. Wills, John. <i>Gamer Nation: Video Games and American Culture</i>. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019.</p> <p>28. Wainwright, A. Martin. <i>Virtual History: How Videogames Portray the Past</i>. London; New York: Routledge, 2019.</p> <p>29. Szablewicz, Marcella. <i>Mapping Digital Game Culture in China: From Internet Addicts to Esports Athletes</i>. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.</p>
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Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon subject completion. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, overcrowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method is intended to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

(Form AR 140) 8.2020