

GAM 244 Game Development I

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Welcome to Game Development I. 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 will lead to a large team-based final project.

You are expected to download and learn to use GameMaker Studio. 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!) If you are a Mac user that wants to work on your personal computer you will need to use a workaround to run GameMaker Studio for Windows.

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 lots of 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 how to think like one.

The class schedule can be found on D2L.

Grading:

Each project will be graded on its own rubric. Participation in class discussions, activities, and within your final project teams will account for 30% of your grade. You are expected to be an active, vocal, and polite participant in this classroom and all of its activities.

D2L

We are using D2L (<http://d2l.depaul.edu>) as the supporting learning platform for this course. All course materials including weekly lecture slides and class info (i.e. syllabus, lesson plan,

assignment descriptions etc.) are available through D2L under "contents".

Most assignments will be submitted to Dropbox on D2L (except for presentations). Do not submit assignments by email. Assignment due dates are noted on the schedule. Late assignments (except for the final project) will be accepted up to two days after the due date with a ½ letter grade penalty per day. Since many assignments require your presence on the day of playtesting, deadlines for in-class activities are fixed and extensions cannot be granted.

Grading Scale

92 – 100	A
90 – 92	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

Breakout Game	20
Simple Interaction Game	40
Systems Game	40
Team Project	60
Participation	40
Total:	200

Goals: By the end of this course you should be able to: plan and prototype digital games, learn the fundamental building blocks of 2D game design, recognize how game engines influence design decisions, and understand the demands of small team projects.

Participation: 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.

Being a good game designer means being involved in a community of peers to give and receive feedback. I will not be taking attendance in this course. Instead, your participation grade will be the measure of your engagement and you are responsible for being an active member of the classroom. You will not be able to make up your participation grade if you miss class.

Both those who *give help* and those who *ask for help* are considered to be active participants in class!

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.

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, students must 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, game rules and text 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

COLLEGE POLICIES

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter. If a change occurs, it will be thoroughly 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: 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
csd@depaul.edu

LESSON PLAN

Please note that some of these sessions and readings may change during the course. Check the schedule on D2L for updates.

Week 1: Introductions and Starting With GameMaker

- Getting to know you
- Introduction to engine basics (sprites, objects, events, actions)
- GameMaker walkthrough

Week 2: Building Blocks and Elements of Games

Due: Breakout Game basics.

- Review *Break Out* games
- GameMaker: Working with sprites, sound, and rooms
- Games with “graphical logics”
- What do games need?

Week 3: Design Considerations

Due: Break Out game updated. See Assignment 1 on D2L.

- GameMaker: Object behaviors, the flow of play, timing, and variables
- Objects, verbs, relationships
- Identifying core loops and player experience
- Brainstorming, planning, and scope.

Week 4: Mechanics, Dynamics, and the Dramatic Arc

Due: Simple interaction brainstorming and prototype. See Assignment 2, part 1 on D2L.

- Mechanics and Dynamics
- Challenge, tuning, and the dramatic arc
- GameMaker: views
- Discuss rudimentary AI behaviors, discuss scripting and the math of building some behaviors that test for player distance, direction, and state.
- Review and iterate on rough prototypes

Week 5: Growing Complexity

Due: Turn in Simple interaction game.

- GameMaker: (TBD as needed)
- Deconstructing games exercise
- Planning documents and paper prototyping

Week 6: Studio Work

Due: Arcade Game prototype.

- Play arcade games prototypes
- Studio work time

Week 7: Narrative, Aesthetics, and Collaboration

Due: Arcade Game iteration.

- Narrative and premise
- Project management for small teams
- Articulating your design ideas
- Form groups for final project

Week 8: Playtesting and Feedback

Due: Arcade Game digital prototype and pitch. Expected milestone schedule.

- Playtest in class
- Get feedback
- Studio work

Week 9: Pitch and Promotion

Due: Prototype iteration meeting milestones.

- Learning to pitch and demo your game
- The “vertical slice”

Week 10: Wrapping Up

Due: Prototype iteration meeting milestones. Completed (updated) design document.

- Playtest and feedback
- Documenting your game (video and website)
- Studio work

Finals Week:

Present final game.