

Business of Games GAM 333

Spring 2016 | WED 5:45 – 9:00PM |
Instructor: Chris Bartholomew
Cbartho2@cdm.depaul.edu; 708 302–8751
Lewis 1517 (Loop Campus)
Office hours : Immediately after class

Course Description This course gives an introduction to the business aspects of the game industry, including development, publishing, distribution and marketing. Subjects covered include game development contracts, management techniques, marketing, personnel, budgeting, outsourcing, pipelines and external partnerships. Additionally, the course will delve into overall market trends in the industry.

Prerequisite(s) – GAM 224 or GAM 226

Learning Outcomes In this course, students will be able to analyze market research and support decisions on what makes a successful game. Real world examples will be used to allow students to create their own budgets, schedules, resource allocations, and presentations.

Although our focus will be on the business of video games, the topics in this class will provide students with project management tools and techniques that can be applied in many industries.

Text Requirements There is no ‘required’ text for this class. We will lean heavily on a market research report – *The Adult Videogamer Market in the U.S.* - available through Depaul’s library. To access the report, go to <http://library.depaul.edu/>. Search ‘marketresearch’ (one word). Click the recommended link to MarketResearch.com. Then search the report name; you should get a hit for a report published in Jan 2009. From here students can download the report for free.

Glued to Games: How Video Games Draw Us In and Hold Us Spellbound (Rigby & Ryan) is recommended reading for this class. This text will be referenced frequently in conjunction with discussions on overall market trends in gaming.

The F2P Toolbox is also recommended reading. It is available for download at <http://www.gamesbrief.com/store/the-free-to-play-toolbox/>. It contains techniques for developing profitable mobile games, and will be a great resource for the final project. In fact, if you choose to do a mobile game for your final, I will expect you to be familiar with key points from this text. It costs \$60; that will work out to be ~\$15/person between your group.

Software

In this course we will use Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft PowerPoint. I will give brief demonstrations of these programs in class, but if you need help, see me during office hours or

check for tutorials online.

Assignments Students will prepare weekly summaries on articles relating to the subject matter. Finding applicable articles is the student's responsibility before each class. Summaries should be submitted through D2L, starting week 2.

Other readings will be posted on D2L throughout the course.

All assignments and reading materials will be posted on the course management site D2L:

<https://d2l.depaul.edu>

Unless I tell you otherwise, assigned work must be completed and submitted in class on the due date or through D2L one hour BEFORE class starts, otherwise it will receive a reduced grade (this will keep us from wasting valuable class time). Handing in something unfinished is always better than nothing at all. If you'd like more feedback, arrange to discuss your work with me during my office hours.

Grading 15% Participation in class discussions and attendance
10% Article Summaries
10% Peer review
25% Mid-term exam
40% Final project

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-88, B = 87-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-78, C = 77-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-68, D = 67-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59-0.

A indicates excellence, B indicates good work, C indicates satisfactory work, D work is unsatisfactory in some respect, F is substantially unsatisfactory work.

Class Policies Attendance

Student absences are not expected to exceed more than 10% (two absences) of the number of the classes scheduled for the semester. A third absence will result in the lowering of your final grade one full letter. Any student missing 4 classes will be given a grade of "F" for the semester.

Tardiness is defined as not in the classroom when class begins or departing before the class has been formally dismissed by the instructor. Tardiness that exceeds thirty minutes will be counted as an absence. Two late arrivals or early departures, or a combination of both, are counted as one absence.

Last day to drop class, no penalty – April 10th.

Cell Phones

Use of cell phones in the class and the lab is prohibited. Please turn your phone off before entering class. Mistakes will happen (to me too), but repeated failure to turn your phone off will result in a lowered grade for the class. All phone conversations and text messaging should be conducted outside the class

Course Policies Academic Integrity

This course will be subject to the academic integrity policy passed by the faculty. More information can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work any assignments which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or a doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the course do so using the Campus Connection system (<http://campusconnect.depaul.edu>). Withdrawals processed via this system are effective the day on which they are made. Simply ceasing to attend, or notifying the instructor, or nonpayment of tuition, does not constitute an official withdrawal from class and will result in academic as well as financial penalty.

Retroactive Withdrawal

This policy exists to assist students for whom extenuating circumstances prevented them from meeting the withdrawal deadline. During their college careers students may be allowed one medical/personal administrative withdrawal, each for one of more courses in a single term. Repeated requests will not be considered. Submitting an appeal for retroactive withdrawal does not guarantee approval.

College office appeals for CDM students must be submitted online via MyCDM.

The deadline for submitting appeals are as follows:

Autumn Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent winter quarter

Winter Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent spring quarter

Spring Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Summer Quarter: Last day of the last final exam of the subsequent autumn quarter

Excused Absence

In order to petition for an excused absence, students who miss class due to illness or significant personal circumstances should complete the Absence Notification process through the Dean of Students office. The form can be accessed at <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/forms.html>. Students must submit supporting documentation alongside the form. The professor reserves the sole right whether to offer an excused absence and/or academic accommodations for an excused absence.

Incomplete

An incomplete grade is a special, temporary grade that may be assigned by an instructor when an unforeseeable circumstance prevent a student from completing course requirements by the end of the term and when otherwise the student had a record of satisfactory progress in the course. CDM policy requires the student to initiate the request for incomplete grade before the end of the term in which the course is taken. Prior to submitting the incomplete request, the student must discuss the circumstances with the instructor. Students may initiate the request process in [MyCDM](#).

Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at:

Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number: (773) 325.1677

Fax: (773) 325.3720 TTY: (773) 325.7296

		Topic	Homework
Mar	30	Introduction, Class goals, Game Dev and Industry Overview, Disciplines, discuss assignments, Q&A	Articles to read before April 1 th class
			<i>All the world's a Game (pgs 1-5, 10)</i>
			http://www.economist.com/sites/default/files/special-reports-pdfs/20111210_video_games.pdf
			<i>The Rise of Costs, the Fall of Gaming</i>
			Available on D2L – Content week 1
			<i>Apple's Favorite Strategy Game is a Financial Disaster</i>
			http://www.wired.com/gamelife/2012/10/outwitters-sales-disaster/
			<i>I Am Not a 'Cancer' on the Game Industry</i>
			http://kotaku.com/i-am-not-a-cancer-on-the-game-industry-1208376438
April	6	Mobile and Console Market Analysis	Article summaries

	13	Group breakouts, Assumptions vs Risks	Article summaries
	20	Outsourcing, Middleware	Article summaries
	27	Building Game budgets, P&Ls, Billing work, cash management	Article summaries
May	4	Midterm Exam review, Greenlight decks	Article summaries / Midterm due
	11	Marketing Games	Article summaries
	18	Case studies on gaming companies	Article summaries / Excel budgets (1st pass)
	25	Studio Strategy & Management	Article summaries / Marketing Research & Positioning write-up (1st pass)
June	1	Publisher pitch-Final presentation	
	8	None	Final PowerPoint deck, Excel budget, Marketing writeup due