Lecture 1:

Course Overview; Development Process
CS/INFO 3152: Game Design

● Single semester long game project
  ● Interdisciplinary teams of 5-6 people
  ● Design is entirely up to you

● First 3-4 weeks are spent preparing
  ● Labs to develop basic game concepts
  ● Design activities to solidify your ideas
  ● Group activities to help you collaborate

● Remainder of class spent on project
CS/INFO 3152: Game Design

• We provide a basic **milestone** schedule
  • **Today’s focus**: the development process
  • Deliverables every two weeks (after week 4)
  • Details on course website:
    http://www.cs.cornell.edu/courses/cs3152

• **Games demonstrated at Showcase**
  • Like BOOM, open to the public
  • Public reaction is part of your grade
  • Submissions posted on the GDIAC website
Course Structure

- **Lectures**: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays
  - Of general design and development interest
  - Programming-specific around Spring Break
  - Lecture notes posted on website (but *incomplete*!)

- **Communication Labs**: Tuesdays (usually)
  - Create documents and presentations
  - Satisfies the technical writing requirement
  - See schedule for exact dates
Course Structure

• **Game Labs**: First four Thursdays
  • Special labs for programming or design
  • Complete according to your project role
  • Only INFO has a choice; CS is programming only

• **Playtest Sessions**: Thursday after milestones
  • Submit a **playable** prototype every two weeks
  • Others will playtest your prototype in class
  • We will critique each other’s games
This course is a lot of work!

- Expect at least **10 hours/week** outside of class
  - Once the project “starts” in four weeks
  - Typically bare minimum to finish game
  - But if you do this, guaranteed at least a B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Includes</th>
<th>Does Not Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time working on game</td>
<td>5 days/week in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time writing documents</td>
<td>Time spent on readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time meeting with group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This course is a lot of work!

- Expect at least 10 hours/week outside of class
- Once the project “starts” in four weeks
- Typically bare minimum to finish game
- But if you do this, guaranteed at least a B

Includes:

- Time working on game
- Time writing documents
- Time meeting with group

Does Not Include:

- 5 days/week in class
- Time spent on readings

If this is a problem, let us know immediately

Introductions
Project Groups

• This is a **group-oriented** course
  • 5-6 person teams of diverse talents
  • At least one ≥ 3110 programmer
  • One character designer/artist
  • One user interface specialist

• Groups have been assigned by the staff
  • Taking your preferences into account
  • Groups **must** be in the same section
Game Requirements

- Must be unique with innovative **gameplay**
  - Avoid standard **point & click adventures**
  - But can take elements from other games
    - **Example**: platformer + something new

- Must be feasible in a semester
  - Avoid full-blown **RPGs** or **real-time-strategy games**
  - But can have basic elements of these games

- Must have a single player mode
Game Requirements

• Must develop in the game in **LibGDX**
  • Java-based cross platform engine
  • Has become very advanced, surpassing XNA
  • Can use any IDE, but only Eclipse is supported

• Must develop a game for a **desktop PC/Mac**
  • Designing gameplay for mobile input is hard!
  • Subject of the advanced class, 4152

• See website for help and resources
Intellectual Property

- Your **group** retains all ownership
  - You can commercialize it later
  - You can make derivative works
  - Individual ownership is your responsibility

- But Cornell gets a non-exclusive license
  - Non-commercial use of final version submitted
  - We can post this version on our website
  - We claim no other rights to your game
Grading Policy

• Mixture of **group** and **individual** grades

• Group grades are same for all group members
  • Group game grade (25%)
  • Technical writing (20%)
  • Class presentations (5%)

• Individual grades distinguish group members
  • Individual game grade (25%)
  • Game Labs (20%)
  • Attendance (at demos) (5%)
Game Grade

- **Group grade reflects the game quality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Bug-free, Fun-to-play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Complete and playable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Complete but unplayable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/F</td>
<td>Serious delinquencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Individual grade represents contribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Group</td>
<td>Visionary, group MVP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Group</td>
<td>Good attitude, hard worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; Group</td>
<td>Produce negative work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/F</td>
<td>Abandon the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Software Development

- **Design** process
  - Decide what game you want to make
  - Create a *specification* of your design

- **Development** process
  - Implement your specification
  - Test result to make sure it works

- **Release** (yeah!)
The Traditional Model

- Document extensively; design to specification
  - Design and documents done before coding starts
  - Development follows a specified project timeline

- A general software engineering model
  - Often called the *waterfall* model

1. Pre-Production
2. Design
3. Implement
4. Test
5. Release
Waterfall Model

Introduction

Pre-Production → Design → Implement → Test → Release

Cannot start stage until previous step finished. **Result**: Lots of delays

What if you discover the game is not fun? **Result**: Start Over?
The Iterative Model

- Cannot evaluate game without playing it first
  - **Iterate**: Rethink design from intermediate results

- Should be playing 20% into development!
  - This requires *prototypes* (may be nondigital)
SCRUM & Agile Development

- Iterative model is called **agile development**
  - The most popular agile method is **SCRUM**

- Key (but not only) idea: **SCRUM sprint**
  - Focus on a small, but testable deliverable
  - 3-4 weeks in industry; 2 weeks in this class

- **Sprint Backlog**: features left to implement
  - Chosen to implement for this sprint
  - Re-evaluate features at end of every sprint
SCRUM Sprint

Product Backlog

Sprint Backlog

Sprint

Feature Release

Features at the end

Features this Sprint

Introduction
Milestones

- **Suggestions** for your sprint backlog
  - Flexible enough to handle set-backs
  - Can renegotiate if you get seriously behind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Nondigital Prototype</th>
<th>2/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Gameplay Prototype</td>
<td>3/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Technical Prototype</td>
<td>3/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Alpha (Code Complete)</td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Beta (Feature Complete)</td>
<td>4/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Release (Balanced and Tested)</td>
<td>5/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>GDIAC Showcase</td>
<td>5/15</td>
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Documentation

• Major part of the development process
  • Why course counts for technical writing
  • Ensures group is always on “same page”

• At every point of development
  • **Pre-production**: concept document, gameplay
  • **Sprints**: reports, architectural specification
  • **Release**: game manual, post-mortem

• Challenge is understanding your *audience*
Pre-Production Documentation

- **Concept Document**
  - Describes the basic idea behind your game
  - Communicate core vision without too many details
  - Focus of Communication Lab next week
  - **Audience**: a game publisher (to get funding)

- **Gameplay Specification**
  - Thorough overview of your gameplay
  - Include formal design elements shown in class
  - **May change as part of your sprints!**
  - **Audience**: new team members (hired later)
Sprint Documentation

- **Reports (every 2 weeks)**
  - Outlines the upcoming sprint (who does what)
  - Reflects on previous sprint (did you meet goals?)
  - **You must be honest! Not** graded on progress.
  - **Audience**: your game producer

- **Architecture Specification**
  - Outline of your software organization
  - Used to distribute tasks to programmers
  - **Audience**: team programmers
Sprint Documentation

- **Reports (every 2 weeks)**
  - Outlines the upcoming sprint (who, when, what)
  - Reflects on previous sprint (did you meet goals?)
  - You must be honest! Not graded on progress.
  - **Audience**: your game producer

- **Architecture Specification**
  - Outline of your software
  - Used to distribute tasks to programmers
  - **Audience**: team programmers

Responsibility of **Project Leader**

Responsibility of **Lead Programmer**
Release Documentation

- **Game Manual**
  - Concise description of gameplay
  - Instructions on how to play the game
  - Story, other material to improve the setting
  - **Audience**: your players

- **Postmortem**
  - *Honest* reassessment of what happened
  - What went right; what went wrong
  - **Audience**: yourself (for next time…)

Introduction
Development Process Review

- **Pre-production**
  - Initial design
  - Concept Document
  - Gameplay Spec

- **Two-Week Sprints**
  - Playable prototypes
  - Reports
  - Architecture Spec

- **Release**
  - Public Showcase
  - Game Manual
  - Postmortem

Introduction
## Semester Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Form Groups</td>
<td>1/24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Group Charter</td>
<td>1/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Concept Document (Project Kickoff)</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gameplay Specification</td>
<td>2/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nondigital Prototype</td>
<td>2/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Milestone Proposals Content Repository</td>
<td>2/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gameplay Prototype</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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### Pre-Production

- Week 1 - Form Groups
- Week 2 - Group Charter
- Week 3 - Concept Document (Project Kickoff)

### Development

- Week 4 - Gameplay Specification
- Week 5 - Nondigital Prototype
- Week 6 - Milestone Proposals Content Repository
- Week 7 - Gameplay Prototype
- Week 8 - Architecture Specification
- Week 9 - Technical Prototype
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Immediately after Feb. break
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Development

Release