

Game Testing | GAME 2338

Syllabus

instructor	Vernon Reed
office hours	Walk-in Office Hours: Tue/Thu 11:40AM - noon By Appt Office Hours: as needed, by appointment
office location	NRG Rm 3135
class info	noon-2:40PM, Tue/Thu, Rm 3136
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phone	512-964.4177 (cell)
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Course Description

Testing and debugging gaming and simulation applications in the alpha and beta stages of production. Includes critiques of the product and written documentation of the testing and debugging processes.

Learning Outcomes Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)

Describe the methodology and procedures for collecting, reporting, and closing game bugs; identify the stages of project completion; identify the different testing types (i.e., white box, black box, compatibility, minimum specification, etc.); explain the console approval process; and demonstrate writing precise bug database records.

Texts, Instructional Materials and Resources

Required Text(s):

Game Development Essentials: Game QA & Testing; Luis Levy, Jeannie Novak; Delmar Cengage Learning; ISBN: 1-4354-3947-3

Game Testing All in One, 2nd Edition; Charles Shultz, Robert Bryant; Mercury Learning and Information; ISBN : 1936420163

Instructional Resources:

Microsoft Office: includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint; Microsoft Visio: flowcharting program;

Microsoft Project: Scheduling software;

Microsoft Visio: Flowcharting software;

Vicious Cycle Engine: Game Development Environment

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 (96 contact hours), 16-week Lecture-Lab course in techniques for game testing. Each class takes up approximately 2 and a half of those hours. During each class, the instructor will present new information (lecture) and supervise assigned work to help students develop their skills (lab). 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. 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

Projects	16.5%
Tests	67%
Attendance/Participation/Homework	16.5%

Grade formula $Q1 + Q2 + Q3 + Q4 + (M*2) + (F*2) + (A*2) + (P*2) / 12$

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.

Class Outline/Course Calendar:

Lesson Plan

Week	Topic	Reading
1	Introductions/orientation	
1	Intro to testing	Schultz, Ch 1
2	History/working conditions & demographics	Levy, Ch 1-2
2	Game life cycle/bug categories, tools & documentation	Levy, Ch 3-4
3	Defect typing, ways to categorize software bugs	Schultz, Ch 3
3	Bug reporting	
4	Bare bones bug hunting	Levy, Ch 5
4	Bug reporting	
4	Quiz 1	
5	Test trees	Schultz, Ch 11
5	Intro to project	
5	Bug reporting	

6	Combinatorial testing	Schultz, Ch 8
6	Intro to Mantis bug database	
6	Bug reporting	
6	Project	
7	Elite bug hunting	Levy, Ch 6
7	Bug reporting	
7	Project	
7	Quiz 2	
8	Review for Midterm Exam	
8	Bug reporting	
8	Project	
8	Midterm Exam	
9	Test flow diagrams	Schultz, Ch 9
9	Bug reporting	
9	Project	
10	Test flow diagrams	Schultz, Ch 9
10	Bug reporting	
10	Project	
11	The test process- black box, white box testing	Schultz, Ch 6
11	Quiz 3	
11	Bug reporting	
11	Project	
12	Job hunting/	Levy, Ch 7
12	Moving up the game ladder	Levy, Ch 8
12	Bug reporting	
12	Project	
13	Cleanroom testing, modeling player behavior	Schultz, Ch 10
13	Bug reporting	
13	Project	
14	Quality standards	Schultz, Ch 4
14	Future of game testing	Levy, Ch 9
14	Bug Reporting	
14	Project	
15	Quiz 3	
15	Bug reporting	
15	Project	
15	Review for Final Exam	
16	Final Exam	
16	Present project results	
16	Postmortem	

