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A BETA PLACE
Attention, computer geeks, joystick freaks, and free-pizza seekers: Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at 2 Metrotech Center in Brooklyn, inventors bring their board, card, or video game prototypes in various stages of doneness to give and get invaluable feedback. “When teaching game design, we focus on iteration,” says Frank Lantz, director of the Tisch School of the Arts’ Game Center. “There is no substitute for the process of observing how [a game] plays, [then] modifying and tweaking it.” Upwards of 50 students and faculty, along with pro developers and guests, convene outside the center’s game library—the largest in existence—for what’s known as Playtest Thursdays in the hopes of replicating the success of one team-based blockbuster. “Killer Queen Arcade was playtested in its early form here,” Lantz says of the world’s only 10-player arcade strategy game. “It’s pretty cool.” —D. I.

METHOD MALAISE
Some of the wickedest theater in New York City is happening in one of the most unexpected of places. Several times a week at the New York Simulation Center for the Health Sciences (NYSIM) located within Bellevue Hospital, thespians pretending they’re patients get routine checkups, discuss embarrassing symptoms, respond to devastating diagnoses, and engage in other scenarios with current and future healthcare providers. “We have more than 250 actors in our database, ranging from 16 to 88 years old and speaking 10 different languages,” says Sondra Zabar (MED ’91) of the Standardized Patient Program, which she directs along with NYU’s division of general internal medicine and NYSIM, a partnership between the Langone Medical Center and the City University of New York. The performers provide feedback and let educators observe the students’ history taking, eye contact, clinical reasoning, note writing, and physical exams via one-way mirrors and video. “We have programs for nursing, emergency room responders, pharmaceutical companies [doing] clinical trials, and for faculty, to reinforce their communication and leadership skills. [The scenes] are only limited by our creativity,” says Zabar. —D. I.

LETTERING IN POLITENESS
You typically use a dictionary when you’re unfamiliar with a word. Other times, you simply want to understand its deeper meanings or nuances. We’d like to think the latter explains why “courtesy” was the term most looked up by NYU students in 2014. Dictionary.com tracked searches in zip codes associated with or near colleges and produced a list that included “blithe” (Stanford University) and “egregious” (University of California, Los Angeles) as well as the head scratchers “cauliflower” (Boise State University) and “sociopath” (University of South Carolina). —D. I.