Advanced Game Design Studio

GAME410 – Fall 2018 – MW 9:00 am to 10:15 am – AD 2002

Instructor: Rob Dieterich
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Office: AD 2021
Office Hours*: Tuesday 1 pm – 2:45 pm

* Other times by appointment. The best way to reach the instructor is via email.

Mason Mission Statement
Mission-Who we are and why we do what we do

A public, comprehensive research university established by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the National Capital Region, we are an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to creating a more just, free, and prosperous world.

Mason Game Design Mission Statement
The Mission of the Computer Game Design Program at George Mason University is to prepare students for employment and further study in the computer game design and development field, doing so with a curriculum designed to reflect the gaming industry’s demand for an academically rigorous technical program coupled with an understanding of the artistic and creative elements of the evolving field of study.

Catalog Description
This course is for Computer Game Design Majors and serves as the second studio design course and the design capstone for the Major. This course expands on knowledge gained in the prerequisites GAME 310 and GAME 330. It serves as a capstone of design and as a precursor or supplement to GAME 490, the capstone for the Major.

This is a team project-based class. As such, there are no tests, just a major project. Each student is responsible for their own work on the project, but also responsible for meeting the team’s goals.

The primary focus of this course is the process of game development, which is learned by doing. Learning how to progress from the design to the prototype to the production phases will occur over the course of project development. Students will learn to meet milestones and create a polished final game which meets design goals and is user friendly.
Course Overview
In this course, students will cooperate to complete a non-trivial game design project. The game produced will be implemented in such a way as to make it suitable for public release. Students in the class will be expected to act as a cohesive team to develop the game project from conception to release.

Student Learning Objectives
During this course, students will:

- Attain a working knowledge of Scrum fundamentals
- Exercise Unity skills in the development of a game suitable for public release
- Use professional game documentation and processes
- Implement a team-based game development process
- Produce a non-trivial game in a team-based environment
- Apply critical thinking skills to refine their development process

Required Texts / Materials
There’s no required text for this course. Necessary materials will be distributed online if applicable.

Access to a PC Desktop/Laptop is required for project work outside of class.

Required Software
Reasonable software requirements will be decided between the students and the professor over the course of project development.

Course Structure
This course is entirely devoted to the development of a single project with all members of the class working collaboratively. As such, this class provides an opportunity for students to practice the logistical and project-management skills required to organize a team of this size.

The bulk of the work for this course will be take place outside of class meetings. Enumeration and assignment of tasks will be performed by the students and individual students will be responsible for completing the tasks they are assigned. Class times will generally serve as regular meetings that allow the team to coordinate development efforts. Some class time will be used by the professor to teach relevant development / management strategies over the course of the project.

Grading & Assessment Overview
Your grade in this course will be based on the following factors:

70% Participation in Project Development
20% Quizzes and Other Graded In-Class Assignments
10% Attendance*
* Note that, if you are having trouble in class, need an extension on a given assignment, or circumstances outside of class are affecting your ability to do the work, talk with me about it sooner than later. In general, we can work something out.

Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A: 90% - 100%
B: 80% - 89%
C: 70% - 79%
D: 60% - 69%
F: 0% - 59%

**Academic Honesty**

For complete information about the University’s policies on academic honesty, please see: http://www.gmu.edu/cte/Teaching/Getting_STARTED/Designing_Syllabus/academic_honesty.html

**GMU Honor Code**

http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/index.html#Anchor12

Honor Code: To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

**Additional Resources**

GMU Student information and resources: http://www.gmu.edu/mlstudents/

The University Libraries maintain info guides for various majors. You can find links to various game design resources on the Computer Game Art & Design info guide: http://infoguides.gmu.edu/games

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Students must inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester, and the specific accommodation will be arranged through the Disability Resource Center.

**Disclaimer**

In this class, I reserve the right to show a broad range of course materials, some of which assume the audience to be adult in age and demeanor. Should you at any time in the course of the class feel offended by something you have seen or heard, we would appreciate you staying to be part of a dialogue. If you feel that you cannot stay, remove yourself from the classroom as discretely as possible. You may be asked to report on your response.
Privacy
Students must use their MasonLIVE email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See http://masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

Course Schedule
Major project deadlines will be determined by the students and professor in a collaborative fashion during this course.