THE GAME DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
AT AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Introduction to Game Design and Development | GAME 1303
Syllabus

instructor	Vernon Reed
office hours	Walk-in Office Hours: Tue/Thu: 111:40 - noon By Appt Office Hours: as needed
office location	NRG Bldg 3000 GDI Office Pod
class info	6 – 9:30 PM Wed, Rm 3134
e-mail	kstreich@austincc.edu
phone	512-964-4177 CELL
web site	**http://www2.austincc.edu/viscom**,

Course Description

The course covers an introduction to the electronic game design and development careers. It includes the history and philosophy of games, the game production process, employee factors for success in the field, and current issues and practices in the game development industry.

Learning Outcomes Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)

The structure of the game industry: its history (literature, media studies, and design), the market, game genres, distribution and publishing channels, typical business models, and a competitive landscape of the industry. Topics include: market size and trends, retail and Internet distribution channels, single and multi-player game genres, PC, console, and cell phone platforms, and major industry players. Also included are the history of computers, electronic games and toys, and the construction and critique of a canon of significant and influential games.

Texts, Instructional Materials and Resources

Required Text(s): Moore, Micheal. *Game Design and Development: Introduction to the Game Industry.* (2007). Pearson: Prentice Hall. 2006 IGDA Casual Games Whitepaper. http://www.igda.org/casual/IGDA_CasualGames_Whitepaper_2006.pdf

Instructional Resources: Microsoft Office: includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint.

Supplies

Pencil or Pen, 3-ring notebook with paper and pockets (in which to keep notes, exercises, projects and information sheets), 1 GB removable drive (USB or otherwise), blank CD-R or DVD-R for permanent backup of materials.

Instructional Methodology

This course is a 3 credit hour (60 contact hours), 16-week Lecture course in introduction to game design and development. Each class takes up approximately 1 hour and 40 minutes of those hours. During each class, the instructor will present new information (lecture) and supervise assigned work to help students develop their skills. Solutions to individual student problems are demonstrated for the entire group. The instructor's ability to evaluate students' progress is founded on observing their productivity in class as well as the quality of their work.

Course Rationale

This course is aimed at the game design certificate student or the Visual Communication major who is interested in pursuing a career in game development. Design principles are reinforced through project-based assignments. Students are provided an opportunity to obtain real life experiences. Practicing professionals may upgrade their job skills.

Helpful Websites:

- http://www.igda.org
- http://www.austingamedevelopers.org/
- http://www.gamasutra.com
- http://www.gamespy.com
- http://www.utexas.edu/students/egads/
- http://www.gamespot.com/
- http://www.gamers.com/egm/index.jsp

Grading System

Students will be given several grades throughout the semester. These grades provide students with the opportunity to evaluate their standing in the class. Students can contact the instructor during the office hours listed at the beginning of this document if they need to discuss their progress, or to seek additional help. Students will be also be quizzed during the semester in preparation for the midterm and final exams. Though quiz results are a small part of your final grade, they help students assess what skills need additional work before taking the exam.

Point Total Ranges:

89.5 —100 = A
79.5 — 89.5 = B
69.5 — 79.5 = C
59.5 — 69.5 = D
< 59.4 = F

Effective September 2005 no D's will be accepted as a passing grade within the Visual Communication Department courses. Students receiving a grade of D must retake the course to receive credit and to progress to the next level course. Students who made a D prior to September 2005 will be allowed to proceed to the next level course.

Course Requirements and Grading

Assignments	18%
Final Project	34%
Tests/Quizzes	6%
Exams	36%
Attendance	6%

Note: Percentages are rounded up / down respectively, and are subject to change according to instructor.

Course Class Policies

General Statement: The stated objectives for each assignment of individual projects are based upon the instructor's experience with industry standards. Student work is assessed upon technical expertise, accuracy, composition standards and creativity. Active participation in class discussions, critiques and sharing sessions is essential and considered part of each project grade and final evaluation.

Demonstration of a professional attitude is required. This includes, but is not limited to arriving to class on time and participating for the whole period and turning in projects on time. Consistently late arrivals can add up. If you know you will need to arrive consistently late or leave consistently early, or if you know you will have to miss a large portion of the class, you should withdraw yourself and register again during a time when you can commit yourself to the work. Students are expected to show professional courtesy to other students as well as the instructor in class and via online discussions. This will be a factor in overall grading. **Please turn off cell phones/ pagers during class/lab.**

Attendance and Class Participation is mandatory. In a 16-week course, students only have 96 contact hours with their instructor. This is roughly equivalent to two weeks on production in an industry studio. In a semester with holidays, the number is less. The level of a student's day-to-day class participation is evaluated and will be reflected in their final grade. Failure to show up for class and work during class and lab time will automatically affect your grade regardless of work quality. There are demonstrations, sharing sessions, quizzes, and possibly guest lecturers that require your attendance.

An instructor may drop you after 5 absences.

Lab attendance is necessary if the student is to excel in class. Though lab time is not tracked, you are responsible for meeting project deadlines. Lab Hours are posted on the door outside the classroom.

Late work: Projects will automatically be lowered by a percentage if turned in past due date.

Withdrawal Statement: No more than 6 withdrawals from classes will be allowed in a four-year college career. (New Law Fall 2007). Students are responsible for withdrawing themselves if they are unable or decide to not to continue coming to class. If a student simply stops coming to class, a failing grade will appear on his/ her transcript. Instructors may also withdraw you if you miss too many classes. Please contact the instructor if you know you must miss a class.

Incompletes: Meeting deadlines is one of the most important aspects of development. Therefore, all work must be completed within the class deadlines. If there is a lack of work, the student will be graded on the work that the instructor has received -- the instructor will not give incomplete grades. The skills taught in this class act as a foundation for subsequent classes. If a student knows he or she will not be able to complete the class, they should drop the class and register again during a time when they know they can complete the full course.

Assignment Deliveries: Assignments must be delivered as a printout/hardcopy at the deadline for grading. In addition, a digital copy must subsequently be delivered via the teacher's digital dropbox, network folder or email.

Copyright

The software programs that you in the labs are licensed to the college as the original purchaser and as such are not available for students to duplicate for their personal use. Do not use college equipment to duplicate software for other students or to produce work-for-profit. Do not copy or scan copyrighted material for use in your projects.

Academic Freedom

"Each student is strongly encouraged to participate in class. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. These differences enhance the learning experience and create an atmosphere where students and instructors alike will be encouraged to think and learn. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with the instructor. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions." (see student handbook)

Student Discipline

By applying to and registering at Austin Community College, students agree to abide by the Student Discipline Policy and Student Rights and Responsibilities regulations published in the college catalog and the student handbook.

Scholastic Dishonesty

"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 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" (See Student Handbook.) Students found in violation of this policy will be dropped from the class and a failing grade will appear on his/ her transcript.

Students with Disabilities

The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) assists students with documented disabilities to access ACC's educational resources by providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations. To request accommodations, students must submit appropriate diagnostic documentation to the OSD supervisor at their primary campus. Students attending multiple campuses must meet with the OSD supervisor at each campus where accommodations are needed. Accommodations must be requested before each semester they are needed. NOTE: Students are urged to apply for accommodations at least three weeks before the start of each term. (ACC Student Handbook, 2006-2007, pg. 20.) **All requests for accommodations must be presented to the instructor during the first week of class.**

SCAN Competencies:

SCANS = Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills:

This course satisfies

1.1 Manages Times
2.1 Participates as a Members of a Team
3.0 **Information**
3.1 Acquires and Evaluates Information
3.2 Organizes and Maintains Information
3.3 Uses Computers to Process Information
4.0 **Systems**
4.1 Understands Systems
4.2 Monitors and Corrects Performance
4.3 Improves and Designs Systems
5.0 **Technology**
5.1 Selects Technology
5.2 Applies Technology to Task
5.3 Maintains and Troubleshoots Technology

6.0 **Basic Skills**
6.1 Reading
6.2 Mathematics
6.4 Listening
6.6 Speaking
7.0 **Thinking Skills**
7.1 Creative Thinking
7.2 Decision Making
7.3 Problem Solving
7.4 Mental Visualization
7.5 Knowing How to Learn
7.6 Reasoning
8.0 **Personal Qualities**
8.1 Responsibility
8.2 Self-Esteem
8.3 Sociability
8.4 Self-Management
8.5 Integrity/Honesty

Class Outline/Course Calendar:

► **Week 1:**
  ○ Lecture: Introduction to course – Instructor; Syllabus; Equipment; Supplies; Textbooks;
  ○ Lecture: Games Overview; A Theory of Fun; History of Games.
    → Assigned Reading: Moore: Ch 1-Introduction to Games pp.1-18
► **Week 2:**
  ○ Lecture: History of Computer Games;
    → Assigned Reading: Moore Ch 2-The Evolution of Games pp.19-59
► **Week 3:**
  ○ Lecture: Game Platforms, Console, PC; Mobile, etc., Project Brainstorming
    → Assigned Reading: Moore Ch 4-Overview of Game Platforms pp.118-156
    → Assignment 1 due: Review your Favorite Computer Game (due at start of class)

      Choose a game and write a review of it. You can select a game that you've played
      and know well or a new game that you plan on playing too much over the weekend!
      It can be any type of game, including casual games, console, online, and PC games.
      Your review should be at least 2 pages long, double-spaced and no more than 4
      pages please). You can find examples of game reviews at pcgamer.com and many
      other on-line gaming sites.

      Feel free to organize the paper however you like but remember that a review has to
      be *informative* and *entertaining* in order to hold the reader's attention. When you give
      an opinion, back it up with evidence, such as examples of game play. Your grade will
      be based on whether it is comprehensive (covers the items below), informative,
      entertaining, presentation, and has good support for your opinions and arguments.

• **Basic Information** ▪ Game Title ▪ Company or Author ▪ Type of game ▪ Price ▪ Minimum stated hardware requirements ▪ Minimum reasonable hardware requirements (if different) • **Game Summary** ▪ Quick Overview ▪ Story Line (if appropriate) ▪ Player's Role ▪ Installation ▪ User Interface ▪ Game Play ▪ Scoring ▪ Artwork ▪ Sound and Music ▪ Bugs	• **Game Review** ▪ What is fun about the game and why? ▪ What is not fun about the game and why? ▪ How does it compare to similar games in the same genre? ▪ Why is it better or worse than similar games? ▪ What is the appropriate audience for this game? ▪ How does it do in terms of the issues raised in the talk on game design? • **Summary** ▪ Highlights ▪ Low Points ▪ ESRB Rating

  ○ Class Work: Present Assignment 1 to class.
► **Week 4:**
  ○ **Quiz #1 (Chs 1, 2, 4)**
  ○ Lecture: What is a Game? & Game Genre Overview
    → Assigned Reading: IGDA 2006 Casual Games Whitepaper pp1-25

► **Week 5:**
  ○ Lecture: Industry Segments, Structure & Trends (Porter 5)
    → Assigned Reading: Moore Ch 21-Economics of the Game Industry pp.662-691
    → Assigned Reading: IGDA 2006 Casual Games Whitepaper pp.33-43
► **Week 6:**
  ○ Assignment 2 due: Game Industry Segment (due at start of class) – Project Milestone 1
    Choose a game industry segment and using the five forces analysis and (Porter 5 including 6th Force Complementor), submit a 1,000- to 1,500-word paper on the structure of that industry segment. Discuss who are its suppliers, its customers, substitute products, potential new entrants, and the existing industry competitors.
  ○ Lecture: Market Analysis: Understanding the Customer; Mulligan-Ch 1-The Market pdf
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 20-Marketing the Game pp.635-661
  ○ Lecture: Games Marketing and Distribution
  ○ Class Work: Present Assignment 2 to class.
► **Week 7:**
  ○ **Quiz #2 (Chs 21, 20; IGDA 2006 Casual Games Whitepaper 1-25, 33-43)**
  ○ Lecture: Competitive Analysis (SWOT): Understanding the Company
    → Assigned Reading: Interactive Media Report 2004
► **Week 8:**
  ○ Assignment 3 due: Company analysis (due at start of class) – Project Milestone 2
    Select two companies within the industry segment chosen from Milestone 1. Using key areas of the Competitive Strategy Wheel and SWOT analysis, submit a 750- to 1,050-word paper on those companies. Compare their relative strengths, weaknesses, etc. in their industry.
  ○ Lecture: Game Development Cycle and Production Team
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 5-Game Development Cycle pp.157-185
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 6-The Production Team pp.186-223
  ○ Lecture: Game Genres I; Strategy in Video Games
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 3-Game Genres pp.60-117
► **Week 9:**
  ○ **Midterm Exam**
  ○ Lecture: Game Genres II
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 8-The Elements of Game play pp.247-27678
    → Assigned Reading: IGDA 2006 Casual Games Whitepaper pp44-78
  ○ Class Work: Present Assignment 3 to class.
► **Week 10:**
  ○ Assignment 4 due: What is your favorite game genre? Why? (due at start of class) – Project Milestone 3
    Select a game within your genre. Compare and contrast this games, features, graphics, interface, etc. to another within the same genre. What makes your favorite game more appealing? What makes it less appealing than others? What would you suggest to make your favorite game better? Why? Submit a 500- to 750- word paper to support your reasoning.
  ○ Lecture: Principles of Game Design I: Layers of Game Design
    → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 9-Committing Ideas to Paper pp.277-308
  ○ Lecture: Principles of Game Design II: Design Issues
  ○ Class Work: Present Assignment 4 to class.

- ► **Week 11:**
  - ○ **Quiz #3 (Chs 5, 6, 3, 8; IGDA 2006 Casual Games Whitepaper 1-44-78)**
  - ○ Lecture: Principles of Game Design III: Pre-production and Documentation
  - ○ Lecture: Principles of Game Design IV: Design Trade-Offs
  - ○ Lecture: Principles of Game Design V: Poor Design
    - → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 10-The Game Design Document pp.309-354
- ► **Week 12:**
  - ○ Assignment 5 due: Game analysis and post-mortem (due at start of class) – Project Milestone 4
    Select a popular video game and complete a 500-750 word analysis and post-mortem on its design, playability, and impact on the marketplace. This is not a review, be objective and analyze the core game elements.
  - ○ Lecture: Legalities of Game Development
  - ○ Class Work: Present Assignment 5 to class.
- ► **Week 13:**
  - ○ **Quiz #4 (Chs 9, 10)**
  - ○ Lecture: Ethics, Culture, Violence in Games, Responsibilities, and ESRB Ratings
- ► **Week 14:**
  - ○ Assignment 6 due: Project completion (due at start of class)
    Revise, combine, and complete your sections from Milestones 1 through 4 into your final document project adding a capstone on what you have learned from this process. Submit your final document (2,500 – 3,500 words) as a hardcopy and via email.
  - ○ Lecture: Industry Roles and Careers, Salary Survey and Quality of Life
    - → Assigned Reading: Moore, Ch 22-Breaking into the Industry pp.692-716
  - ○ Class Work: Present Final Project (Assignment 6) to class.
- ► **Week 15:**
  - ○ Lecture: What it takes to make an AAA title.
  - ○ Lecture: Future of Video Games.
  - ○ Class Work: Present Final Project (Assignment 6) to class.
- ► **Week 16:**
  - ○ **Final Exam**
  - ○ Class Work: Present Final Project (Assignment 6) to class
  - ○ Wrap-up

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Student Acknowledgement and Agreement
Game 1303 - Introduction to Game Design and Development

To ACC,

I hereby have read, acknowledge and agree to the Syllabus document of "Game 1303 – Introduction to Game Design and Development" for the fall of 2011.

_____
Signature

_____
Print Name