

# GAM 244 Game Development I

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Instructor: Dr. Bobby Schweizer

Term: Winter 2015

Section: 501

Meeting time: M/W 3:10PM - 4:40PM

Location: CDM 214 at Loop Campus

Email: [rschweiz@cmd.depaul.edu](mailto:rschweiz@cmd.depaul.edu) (Please prefix all emails with [GAM 244] to ensure I receive it.)

Office: Daley 205C

Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 1:30–3:00

In this class we will be using GameMaker Studio to create simple 2D games in order to understand the development process. The quarter is structured as a series of short projects that introduce game production concepts and the development process, and then culminates in a pair-based game of your own devising.

You will need to download and learn to use GameMaker Studio version 1.3.1386. It is available in the labs here at school if you do not have a computer to work on. You will be using GameMaker on the PC. (The Mac version will not work for this class!)

While there will be lectures to get you moving forward, deep learning of the software will only come from making games and digging for more info online. GameMaker Studio is a popular engine and there are many resources out there to help you understand the tool. The good news is that this is how most game developers get started on their work! This class doesn't require that you be a programmer, just that you learn to think like one.

The class schedule can be found on D2L.

**Goals:** By the end of this course you should be able to: plan and prototype digital games, recognize and employ the fundamental building blocks of 2D game design, conduct playtests and incorporate feedback into your work, and to understand the demands of the game development process.

## Grading:

Each project will be graded on its own rubric. Participation in class discussions, activities, and within your final project teams will account for 15% of your grade. You are expected to be an active, vocal, and polite participant in the classroom and all of its activities.

## Grading Scale

94 – 100	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 – 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-
67 – 69	D+
60 – 66	D

## Assignment Overview

Brick Breaker Exercise	10
Top-Down Shooter	20
“Cover” Game	50
Arcade Game	60
Reading Responses (6 x 5 pts)	30
Participation	30
Total:	200

**Participation & Attendance:** Your participation in class will be measured during discussions, design exercises, and playtests. During discussion, you are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows me to get to know you, which will give me insight into your assignments. Both those who *give help* and those who *ask for help* are considered to be active participants in class.

Being a good game designer means being involved in a community of peers to give and receive feedback and attendance is a significant part of this. You can't participate if you're not in class! If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to make up the work. Lectures are video recorded and posted to D2L. Excused absences must go through the Office of the Dean of Students.

## **D2L**

We are using D2L (<http://d2l.depaul.edu>) as the supporting learning platform for this course. The syllabus, lesson plan, and assignment descriptions are available through D2L under “Content.”

Most assignments will be submitted to dropbox on D2L. Do not submit assignments by email. Assignment due dates are noted on the schedule. Late assignments (except for the final project) will be accepted after the due date with a ½ letter grade penalty per day. The dropbox will remain open for 48 hours after the due date, at which point it will stop accepting submissions and you will need to email me before turning your assignment into the “Late Work” dropbox.

**Project Extensions:** Sometimes things happen that get in the way of your schoolwork. I would rather you turn something in late than not at all. Thus, I am willing to grant one deadline extension to each student per term, provided you email me at least two days ahead of time and explain your plan to turn the work in.

## **RESOURCES**

As a student in the class, you have access to the CDM Gaming and computer labs (see <http://defrag.depaul.edu> for details). If you’re working on an assignment, you have priority for the use of the lab hardware and software. Student ID is required to use the labs.

GameMaker 1.3.1386 is available in the labs of CDM 1st floor, CDM 801, CDM 819, Daley 212, Daley 503, Daley 505.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attitude:** A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others while someone else is speaking, mocking another’s opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise, you may be asked to leave the classroom. I will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such issues.

**Civil Discourse:** DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student’s ability to be successful in the course. Again, I will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

**Digital Devices:** While class is in session, your attention should not be divided between classroom activities and your laptops, smart phones, iPads, etc. (unless you’ve been asked to play a game or do research). Set your phone ringers to silent. Should you need to answer a call during class, please leave the room in an undistruptive manner. Out of respect to everyone in the room, texting/messaging is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

**Writing:** While this class does not emphasize essay writing, design documents are expected to be clear, spell-checked, and demonstrate a high proficiency in written English. The Writing Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from published writers about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing and oral presentations. Go to <http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/> for more information and to set up appointments.

**Email:** Email is the preferred means of communication between faculty and students enrolled in this course outside of class time. My email is [rschweiz@cdm.depaul.edu](mailto:rschweiz@cdm.depaul.edu)

## **COLLEGE POLICIES**

### **Changes to Syllabus**

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be addressed during class, posted under Announcements in D2L and sent via email.

## **Online Course Evaluations**

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in CampusConnect.

## **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

This course will be subject to the university's academic integrity policy. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu/>. If you have any questions be sure to consult with your professor.

## **Student Rights**

To learn about your rights as a student please read DePaul's policies located here <http://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/current/undergraduate%20student%20handbook/pg51.html>

## **Incomplete**

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final. For more information on requesting an Incomplete: <http://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Grading-Policies.aspx>.

## **Academic Policies**

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the University Academic Calendar. Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <http://cdm.depaul.edu/enrollment>

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussion will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of the course) and be sure to contact the following office for support and additional services:

Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD)  
Lewis Center 1420, 25 East Jackson Blvd.  
Phone number: (312)362-8002  
Fax: (312)362-6544  
TTY: (773)325.7296  
[www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/csd](http://www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/csd)  
[csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu)

## LESSON PLAN

Please note that some of these sessions may change during the course. Always check the schedule on D2L for updates.

Week 1 (Jan 4, 6)	Introductions	GM: Intro
Week 2 (Jan 11, 13)	Graphical Logics	GM: Rooms, spawning
(January 17 is the last day to drop classes with no penalty)		
Week 3 Jan (18, 20)	NO CLASS	GM: Sprites, sound, state-changes, variables, alarms
Week 4 (Jan 25, 27)	Designing Games	Mini Jam
Week 5 (Feb 1, 3)	Compelling Gameplay	GM: Views, motion, A.I. Share Design Plans
Week 6 (Feb 8, 10)	Deconstructing Genre Elements	Playtesting
Week 7 (Feb 15, 17)	Tuning and Balance	GM: Advanced Concepts
(February 21 is the last day to withdraw from WQ2016 classes)		
Week 8 (Feb 22, 24)	Development Processes	Developers
Week 9 (Feb 29, March 2)	Functionality and Completeness	Playtesting
Week 10 (March 7, 9)	You, the Developer	Studio
Week 11 (March 14, 2:30–4:45pm)	Final Projects Due	