

Spring 2010

## Video Game Production, Arts Col 734

### 5 credits

**Prerequisite:** Permission of instructor.

TR, 5:30 – 7:30pm

1224 Kinnear, Rm. 205

*instructor:* <name>

*email:* <address>

*office hours:* <hours>

### Course Description

Students will be introduced to techniques for game production and apply them to create a video game. Production activities will be team-based and progress from concept to prototype to playable game by the end of the course.

### Course Learning Goals

Video games present unique challenges for development, requiring interdisciplinary skill sets and efficient teamwork. They also present unique opportunities for building creative interactive art that is experienced collaboratively by multiple players. This will require the development of knowledge and skills as follows:

- Students develop collaborative and independent work habits
- Students demonstrate both conceptualizing and communicating skills
- Students articulate constructive technical and aesthetic criticisms
- Students apply prioritizing, delegating, and scheduling tasks among team members
- Students build components and integrate them into larger systems
- Students perform coding, illustrating, animating, sound engineering based on areas of expertise
- Students apply testing for usability methodologies to their final game

### Course Methodology

This is a studio based course which will be built around creative multidisciplinary teams of students. Students must be willing to work collaboratively and perform as a productive team member as game production duties will be divided among team members and each team member's work will contribute to the collaborative creation of a video game. The final game will be playable on the course arcade machine.

Course assignments will require students to use a wide variety of software and equipment to produce video games. Collaboration between students in the course and other faculty, staff and students at ACCAD is encouraged. Examples will be given to illustrate various concepts and techniques, but students will learn primarily by creating, presenting, and discussing their own work. The class format will follow a general schedule of lecture, demonstration, class work, homework, presentation, critique, discussion. Examples will be presented in lectures and demonstrations. Students will present their work in critique sessions, to facilitate discussion of their methods and results, and sharing of their findings.

Students will document all their work on individual web pages which will be burned to CD-ROM by each team and turned in as part of the final project during finals week. Final games will be installed on the course arcade machine and posted on the course site. Game development teams will be credited by name. Any student wishing not to have their name posted should inform the instructor. This will not affect course grading or participation.

### Course Required and Optional Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. Reading selections will be available online via the course website <http://www.accad.osu.edu/~pgerstma/class/gmz/> and students will be referred to technical reference texts appropriate to their skill focus.

## Grading Criteria

Students must demonstrate satisfactory achievement of course objectives by skillfully completing course assignments and contributing to class discussions and critiques. Since building a game requires a large number of steps achieved over time, students will be given a grade based on assigned tasks and milestones as listed under **Assignments**. The grade will be based on the level of completion for the required stage of the game, the technical and artistic achievement, and the solution's address of the group's game requirements.

*Deadlines:* Adherence to deadlines is expected. It is the individual student's responsibility to keep track of deadlines and to present the work to the class and instructor on the specified dates. Late assignments will have their grade lowered by one-third per missed class (e.g. B to B- for an assignment one class late). Students choosing to use "at home" hardware and software must have their current working files on the course system and available for review at the beginning of each and every class. Problems with home systems or incompatibilities will not be an acceptable excuse for missed goals. Technical problems will happen frequently during the quarter and students may have trouble accessing the computer lab during "prime time" hours. Students must make their own arrangements for overcoming these difficulties and submitting their work on time. Unless there is a complete system failure in a computer-related course, technical difficulties are never an acceptable excuse for not meeting a deadline. Students should plan their time and workload to anticipate the technical hurdles that are a part of this profession.

*Attendance:* All students are required to be on time and in attendance for each and every class. Students arriving to class more than 15 minutes late will be counted as absent. Two absences will lower a final grade by one-third (e.g. B to B-), three absences will lower a final grade by one letter (e.g. B- to C-) and four absences will result in failure of the course.

## Assignments

- 4% Task00: *Game Proposal* (pitch for new game concept)
- 4% Task01: *Arcade Review* (survey of previous student work)
- 4% Task03: *System Design* (detailed plan for technical implementation)
- 4% Task04: *Style Guide* (detailed plan for audio / visual implementation)
- 4% Task05: *Prototype* (10% complete)
- 4% Task06: *Release 01* (20% complete)
- 4% Task07: *Task List* (live priority list of remaining tasks)
- 4% Task08: *Release 02* (35% complete)
- 4% Task09: *Alpha* (50% complete)
- 4% Task10: *Release 04* (65% complete)
- 4% Task11: *Release 05* (80% complete)
- 4% Task12: *Beta* (90% complete)
- 4% Task13: *Release 07* (98% complete)
- 20% Task14: *Final Release* (100% complete)
- 10% Task15: *Final Presentation* (discuss game production and present features and gameplay)
- 8% *Website Documentation* (wiki contents and linked assets)
- 5% *Play Test 01* (feedback from random volunteer play testers)
- 5% *Play Test 02* (feedback from random volunteer play testers)

## Course Grading Scale

A = 100% - 95%	C+ = 79% - 77%
A- = 94% - 90%	C = 76% - 74%
B+ = 89% - 87%	C- = 73% - 70%
B = 86% - 84%	D+ = 69% - 64%
B- = 83% - 80%	D = 63% - 60%
	E = 59% - 0%

## Course Weekly Topics

### **Week01**

introductions and course overview  
assigned, *Task00: Game Proposal*  
assigned, *Task01: Arcade Review*  
due, *Task01: Game Proposal*  
receive team assignments  
discuss and select concepts  
assigned, *Task02: Game Design*  
actionscript boot camp for programmers, part I

### **Week02**

due, *Task01: Arcade Review*  
due, *Task 02: Game Design*  
assigned, *Task03: System Design*  
assigned, *Task04: Style Guide*  
actionscript boot camp for programmers, part II  
due, *Task03: System Design*  
assigned, *Task05: Prototype*

### **Week03**

due, *Task04: Style Guide*  
due, *Task05: Prototype*  
critique prototypes and record feedback  
assigned, *Task06: Release 01*

### **Week04**

due, *Task06: Release 01*  
assigned/due, *Task07: Task List*  
assigned, *Task08: Release 02*

### **Week05**

due, *Task08: Release 02*  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task09: Alpha*

### **Week06**

due, *Task09: Alpha*  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task10: Release 04*

### **Week07**

due, *Task10: Release 04*  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task11: Release 05*

### **Week08**

due, *Task11: Release 05*  
play test Release05 and record feedback  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task12: Beta*

### **Week09**

due, *Task12: Beta*  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task13: Release 07*

### **Week10**

due, *Task13: Release 07*  
play test Release07 and record feedback  
review, update, and revise Task List  
assigned, *Task14: Final Game*  
assigned, *Task15: Final Presentation*

### **Finals**

due, *Task14: Final Release*  
due, *Task15: Final Presentation*

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Any and all suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to university procedures. Students are referred to the student handbook for further information on academic dishonesty and the accompanying procedures and penalties.

Additional info <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html>

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

## **Personal Safety**

When taking courses and working at ACCAD you should remember that you are member of a community that includes our group as well as the Ohio SuperComputer Center. As a way of maintaining building security, public spaces at 1224 Kinnear are monitored by video 24 hours/day. Entry to the building requires that students use their BuckID for access after-hours (5pm – 8am) on weekdays and in all hours of the weekend. Students should never open any outside entrance door to any person(s) after hours or on weekends. Students, staff and faculty who are working in the building should be able to access the building with their own BuckIDs.

The University Escort Service operates after 6pm until 3am when classes are in session (i.e. not during quarter breaks and University holidays), and will assist OSU students who live off campus as well as on campus. The University Escort Service can be contacted at 614-292-3322, and scheduled pick-ups are taken in advance.