

# Fall Showcase 2019

## Questing for Engagement:

### The Potential and Limits of Gamification for Encouraging Student Reading

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#### Research question/statement

Research suggests that most undergraduate students do not read assigned materials. As part of the Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars program, I developed a rudimentary gamification system intended to encourage student reading in a senior level

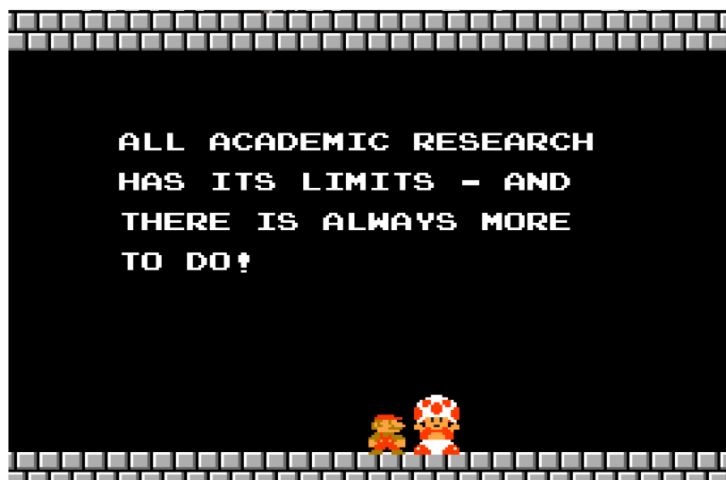
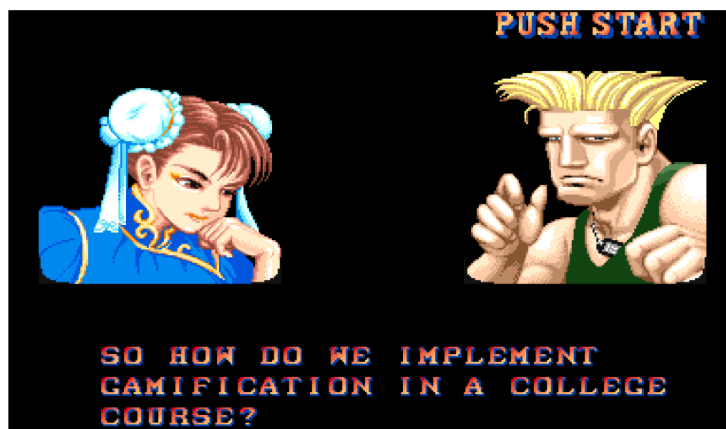
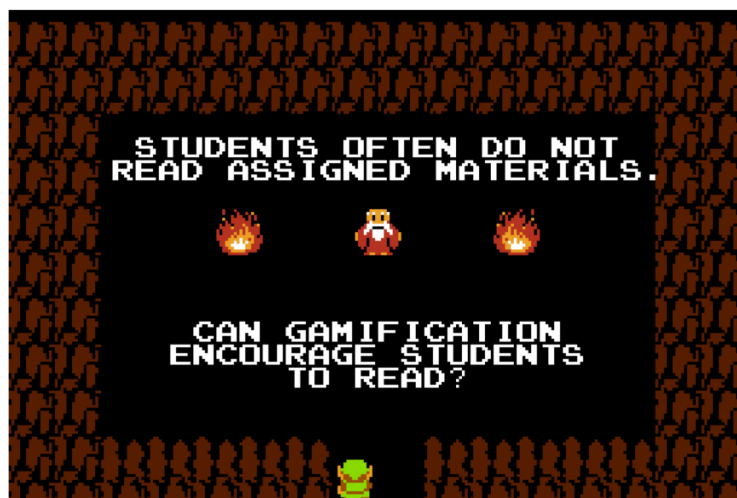
Communication/Information Science course. Over the course of the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters, students in Information, Media, and Society were offered the chance to work on several short exercises based on argument construction and analysis, factual retention, and other learning outcomes in order to engage students with the assigned material.

Completion of the exercises awarded students with points that would earn "perks" in class like extended due dates and extra credit. Student reaction was measured via optional pre-and-post-test surveys. Analysis of the two semesters suggested the overall average exam scores for both courses improved compared to previous semesters, but overall student behaviors did not change much despite a generally positive reaction to the activities. The results suggest gamification should be a primary focus of curriculum design if it is included, but it cannot change reading habits or guarantee success alone.

**RQ1:** *Did exam scores improve once gamification was introduced?*

**RQ2:** *How did student reading habits change (if at all) prior to and after gamified exercises?*

**RQ3:** *Do students perceive gamified exercises as encouraging to their reading habits?*



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