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CORE 100-22-23 The Game of Chess

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The Game of Chess

CORE 100 – 22 & 23

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 2:30-3:45pm and 4:00-5:15pm

Three Credit Hours

Classroom: Alter Hall 004

Professor Adam Konopka

Office: Hinkle 231

Office phone: (513) 745-3491

Email: konopkaa@xavier.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:00-11:00am, 5:30-6:30pm and by appointment

Course Syllabus

Course Section Description:

This course examines the game design, history, educational benefits, and symbolism of the game of chess. Games like chess play an important, but often overlooked, role in the fabric of a society. Chess, in particular, is one of the most enduring and universal games in human history. How do historical variations of chess reflect the social structures in which they were played? How are skills such as spatial reasoning, sequencing, and strategic decision making learned through playing chess? How has chess become symbolic of the human condition in works of literature such as Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*? This course is oriented to novice and advanced players alike. No familiarity with chess is necessary.

Core Curriculum Freshman Seminar Description:

CORE 100 courses are designed to excite students' intellectual curiosity in an intimate seminar setting. First-year students engage in questions and problems that are interesting and intellectually challenging. They develop skills in critical and creative thinking, such as interpreting complex texts, employing effective library research skills, constructing an argument and supporting it with evidence, and critically assessing multiple perspectives on "the Greater Good." Xavier faculty who teach FYS courses are committed mentors, guiding students to think about the evolution of their vocation and their aspirations to contribute to the world. FYS integrates students into the community of scholars at Xavier and establishes a solid foundation on which the other Core Curriculum courses will build.

Required Texts:

Carroll, Lewis *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* (New York: Evertime, 2009). ISBN: 1904808387

Price, Bill *The History of Chess in Fifty Moves* (Buffalo: Firefly Books, 2015). ISBN: 9781770855298

Silman, Jeremy *The Complete Book of Chess Strategy: Grandmaster Techniques from A to Z* (Hollywood: Siles Press, 1998). ISBN: 1770855297

Additional readings will be posted on the Canvas site for this course and can be accessed through this link: [http:// https://canvas.xavier.edu](http://https://canvas.xavier.edu). Your student ID and password are required to access Canvas.

Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:

This course is part of the Xavier Core Curriculum, which aims to develop people of learning and reflection, integrity and achievement, in solidarity for and with others. It addresses the following core learning objectives at an introductory level:

Course Specific Goals	Student Learning Objectives	Assessment
1) Analyze historical and contemporary variations of chess and related board games.	Objective 1b: Apply the approaches of multiple disciplines to a significant issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Posts - Papers - Final Project
2) Identify and clarify literary representations of vocation, e.g., Lewis Carroll's <i>Through the Looking Glass</i> .	Objective 6b: Articulate the evolution of one's vocation and aspirations to contribute to the world. In FYS, this includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an introduction to the idea of vocation, guidance in thinking about how vocation and career overlap, - discussing vocation as part of mentoring conversations and in the context of our Jesuit identity and focus on solidarity, kinship, and service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Posts
3) Examine and interpret scientific studies of the educational benefits of chess.	Objective 3a: Identify and critically assess multiple dimensions of an ethical issue in an attempt to reach a conclusion. In FYS, this includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Posts - Experiential Learning (Chess in Schools Program) - Final Project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpreting challenging readings - Employing effective library research and information literacy skills - Constructing arguments supported with evidence. 	
4) Develop chess playing proficiency and appreciation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playtime - Discussion Posts - Tournament

Teaching Methodology:

This course primarily utilizes facilitated classroom discussion, small group work, field trips in its pedagogical approach. Regular readings and writing assignments will be involved in class preparation.

Course Requirements:

Attendance:

- You are expected to have *punctual* attendance to every class meeting.
- You are allowed three unexcused absences. For every additional unexcused absence your attendance/participation grade will be lowered by 5%.
- Excused absences will be given if the student supplies a note from a doctor, a coach, etc. You must hand in the note within one week from your first day back to class, preferably before, especially if the absence is anticipated. If there is no note within this time frame, then the absence will be counted as unexcused.
- If you are late to class and have missed the role call or the attendance sheet, please notify me of your presence after class. If you do not, you will be counted as absent. (It is your responsibility to demonstrate your attendance.)
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes/information that you missed from another student. You are also welcome during office hours to discuss the material.
- Special campus events: Over the course of the semester, there will be several campus events, e.g., lectures, panel presentations, etc., that will be available for extra credit.

Participation:

- This is seminar style course is primarily comprised of student presentations and group discussions.
- University Disability Policy: Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to speak to course faculty at the beginning of the semester. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Xavier University affords academic adjustments and auxiliary aids for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit or restrict one or more of such major life activities as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning. Students with disabilities should contact the Student Disability Services Center: <http://www.xavier.edu/lac/student-disability-services.cfm>.

Papers:

- There are two 3-4 page papers assigned for this semester. Specific guidelines for the papers will be available at least one week in advance of the paper due date that will specify the criteria of evaluation.
- Writing Center – The James A. Glenn Writing Center is located in Room 400 of the Conaton Learning Commons and relevant information can be found on the center website: www.xavier.edu/writing_center. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this valuable resource.

Discussion Posts:

- Over the course of the semester, there will be several required discussion posts on canvas that will be an extension of classroom group discussions. Specific questions and guidelines will be available in advance.

Final Project:

- This course culminates in final project that is inclusive of course content introduced throughout the semester. Specific guidelines will be available in advance.

Class Presentation (Final Project):

- Part of your overall grade for this course will be determined by the class presentation of your final project during the end of the semester. Specific guidelines will be available in advance.

Submission and Plagiarism Guidelines:

- Failure to turn in the assignment by class time of the due date will result in a lowering of the grade for that paper. For every day that the assignment is late, the grade will automatically be lowered one letter grade. If the paper is more than one week late, you will automatically fail that assignment. Arrangements for exceptions to this policy must be made in person or by email before the day the assignment is due.
- Plagiarism: In accordance to university policy, papers that display evidence of plagiarism will be failed and can result in failure of the course. All such cases will be dealt with according to this policy and in coordination with the Dean’s Office. Whenever you quote or paraphrase from a book, the internet, a lecture, or other source, you must cite that source and use quotes if appropriate. Please review the student handbook at <http://www.xavier.edu/student-integrity/documents/studenthandbook.pdf>. As stated in the handbook, “Penalties for violations of this [plagiarism] policy may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an “F” in the course, and expulsion from Xavier.”

Chess in Schools Program:

- This course has been made possible by the generous support of the Cris Collinsworth Proscan Fund. Over the course of the semester, you will have an opportunity to participate in the CCPF Chess in Schools program. Details TBA.

University Library:

- The [University Library](#) provides research support for all Xavier students. Find books and visit the [Makerspace](#) or [University Archives and Special Collections](#) in McDonald Library. Check out materials and laptops and find a librarian for research help at the Connection Center on the 3rd floor Conaton Learning Commons (CLC). Call (513) 745-4808 to speak with a librarian, or request research help at [Ask a Librarian](#). Use [Search@XU](#) and [Databases](#) to start research and find tutorials in [XU Tutor](#).

Overall Grading Percentages:

Attendance/Participation:	10%
Discussion Posts:	10%
Papers:	50%
Class Presentation:	5%
Final Project:	25%

Letter grades are determined according to a ten-point scale:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	59 and below

- The information on this syllabus is subject to change. If a change is made, students will be clearly notified.

Course Calendar:

Date:	Assignment:	Due:
	Game Design	
1/14	Course Introduction Playtime: Pawn Game	
1/16	Huizinga – “The Nature and Significance of Play as a Cultural Phenomenon” pp. 1-27 Playtime: Rooks and Bishops	Chess.com Sign Up
1/21	Caillois – <i>Man, Play, and Games</i> pp. 1-41, 57-67 Playtime: Queen and Knights	
1/23	Suits – “What is a Game?” pp. 148-156 Playtime: Pawn Promotion, Castling, <i>En Passant</i>	Discussion Post – Suits’ Definition of Games
1/28	Elias, Garfield, Gutschera - <i>Characteristics of Games</i> pp. 1-36 Class Guest: Andrew Cook (Biology Department) Playtime: Opening Strategies and Tactics	
1/30	Elias, Garfield, Gutschera - <i>Characteristics of Games</i> pp. 1-36 Silman - <i>The Complete Book of Chess Strategy</i> pp. 1-108 Playtime: Opening Strategies and Tactics	Discussion Post – Opening Game Quizzes
1/30*	<i>Extra Credit Opportunity:</i> <i>Spark: First-Year Seminar’s Call to the Greater Good</i> <i>Cintas Center - Duff Banquet Room</i> <i>7:00-8:15pm</i>	
2/4	Paper Discussion Class Guest: Greg Braun (Physics Department)	Paper #1

	Playtime: Mint Works	
	Chess History	
2/6	Price – <i>The History of Chess in Fifty Moves</i> pp. 6-19, 138-139 Murray – <i>A History of Chess</i> pp. 25-50, 68-77 Playtime: Chaturanga	
2/11	Price – <i>The History of Chess in Fifty Moves</i> pp. 20-35 Playtime: Xiangqi	
2/13	Needham – <i>Science and Civilization in China</i> pp. 314-335 Silman - <i>The Complete Book of Chess Strategy</i> pp. 109-280 Playtime: Xiangqi	Discussion Post – Middle Game Quizzes
2/18	Price – <i>The History of Chess in Fifty Moves</i> pp. 23 Murray – <i>A History of Chess</i> pp. 138-148 (Shogi) Playtime: Shogi	
2/20	Price – <i>The History of Chess in Fifty Moves</i> pp. 56-61 Yalom – <i>The Birth of the Queen</i> pp. 3-40 Playtime: Premodern Chess	Discussion Post – Final Project Proposals
2/25	Paper Workshop Playtime: Game Strategy and Tactics	
2/27	Paper Discussion Playtime: Game Strategy and Tactics	Paper #2
	Educational Benefits of Chess	
2/28*	Campus Chess Event: Panel Discussion and Blindfold Game Demonstration	

	<p>Chess Masters: Maurice Ashley, Irena Krush, and Russell Wilson with Special Guest Tani Adewumi</p> <p>Time: 12:00-1:00pm Location: Duff Banquet Room, Cintas Center</p>	
2/28-29*	<p>Queen City Chess Classic</p> <p>Details: TBA</p>	
3/3	<p>Ferguson – “Chess in Education Research Summary”</p> <p>Silman - <i>The Complete Book of Chess Strategy</i> pp. 283-331</p> <p>Playtime: Game Strategy and Tactics</p>	Discussion Post – Endgame Quizzes
3/5	Panel Discussion: Educational Benefits of Chess	
3/10	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
3/12	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
3/17	Gobet and Campitelli – “Educational Benefits of Chess Instruction: A Critical Review”	
3/19	<p>Ericsson – “The Influence of Experience and Deliberate Practice on the Development of Superior Expert Performance” pp. 683-703</p> <p>Class Guest: Gabe Gottlieb (Philosophy Department)</p> <p>Playtime: Game Strategy and Tactics</p>	
3/24	<p>Price – <i>The History of Chess in Fifty Moves</i> pp. 166-171, 182-189</p> <p>Class Guest: Russell Wilson (national chess master and CCPF board member)</p>	
3/26	Aciego, Carcia, Betancort – “The Benefits of Chess for the Intellectual and Social-Emotional Enrichment in Schoolchildren” pp. 551-559	Discussion Post – Personal Game Reports (30 full games)
3/31*	<p>Simultaneous Exhibition with Chess Master Russell Wilson</p> <p>Time: 4:00-6:30pm Location: Conaton Board Room (Schmidt Hall)</p>	

Final Projects		
4/2	Library Research and Information Literacy Skills Class Guest: Anne Ryckbost (Library)	Tutor Find Quiz (library)
4/7	Final Project Presentations	Class Presentation
4/9	NO CLASS – Easter Break	
4/14	Final Project Presentations	Class Presentation
4/16	Final Project Presentations	Class Presentation
4/21	Final Project Presentations	Final Project
TBA*	<i>Flame: First-Year Seminar's Celebration of Student Research</i> <i>Cintas Center - Duff Banquet Room</i> <i>Time: 7:00-8:30pm</i>	Flame Presentation
Course Conclusion: On Vocation		
4/23	Carroll – <i>Through the Looking Glass</i> pp. 1-47 Playtime: Bughouse	
4/28	Carroll – <i>Through the Looking Glass</i> pp. 48-150 Playtime: Bughouse	
4/30*	Last Class Meeting: <i>Dinner at the Konopka Home</i> <i>6:00-8:00pm</i> <i>Details: TBA</i> There is no final exam in this course.	