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😊 diversity 😊 disagreement 😊 democracy 😊 online 😊

PS 115D fully online | Spring 2016

Most weeks: play games MonNoonWedNoon & write report Wed1pmMon11am
 Some weeks: play games MonNoonWedNoon & write report Wed1pmMon11am & play games by Mon1pm
<https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/16S-POLSCI115D-1>
 Wait list to be admitted in full on Thursday March 24
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Is there a teacher in this class?

Welcome to PS 115D Diversity, Disagreement, and Democracy! You are enrolled in an online course I conceived under the auspices of UC Online Education in collaboration with Social Science Computing and the Office of Instructional Development at UCLA.

My name is Susanne Lohmann. I am a professor of political science and public policy at UCLA. My research covers collective action and political institutions; my teaching, ethics and governance.

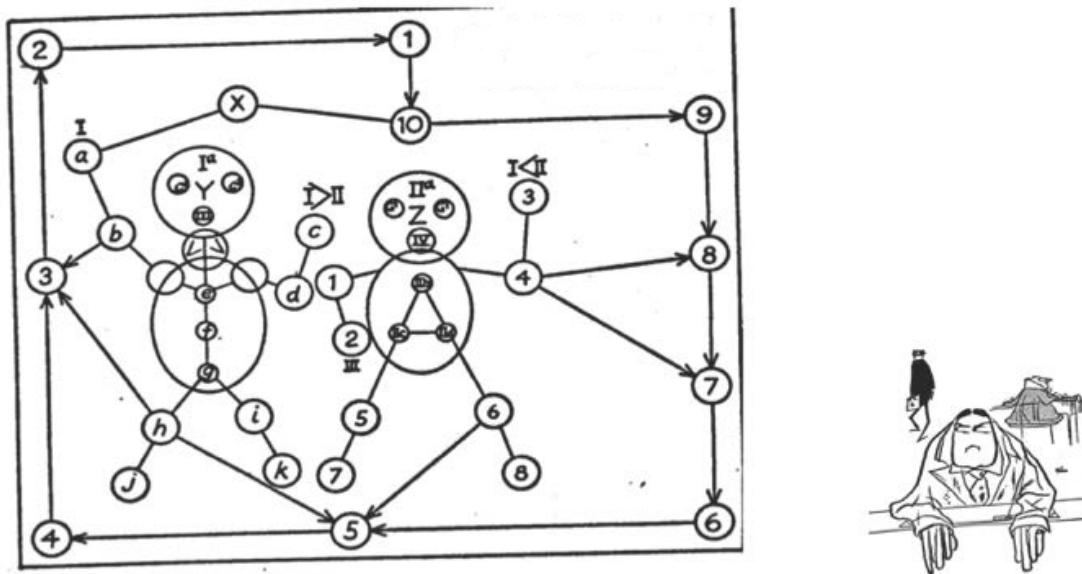
I hold a Ph.D. degree in economics and political economy from Carnegie Mellon University. My alma mater is a leading light in applying the learning sciences to online education. The spirit by which research informs not only course content but also pedagogical design animates my teaching.

In the classroom, I mix Socratic dialogue with a game play pedagogy. Socratic dialogue doesn't travel well, but the game play pedagogy has the potential to work better online than it does in the classroom!

Over the course of 10 weeks, you'll be checking in two times a week, on days and at times of your choice, to play games, view data, skim readings, and write reports. Under the cloak of a pen name, you'll be participating in a game-of-life simulation with 150 similarly concealed fellow students. Along the way, you'll learn more about rationality, morality, and collective action than you ever dreamed possible ... You'll find out how your player type fits into a moral ecology of player types. The dark sides of your type will be offset by the bright sides of other types, and conversely your type will save other types from ruin.

On top of getting college credit for having fun, you will gain social networking skills consistent with cutting-edge social science as well as data analysis skills in high demand by employers in business, government, and civil society.

I look forward to serving as your teacher this quarter. Actually ... for the most part I will be out of the picture. You and your fellow students will be teaching each other and learning from one another!



Course description

Can't we all just get along? To study this question, you will play games of cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and competition (4C). You will examine whether and how diversity, disagreement, and democracy (3D) influence the game play.

Learning goals include: understanding under what conditions diversity feeds productively or counterproductively into a group effort; developing self- and other-awareness of the emergent properties of disagreement; and appreciating how different kinds of social organization promote or undercut social cognition and collective action.

Such understanding can be taught top-down only up to a point; for the most part it needs to develop bottom-up, through experiential and interactive learning; active and analytical learning; systems thinking and real world application. You will play games, complete surveys, and explore simulations. Over and over again, you will experience a human complex system in action, first from a frog's perspective, as an inhabitant of the system, then with a bird's eye view, as the analyst of the system. The effect is to create a peculiar kind of tolerance, as in, *de todo ha de haber en el mundo* [it takes all sorts to make a world], including the intolerant sort.*

*The Spanish quote, which dates back to 1615, is drawn from the second volume of Miguel de Cervantes's *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha* [The Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote of La Mancha].

List of Surveys and Games

INTRODUCTION

Week 1 Enter Gaming Platform

Monday March 28 at noon to Wednesday March 30 at noon

Be sure to enter the Gaming Platform by Wednesday March 30 at noon, otherwise you will be shut out of this course!

Enter Lockbox and create Pen Name

Presurvey (100 points)

Diversity Survey (300 points)—*prerequisite for all subsequent surveys and games*

Happiness Survey (10 points)

Anger Survey (10 points)

Income Game with Mean-Variance Tradeoff (60 to 300 points)

Income Game with Same Mean and Different Variances (60 to 300 points)

Coin Tossing Game 1x (0 to 100 points)

Coin Tossing Game 10x (0 to 100 points)

[Segregation Simulation]

Week 1 Write Report

Play Game

**Wednesday March 30 at 1pm to Monday April 4 at 11am
before Monday April 4 at 1pm**

Write a two-page report on the Happiness and Anger Surveys, the Income Games, the Coin Tossing Games, and the Segregation Simulation—pick two of four to cover in your report.

After you've submitted your report, and at the very latest on Monday April 4 at 1 pm, play:

Taxation and Redistribution Game (variable points)

COOPERATION AND A LITTLE BIT OF COMPETITION

Week 2 Play Games

Monday April 4 at noon to Wednesday April 6 at noon

Hunger Survey (not to be confused with Hunger Games) (10 points)

Basic Public Goods Game (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Eyes of Honesty (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Inspirational Dog (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Awe-inspiring Experience (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Golden Rule (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Just Men and Just Women (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Zeros, Fives, and Tens (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Partner Selection (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with n=50 (5 to 55 points)

Public Goods Game with Whole Class (5 to 55 points)

Week 2 Write Report

Wednesday April 6 at 1pm to Monday April 11 at 11am

Write a three-page report on three of four public goods topics (Demographics, Group Size, Priming, Partners) and on the Taxation and Redistribution Game.

Week 3 Play Games

Monday April 11 at noon to Wednesday April 13 at noon

Competitive Public Goods Game with Jets and Sharks (0 to 100 points)

Competitive Public Goods Game with Democrats and Republicans (0 to 100 points)

Competitive Public Goods Game with Just Men and Just Women (0 to 100 points)

Public Goods Game with Bottom-up Punishment (-90 to +65 points)—*prerequisite for Salary Negotiation Game and Trust Game with Race or Ethnicity*

Week 3 Write Report

Wednesday April 13 at 1pm to Monday April 18 at 11am

Write a three-page report on three public goods topics (Competition, Gender, Punishment).

Week 4 Play Games STAGE ONE Play Games STAGE TWO

**Monday April 18 at noon to Tuesday April 19 at noon
Tuesday April 19 at noon to Wednesday April 20 at noon**

This week, by way of an exception, you need to go online two times to play a couple of two-stage games.

Dictator Game (0 to 100 points)

Ultimatum Game STAGE ONE (0 to 100 points total in STAGES ONE and TWO)

Ultimatum Game with Committee STAGE ONE (0 to 100 points total)

Ultimatum Game with Human Proposer and Robot Responder (0 to 100 points total)

Salary Negotiation Game STAGE ONE (points TBA)

Trust Game STAGE ONE (0 to 100 points total)

Trust Game with Race and Ethnicity STAGE ONE (0 to 100 points total)

Ultimatum Game STAGE TWO (0 to 100 points total in STAGES ONE and TWO)

Ultimatum Game with Committee STAGE TWO (0 to 100 points total)

Ultimatum Game with Robot Proposer and Human Responder (0 to 100 points total)

Salary Negotiation Game STAGE TWO (points TBA)

Trust Game STAGE TWO (0 to 100 points total)

Trust Game with Gender and Race or Ethnicity STAGE TWO (0 to 100 points total)

Week 4 Write Report

Play Game

Wednesday April 20 at 1pm to Monday April 25 at 11am

before Monday April 25 at 1pm

Write a three-page report on one public goods topic (Egoists and Altruists), on the Dictator vs. Ultimatum Games, and on the Trust Games.

After you've submitted your report, and at the very latest on Monday April 25 at 2 pm, play:

Salary Negotiation Game STAGE THREE (points TBA)

COORDINATION AND A LITTLE BIT OF COMPETITION

Week 5 Play Games

Monday April 25 at noon to Wednesday April 27 at noon

Coordination Game with n=2 (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with n=15 (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with n=15 and Treadmill Dance (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with n=15 and Hierarchy (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with Whole Class (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with Whole Class and Aircraft Carriers (-10 to +90 points)

Number Guessing Game with 2/3 (0 to 100 points)

Number Guessing Game with 3/2 (0 to 100 points)

Bureaucracy Game WORKER STAGE (0 to 160 in DIRECTOR STAGE)

Week 5 Write Report

Play Game

Wednesday April 27 at 1pm to Monday May 2 at 11am

before Monday May 2 at 1pm

Write a two-page report on the Salary Negotiation Game and the Coordination Games.

After you've submitted your report, and at the very latest on Monday May 2 at 1 pm, play:

Coordination Game with Leadership STAGE ONE (-10 to +90 points in STAGE TWO)

Week 6 Play Games

Monday May 2 at noon to Wednesday May 4 at noon

Coordination Game with Leadership STAGE TWO (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with Random Top-down Punishment (-10 to +90 points)

Coordination Game with Sequential Top-down Punishment (-10 to +90 points)

Bureaucracy Game SUPERVISOR STAGE (0 to 160 in DIRECTOR STAGE)

Week 6 Write Report

Play Game

Wednesday May 4 at 1pm to Monday May 9 at 11am

before Monday May 9 at 1pm

Write a two-page report on the Number Guessing Game, the two-stage Coordination Game with Leadership, and the Coordination Games with Punishment.

After you've submitted your report, and at the very latest on Monday May 9 at 1 pm, play:

Coordination Game with Leadership STAGE THREE (-10 to +90 points)

COLLABORATION AND A LITTLE BIT OF COMPETITION

Week 7 Play Games

Monday May 9 at noon to Wednesday May 11 at noon

Political Prediction Game STAGES ONE and TWO (0 to 525 points)

Presidential Election Game STAGE ONE (-700 to +2000 points in STAGES ONE and TWO)

Bureaucracy Game DIRECTOR STAGE (0 to 160 in DIRECTOR STAGE)

Week 7 Write Report

Wednesday May 11 at 1pm to Monday May 16 at 11am

Write a two-page report on Political Prediction Game, the three-stage Coordination Game with Leadership, and the Bureaucracy Game.

Week 8 Play Games

Wednesday May 11 at noon to Wednesday May 18 at noon

This week's games are open for a full week to give you enough time to read the jury cases.

Jury Verdict on the Speluncean Explorers (50 points)

Judicial Review of the Speluncean Explorers (50 points)

Executive Clemency for the Speluncean Explorers (50 points)

Jury Verdict on the Haditha Incident (100 points)

Week 8 Write Report

Wednesday May 18 at 1pm to Monday May 23 at 11am

Write a two-page report on the Speluncean and Haditha cases.

[Randomness of Death Penalty Simulation]

[Jury Decision Making Simulation]

Week 9 Play Games

Wednesday May 18 at noon to Wednesday May 25 at noon

This week's games are open for a full week to give you enough time to study the jury cases.

Jury Verdict on Liebeck v. McDonald's Restaurants (100 points)

Jury Verdict on New Jersey v. Dharun Ravi (100 points)

Jury Selection Game (-200 to +200 points)

Competitive Jury Selection Game (-200 to +200 points)

Week 9 Write Report

Wednesday May 25 at 1pm to Wednesday June 2 at 11am

Because Monday May 30 is Memorial Day Holiday, you have an extra two days to work on this report. The report is worth 20%, and it comes with optional groupwork. You can choose between completing this week's 20% report or next week's 20% report. If you complete both reports, your 20% Week 10 Report grade will replace your worst report grades, to the tune of 20%, but only if the effect on your final grade is positive.

Write a three-page report on the McDonald's and Dharun Ravi cases and on all four jury cases.

CONCLUSION

Week 10 Write Report

Wednesday May 25 at 1pm to Monday June 6 at 11am

The prompt for this report will be posted early on in the quarter, so you can start working on the report before Week 10, but you can only submit it in Week 10. The report is worth 20%, and it comes with optional groupwork.

Design and execute your own jokes or apologies experiment. Write up a three-page report describing your hypothesis, the related literature, your experimental design, the execution of your experiment, and your experimental results.

Be sure to exit from the Gaming Platform before or after you've submitted your report, otherwise your Cumulative Gaming Points won't be transferred over from your Pen Name to your real name, for the purpose of increasing your final grade!

Week 10 Exit Through the Gift Shop

Monday May 30 at noon to Monday June 6 at 1 pm

Presidential Election Game STAGE TWO (-700 to +2000 points in STAGES ONE and TWO)

Revelation Game (variable points)

Postsurvey (100 points)



Politics at bottom is not all that complicated. It's all about timing

Week 1 is special because it contains two hurdles. Be sure to enter the Gaming Platform in the first class session **WEEK 1 PlayGames MonNoonWedNoon**. Be sure to submit a two-page Week 1 Report—the first of 10 weekly reports—in the second class session **WEEK 1 WriteReport Wed1pmMon11am**. If you fail to meet these two requirements (enter Gaming Platform, submit Week 1 Report), you will be shut out of this class for good.

WEEK 1

PlayGames
MonNoonWedNoon

WriteReport
Wed1pmMon11am

In Week 1

enter Gaming Platform and play games,
write Week 1 Report.

Once you've survived Week 1 and settled in, you'll find that there's a weekly rhythm to this class. Mondays to Wednesdays you play games, and Wednesdays to Mondays you write reports, with occasional exceptions:

WEEK 2

PlayGames
MonNoonWedNoon

WriteReport
Wed1pmMon11am

In Week 2 ...

play games and
write Week 2 Report.

WEEK 9

PlayGames
WedNoonWedNoon

WriteReport
Wed1pmMon11am

In Week 9

play games (this week's games are open for a full week to give you extra time to study the jury cases) and
write Week 9 Report.

In some weeks, you'll have a second appointment to play games. After you've submitted your report, by Monday 11 am at the latest, play the games, by Monday 1 pm at the latest (no worry, a reminder to play games will be posted right next to the report submission link). Here is an example:

WEEK 5

PlayGames
MonNoonWedNoon

WriteReport
Wed1pmMon11am

In Week 5

play games,
write Week 5 Report (submit it by Mon11am), and
play games (complete them by Mon1pm).

In next to no time, it will be WEEK 10, and you'll be all done:

WEEK 10	In Week 10
WriteReport	write Week 10 Report (submit it by Mon11am) and
Wed1pmMon11am	

ExitThrough	exit from Gaming Platform (complete the games by Mon1pm).
TheGiftShop	

So that you don't miss out on playing games, your best bet is to establish a habit. For example, you might commit yourself, I'll always play games on Tuesday evenings.

Grading scheme, summary (10 weekly reports, game play)

Your final grade depends on your 10 weekly reports and your game play:

Week 1-Week 8 Reports	10% each, totaling 80%
Week 9 & Week 10 Reports	20% each; you need to complete one of the two; if you complete both, the 20% grade for your Week 10 Report will replace your two worst 10% Week 1 to Week 8 Report grades or your 20% Week 9 Report grade, whichever replacement improves your final grade to the maximum extent, but only if the overall effect on your final grade is positive; optional groupwork for a group grade
Cumulative Gaming Points	increase your final grade not at all (+0) or by one third of grade (+1/3), two thirds of a grade (+2/3), or a full grade (+1).

There are no midterms and no final exams in this class.

Grading scheme, part 1 of 2 (10 weekly reports)

Your final grade depends on your 10 weekly reports and your game play. This section covers the weekly reports.

You are required to submit at least eight of the 10 weekly reports. If you miss more than two reports, you may get a failing grade for the course as a whole, or you can drop the course to avoid getting the failing grade.

Submit the Week 1 Report online, in session **WEEK 1 WriteReport Wed1pmMon11am**. Students who fail to complete this requirement will receive a failing grade for the course as a whole, or you can drop the course to avoid the failing grade.

Extensions will be granted generously if your request for an extension comes well in advance of the submission deadline. For example, if you already know at the outset of the Spring Quarter that you'll be out of town May 21-22 to attend a wedding, you can ask me—at the outset of the Spring Quarter—for an extension (up to 48 hours) on the Week 8 Report, and I'll grant the extension. The key to getting your extension granted is to request it well in advance. Once the prompt for a given report appears on Wednesdays at 1 pm, I'll grant extensions only in the case of documented medical and other emergencies.

Here are the grading criteria for the weekly reports:

WRITING (grammar, spelling, word choice, sentence structure, paragraph breaks)
2 points = excellent, 1 point = competent, 0 points = deficient

READABILITY (organization, flow, no fluff or repetition, overall pleasing look)
2 points = excellent, 1 point = competent, 0 points = deficient

ARGUMENT (voice, narrative arc, theory, logic, insight, complexity, vivid examples)
2 points = excellent, 1 point = competent, 0 points = deficient

EVIDENCE (empirical detail, empirical accuracy, integration of argument and evidence)
2 points = excellent, 1 point = competent, 0 points = deficient

CHARTS (simplicity, comprehensibility, storytelling, clear labels, no color or clutter)
2 points = excellent, 1 point = competent, 0 points = deficient

Point penalties will be assessed for late submission, formatting errors, poor citation practices, and failure to meet the prompt.

The point totals for weekly reports range from 0 to 10. Here's how your point total translates into a report grade: 0=F, 1=D, 2=C-, 3=C, 4=C+, 5=B-, 6=B, 7=B+, 8=A-, 9=A, 10=A+.

The Week 1 to Week 8 Reports count 10% each towards your final grade. The Week 9 and Week 10 Reports count 20% each, and you need to complete one of them. If you complete both, the 20% grade for your Week 10 Report will replace your two worst 10% report grades or your 20% Week 9 Report grade, whichever improves your final grade to the maximum extent, and only if the effect on your final grade is indeed positive. To calculate your final grade, add up the point totals for your weekly reports and calculate the weighted point average, which translates into your final grade as follows: 10=A+, 9=A, 8=A-, 7=B+, 6=B, 5=B-, 4=C+, 3=C, 2=C-, 1=D, 0=F. (Your final grade may further increase by up to a full grade depending on your Cumulative Gaming Points, as noted in the next section, below.)

The weekly reports will run two or three pages (the weekly prompts will list page limits), everything included. The penalty for running over the page limit is one point per excess page. As a matter of routine, you should save your report as a pdf file and submit the pdf file. This will prevent your report from being reformatted by the computer software governing the class website, with the possible effect that you inadvertently run over the page limit.

You must submit your weekly report on time. The grace period is one hour. The penalty for running late is one point for every six hours. If you run into an online submission problem, contact the technical support staff (use the Need Help link in the upper right hand corner of each page of the class website).

You are allowed to work together with other students in this class, but not with anybody outside of this class, on your data analysis. Each student must write up their own report from scratch, however. If the writing in your report is excessively similar to the writing in another student's report, you'll get points deducted for poor citation practice, and on top of that I may report you to the Office of the Dean of Students for plagiarism.

Your Week 9 and Week 10 Reports are an exception to the rule that each student must write up their own report from scratch. You can choose to write each of these two reports individually or in a group of size two or three. Groups will get a group grade. Some students will be entering this course with a preexisting group in mind. Other students can find a like-minded group using the Networking Survey on the class website, in the section titled Networking.



Leslie Jamison's tattoo, photographed by Alen MacWeeney, reads "homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto," which translates as "I am a human being: nothing human is alien to me." The quotation is due to Terence, a playwright in the Roman Republic, who was born in either 195 or 185 BC (sources disagree on his birth year). Of North African descent, he was brought to Rome as a slave. The Roman senator who purchased him was impressed by his abilities, educated him, and set him free. Terence died young in 159 BC, probably at sea.

Grading scheme, part 2 of 2 (game play)

Your final grade depends on your 10 weekly reports and your game play. This section covers the game play.

You are required to enter the Gaming Platform in session **WEEK 1 PlayGames MonNoonWedNoon**. Entering the Gaming Platform entails: (1) enter Lockbox and create Pen Name, (2) take Presurvey, and (2) take Diversity Survey. Students who fail to complete this requirement will receive a failing grade for the course as a whole, or you can drop the course to avoid the failing grade.

You are further required to check in weekly. Students who chronically fail to play games (that is, they skip playing games in four or more of the 14 class sessions that contain at least one survey or game) may receive a failing grade for the course as a whole, or you can drop the course to avoid the failing grade.

Every time you respond to a survey or play a game, you get points:

You get a fixed number of points for responding to a survey. The number of points depends on the labor-intensity and complexity of the task.

The number of points you get for playing a game varies depend on your responses, other students' responses, and luck.

Over the course of the quarter, your points will accumulate. At the end of the quarter, your Cumulative Gaming Points will feed into your final grade. They will increase your final grade not at all (+0) or by one third of grade (+1/3), two thirds of a grade (+2/3), or a full grade (+1).

Let's say your final grade, based on your Weekly Reports is a B+. Depending on your Cumulative Gaming Points, your final grade will stay put at B+ or increase to A-, A, or A+. Your game play can only improve your final grade; it cannot drag down your final grade.

Here's how the Cumulative Gaming Points translate into final grade improvements. Students are sorted into three groups: Bottom Third, Middle Third, and Top Third. The final grades of the Bottom Third will increase by zero (+0); the Middle Third, by one third (+1/3); the Top Third, by two thirds (+2/3). Within the Top Third, the three students with the most points—the Three Top Dogs—will see their final grades improve by a full grade (+1).

Here's an example with made up Pen Names, Cumulative Gaming Points, and cutoff points. Don't get hung up on the specific cutoff points—they are made up purely for the sake of the example.

Let's say that 168 students entered the Gaming Platform (that is, they entered the Lockbox, created a Pen Name, and took the Diversity Survey). Sort the Pen Names by Cumulative Gaming Points, as in, Pen Name #1 has the lowest number of points and Pen Name #168 has the highest number of points.

RANKING	PEN NAME	CUMULATIVE GAMING POINTS	GRADE IMPROVEMENT
Pen Name #1	JohnnyComeLately	0	+0
Pen Name #2	WattsUp	300	+0
...
Pen Name #56	VirtuousQueen	886	+0
Pen Name #57	ChickenSalad	910	+1/3
...
Pen Name #112	CocoChanel	1,230	+1/3
Pen Name #113	UntamedGorilla	1,240	+2/3
...
Pen Name #165	MissPetticoat	2,488	+2/3
Pen Name #166	Prez-in-2034	2,495	+1
Pen Name #167	Wonnerfull	2,890	+1
Pen Name #168	WanderingTortoise	3,390	+1

With the help of a computer program, the Pen Names are translated into real names, which are sorted into four lists:

- 56 students with +0 grade improvements sorted alphabetically by real name,
- 56 students with +1/3 grade improvement sorted alphabetically by real name,
- 53 students with +2/3 grade improvements sorted alphabetically by real name,
- 3 students with +1 grade improvement sorted alphabetically by real name.

On Thursday March 24, the wait list will be admitted in full and the course will be closed; from then on out students can drop, but no further students can enroll. The translation of Cumulative Gaming Points into final grade improvements is biased in your favor because students who dropped the course after they entered the Gaming Platform are included in the count. Those students, simply because they played no games, or hardly any games, inevitably end up in the Bottom Third, which serves to bump up the students who stick with the course into the Middle Third, the Top Third, and the Top Three. In the extreme, if one third (33%) of the students who entered the Gaming Platform were to drop the course, all of the remaining students would see their final grade improve by one third—or more.

As you play games on the Gaming Platform, your identity is protected by an elaborate security system devised by UCLA's Social Science Computing staff. The weak point in this system is—you and your fellow students. It is absolutely essential that you keep mum about your Pen Name, or for that matter, about the Pen Names of your classmates in the event that they deliberately or accidentally reveal their Pen Names to you.

If I find out that you've revealed your Pen Name, or the Pen Name of a classmate, with the effect that it shows up in electronic form (e.g., on Facebook), I will ask you to drop the course or else accept a failing grade for the course as a whole. The failing grade will be justified on academic grounds, meaning: there is no course of appeal. I am not trying to play mean girl here. It's just that we are collecting data of a sensitive nature in this course, and I am dead serious about protecting your identity.

You are allowed to exchange notes with other students in this class, but not with anybody outside of this class, on your game play. Just be sure not to reveal your Pen Names to each other, or if you do, at least be sure not to have your Pen Names show up anywhere in electronic form.

There is one exception to the above secrecy rule, having to do with your communications with the technical support staff. You are free to reveal your Pen Name to them if you contact them through the Need Help link in the upper right hand corner of each page on the class website or the Contact Us link in the upper right hand corner of any page on the Gaming Platform.

Absolutely do not, ever, reveal your Pen Name in your communications with me (lohmann@ucla.edu).

Eighty percent of success is showing up

This course is a lot of work. It is also rewarding. You'll learn a lot. Perhaps just as importantly, you have a lot of control over your final grade.

The mean report grade is likely to increase from a B on the Week 1 Report to an A- on the Week 10 Report, simply because the class as a whole will get ever better at writing reports. Now let's say your performance on the reports is about equal to the mean performance of the class as a whole. Then the weighted average of your report grades will run around B+. Oops, you bomb one or two reports along the way, as a result of which your weighted report grade slips towards a B. No need to panic. You can write an extra 20% report at the end of the quarter, and the grade for that report will cancel out your worst two 10% report grades from earlier in the quarter. So you're back in business with a weighted average report grade of B+.

Meanwhile, week for week you've been religiously playing games and anxiously tracking your percentile standing in the Cumulative Gaming Points distribution. As noted above, if you play games religiously you can virtually guarantee yourself a one third increase in your final grade; you have a decent shot at a two thirds increase, and there's a small chance that your final grade will increase by one full grade.

The result? Your final grade will end up B+ (unlikely), A- (most likely), A (almost as likely), or A+ (remotely likely).

Be religious about playing games and submitting reports, and it is virtually impossible for you to fail this class or to get a bad grade. This class is a lot of work, true, but the path to an A is straightforward.

Gaming Platform mechanics

Don't click on Page Forward or Page Back: depending on your browser, your responses will get lost. Instead, once you enter a survey or a game, stay on that page, enter your responses, change your responses until you are satisfied with them, and click on the Submit button at the end of the survey or game.

Your responses are not saved—meaning: you can change them at will—until you press the Submit button. Once you've pressed the Submit button, you are stuck with your responses. The technical support staff will not change your responses even if you made an honest mistake.

Some surveys and games consist of multiple stages or parts. If you miss out on an early stage or part, you will be shut out of later stages or parts.

Some surveys and games are prerequisites for subsequent surveys and games. They are labeled required (e.g., the Diversity Survey is required for all subsequent surveys and games) or prerequisite (e.g., you must have played the Public Goods Game with Bottom-Up Punishment in order for you to play the Trust Game with Gender and Race or Ethnicity). The Diversity Survey requirement is obvious (bits and pieces of your diversity data will be displayed, alongside your Pen Name and game play data, in various data sets throughout the quarter). The reason why playing one game is prerequisite for playing another—unrelated—game is more subtle ... In some games you'll be paired off with another student, and if you don't play, not only do you lose the points you could have made; the other student loses those points, too, as a result of your not showing up. By the simple means of making the play of those kinds of games conditional on your having played some game in the previous class session, students who aren't playing regularly get knocked out, which makes it less likely that those students impose a cost on their fellow students, by virtue of not showing up.

Because of the synchronicity and interactivity of the game play, if you miss a class session even for good reason (accident or illness), you cannot make up the surveys and games you missed—ever.

The class website and Gaming Platform are designed to be viewed on a computer. If you view them on a cellphone, you are likely to overlook something important.

Groupwork

On the Week 1 to Week 8 Reports, you are allowed to work together with other students in this class on your data analysis, but each student must write up their own report from scratch. Specifically on the Week 9 and Week 10 Reports, you can choose to work in a group on both the data analysis and the report, in which case you'll get a group grade.

On the class website, the section titled **Networking** contains a Networking Survey designed to create group-specific discussion forums. If you entered this course with a preexisting group, you can create a discussion forum limited to that group. Otherwise, you can match up with like-minded students and create a discussion forum limited to your newly established group.

You are disallowed from working together with anybody outside of this class on your reports, excepting UC-official tutors in campus writing centers and the like.

Readings

In the Syllabus section of the class website you can find an alphabetically ordered reading list. The readings are distributed across the class sessions, where you can access and download them. (Specifically for the books, you will need to seek out a library.) There is no exam in this class, and you won't be tested on your knowledge of the readings per se. But the prompts will refer to the readings, and you are encouraged to skim them so as to do a good job on your weekly reports.

Course improvements

This online course is a work in progress. At the end of the quarter you'll be asked to suggest improvements, to the benefit of your 2017 successors. Meanwhile, in circle-of-life fashion, you gain from the suggestions for improvements that were made by your 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 predecessors. Here are some complaints from past years:

This course is too much work! The workload peaked in 2014; in that year, students wrote 10 reports counting three pages each. That was asking for too much. This year, there are five two-page reports and five three-page reports; one of the three-page reports is optional; and you can miss two reports along the way and make up for them by writing an additional report at the end. Depending on your report writing choices, your page total will run 19 to 25 pages.

We need less time to play games and more time to write the reports! Up to 2014, the week was evenly split into a PlayGames period and WriteReport period. In 2015, I cut the PlayGames period to two days and expanded the WriteReport period to five days. That change was a smashing success, and we're sticking with it.

Some of us have athletic, religious, or party commitments over the weekend, and we need to write our reports before and after the weekend; others, to the contrary, are busy with classes on weekdays, and they want to write their reports on the weekend! To accommodate both types of students, I wrapped the WriteReport period around the weekend; it now runs from Wednesday 1 pm to Monday 11 am.

To do well, you have to have Excel skills, which most of us don't have! In 2014, the programmer for the Gaming Platform created a suite of data tools so that you can analyze the online data without using Excel. The Prompt for Week 1 Report will run you through the full range of data tools. Students who have Excel skills can still download the data and apply Excel.

The grading is inconsistent! In past years, students were randomly assigned to one of two Course Readers. Because Course Readers inevitably have slightly different grading styles and grading standards, students experienced the grading as inconsistent. This year, each student will be assigned to one of the Course Readers for the duration of the quarter. Week for week, the grade distributions generated by the two Course Readers will be equalized (a grade adjustment factor will be applied to the lower grade so as to raise them to the level of the higher grades). There is no systematic grade disadvantage to being graded by one or the other Course Reader.

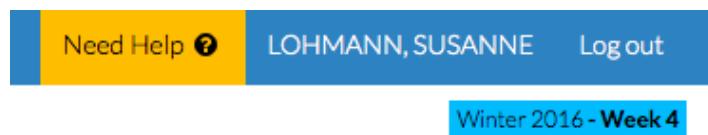
Getting help

This course is based on Apple Computer's design philosophy. When you buy an Apple computer and take it out of the box, it's obvious what you need to do. There is no instruction manual, and you don't have to spend time with a call center.

In the same vein, once you enter the virtual classroom for this course, it's obvious what you need to do. Right in front of you there is a plan of action listing the things you need to do, and all you have to do is work your way through that list. There is no instruction manual, and there is no call center.

So much for the theory. In practice, something is likely to go wrong. In the event that something goes wrong, there are two kinds of help you can get. You can get technical help, and you can ask questions about course content.

To get technical help on the course website, click on the Need Help link in the upper right hand corner of any page on the course website:



To get technical help on the Gaming Platform, click on the Contact Us link in the upper right hand corner of any page on the Gaming Platform:



Technical support is available Monday to Fridays 8 am to 5 pm. If you contact the technical support staff over night, you'll get an answer the next morning; over the weekend, on Monday morning.

If you have substantive questions, write to me at lohmann@ucla.edu.

Before you ask for help, remember the design philosophy underlying this course. Let's say you're about to write a report for this course. You check out the prompt, which tells you to "[p]ick your font size, line spacing, and margin widths so that your report has a pleasing look and is easily readable by a human being." You might be tempted to send me an e-mail asking whether your line spacing should be 1.0 or 1.5 or 2.0. Resist that temptation.

Think for yourself, and make sensible choices.

Optional honors section

UCLA students may—"may" means: this is optional—sign up for the honors section that comes attached to this course (PS 189, one unit). Send me an e-mail (lohmann@ucla.edu) requesting a PTE number. If you get at least a B in both PS 115D and PS 189, then you will receive five units' worth of honors credit, four for PS 115D and one for PS 189.

Cross-campus students would need to contact the Undergraduate Counselor, Vice Chair for Undergraduate Studies, or Department Chair at their home campus to find out whether and how they can get honors credit for PS 115D or PS 189.

If you sign up for the honors section, you need to complete both the Week 9 and Week 19 Reports. One of the two report grades will feed into your PS 115D grade, the other, into your honors section grade. Since you'll be submitting one report on the PS 115D website and the other report on the PS 189 website, you control which report feeds into which final grade.

You can work individually or in a group. The group can include students who are in PS 115D and not in PS 189.

That's it. Enjoy!

