

GAME 1022 Video Game Development

Summer 2008

Course Hours: 42

Class Schedule: May 28 – Aug. 13, Wednesdays, 6:00-9:30 p.m.

Room: HBC 221.0

Instructor: Ben Lewis

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Prerequisites: None

Course Description: This course will provide a general understanding of the many facets of game development (programming, art, design, production, audio, QA, marketing, publishing) and how they all fit together. As one of the four required courses in the ACC Video Game Development curriculum, this class covers the basics of game development to prepare students for further studies in the game industry. Material will include case studies and postmortems from popular games, as well as guest lectures from industry professionals.

Course Objectives: Students will learn about specific processes for console / PC / mobile / handheld platforms and receive real-world advice on preparing for a job in game development. By the end of the semester, students should have developed a robust understanding of the processes by which modern games are made, from concept to completion.

As a final project, students will be required to construct their own postmortem on a chosen game, and give a presentation on their conclusions and reasoning during the final week of class. Working in teams may be required for some class projects.

Who Should Enroll in this Course: This course is required for all students in the Video Game Development technical certification program.

Approved Course Textbook: *Game Development Essentials: An Introduction* by Jeannie Novak; ISBN 1-4018-6271-3

Course Outline:

5/28	Week 1	Introductions, syllabus overview, course structure
6/4	Week 2	Phases of development, industry roles
6/11	Week 3	Art and design
6/18	Week 4	Programming and production
6/25	Week 5	Audio and QA
7/2	Week 6	Marketing and publishing
7/9	Week 7	Console and PC game development
7/16	Week 8	Casual and mobile game development
7/23	Week 9	Serious game development and outsourcing
7/30	Week 10	Looking ahead: developing for Mac and iPhone
8/6	Week 11	Breaking into the game industry
8/13	Week 12	Final project presentations, class review

Grading and Examinations:

A	90 and above	A = Excellent performance. Work is exemplary and worthy of emulation by others. Student is in full attendance and constructively contributes to the learning environment.
B	80-89	B = Above average performance. All assignments are complete and exhibit a complete understanding and an ability to apply concepts.
C	70-79	C = Average performance. Accomplishes only the minimum requirements. Oral and written communication is at an acceptable level for a college student.
D	60-69	D = Demonstrates understanding at the most rudimentary level. Work is minimally passing.
F	< 59	F = Work is not passing, characterized by incompleteness, lateness, unsatisfactory demonstration of understanding and application.

Grades will be based on:

20% class participation, 20% attendance, 60% assignments and quizzes

Academic Integrity: A student is expected to complete his or her own projects and tests. Students are responsible for observing the policy on academic integrity described in the Current ACC Student Handbook.

“Acts prohibited by the college for which discipline may be administered include scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating on an exam or quiz, plagiarizing, and unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing outside work. Academic work submitted by students shall be the result of their own thought, research or self-expression. Academic work is defined as, but not limited to tests, quizzes, whether taken electronically or on paper; projects, either individual or group; classroom presentations, and homework.”

The penalty assessed for violations will be in accordance with the current ACC Student Handbook policy. See <http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/policies4.htm> for more information.

Attendance and Participation Policy: The official college policy states that students are expected to attend classes and will be held responsible for all material covered in class. Regular attendance helps ensure satisfactory progress towards completion of the course. Participation in this case means actively participating in the class assignments and discussions.

Freedom of Expression Policy: It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions. As a course with a high level of discussion, it is imperative that everyone in the class feels comfortable expressing their views.

Video Game Development Program Philosophy

The Video Game Development Program has been designed, developed and implemented in partnership with leading video games studio managers and directors in Austin. The video games industry has undergone significant changes in how games are developed. They are rarely developed by few persons working in isolation. Today's games are often developed by teams of 50 to 200 on schedules from 2 to 3 years with budgets of \$10M to \$20M. The large publishers drive the game development funding and schedules. Consequently, it is critical that personnel in the industry communicate and collaborate effectively. This drove the certificate requirements definition. Students are required to successfully complete courses in four categories:

1. The base industry courses: Video Games Industry, Business of Video Games, Video Game Development, and Video Game Production.
 - a. Students will understand what drives the industry, why games are developed, what is needed for success and how to get from idea to delivery.
2. The specialization courses: Video Game Programming, Video Game Art, and Video Game Design.
 - a. Students will understand the requirements, objectives, limitations and goals of the different disciplines in a studio. This is essential for communication and collaboration.
 - b. Students in these core courses will be cross-discipline in order to build an understanding and appreciation of how different discipline teams collaborate and contribute to the final product.
3. The five specialization electives.
 - a. Students will develop skills in the discipline in which the student will seek employment.
4. Non-specialization electives
 - a. These are optional courses that will give you a deeper understanding of what other disciplines do and how they function. They will help you understand how to work with others on the team and to get the 'big picture.' These courses do not count towards the Video Game development certificate.
5. Capstone Project
 - a. This multi-person team project will simulate the real video game development environment. Students will develop a concept, turn it into a design, implement the programming and art required and produce it on the committed schedule. Go/no go milestones and final "publisher" acceptance reviews will mimic the industry. The students will have a deliverable for their portfolio that can be used for employment purposes.

Throughout the program each course will focus on knowledge transfer, skill building and teamwork. There will be a heavy emphasis on projects that will broaden and deepen each student's portfolio development. Portfolios are critical to demonstrating an individual's capabilities. Some projects will individual, many will be team based. How much a student gets out of each course will largely be determined by how much the students puts into the course. Video game development is highly complex, difficult work. The courses are designed to prepare students for that environment. So, come expecting to work hard.

The program is designed to reinforce key concepts such as teamwork, collaboration, and cooperation across all disciplines in the games development and management process. Many concepts are repeated throughout the program because they are extremely important to successful game development.