



## BOOK REVIEW

# Gaming Innovations in Higher Education: Emerging Research and Opportunities

Robert Costello

*Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2018*

*(x + 178 pages, ISBN 9781522529811, \$118.21)*

### Reviewed By

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*Gaming Innovations* explores using game mechanics and concepts (gamification) in higher education. In five succinct chapters, the book explains gamification theory and its application in the classroom. The book stresses that a fun and safe learning environment for students is essential for implementing gamification. This environment enhances learning and stimulates social activity. The book describes how gaming concepts, such as levels and peer interaction, connect to theories of learning, pedagogy, and curriculum design that are engaging for learners. The final chapter discusses how Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) might be used in the classroom with gamification.

I recommend *Gaming Innovations* as a good introductory book on gamification and how to incorporate this method in the classroom. The book is well written and accessible to a wide audience and those with no gaming expertise. I have three main criticisms and two positive observations. A first criticism is the lack of examples of a curriculum plan or class syllabus for reference. My second critique relates to the idea of “fun” as a vital factor for quality education. Can one use gamification if it isn’t fun? Third, the book does not mention any potential drawbacks of using gamification in the classroom. Despite a few criticisms, *Gaming Innovations* accomplishes its purpose for readers. A first benefit of gamification the book highlights is improved learner growth. Gamification includes an environment of peer review, community support, and direct feedback that engages learners in ways familiar to students. Second, technology combined with gamification could potentially remove barriers to learning.

*Gaming Innovations* is a worthwhile introduction to this engaging topic. Each chapter includes bibliographies helpful for further reading. The book explains a subject that may seem strange to some in higher education and in a seminary classroom. Yet, there is room for adapting existing curriculum to rejuvenate the seminary classroom experience for today’s learners. *Gaming Innovations* provides a great starting point for this subject.