CIS 5640: **Introduction to Game Design**

Assignment 2: Analyzing Game Loops

For this assignment, you will be analyzing the core game loop of a complex game. The goal is to understand how game loops work together to create an engaging player experience. By focusing on a game with **multiple interacting loops**, you will gain deeper insights into how design choices impact gameplay, player motivation, and overall satisfaction.

1. Select a game that you've played before. This game should be one with multiple interwoven game loops (e.g., resource management, combat, exploration). Choosing a game with a long playtime is a safe bet. Examples include Stardew Valley, The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, Elden Ring, or Hades. Play at least 30 minutes of the game, using your previous knowledge of the game as well as your new understanding of game loops.
2. Identify a few core game loops that you've interacted with. Describe at least two of these loops, focusing on:
   ○ At what time scale does the loop operate? Seconds? Minutes? Hours?
   ○ Clarity: What does the player need to do, and is it clear?
   ○ Motivation: What motivates the player to engage with this loop?
   ○ Feedback: How does the game provide feedback to the player?
   ○ Satisfaction: Why does engaging with this loop feel good?
3. Discuss how these loops interact with each other. You can use graphs (Miro, Obsidian Mindmaps) to analyze game loop dependency and interactions like we did on the lecture slides. You can start with following ideas:
   ○ How do they complement each other?
   ○ Is there a hierarchy (e.g., one loop feeds into another)?
   ○ Are there trade-offs or tensions created by balancing multiple loops?
4. (Optional) Since we'll be exploring game narrative next week, we encourage you to analyze how these game loops contribute to the overall theme and narrative of the game. Don't worry if this feels all too unfamiliar—it's entirely optional, and you can decide whether or not to include this in your submission!