CMPS 170: Game Design Studio I
Welcome!
Teaching Assistants

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Professor – Heather Logas

- Professional Game Designer
- Artist
- Teacher

Office Hours:
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Brief Course Overview
(More Details can be Discussed in Section)
Game Design Studio Series

- You will work all year to design and implement an innovative game with a team.
- 8–10 Game Design majors per team, with potential outside collaborators (art, music).
- In this class you define concepts, build prototypes, form teams, and develop design.
- High intensity class—e.g., developing three playable prototypes in the next month.
How Do I Get into this Class?

- If you don’t already have one, we will not give you a permission code today.
- Write up your circumstances (why do you need a code, why not wait) and preparation (why are you ready, classes and more) and email to Heather (hlogas@ucsc.edu) this weekend.
- Program faculty will decide each case by end of next week.
Do you want into this class?

- If you’re a Junior, you should wait to take this as a real Senior capstone.
- If you’re not in the Game Design major, you should not try to take this class (unless in already-approved independent major).
- But you can still be a member of a team, for the full year, w/ independent study credit – especially for art, music, writing, etc.
What we are About (in 170)

- Exploring game ideas, some of which will become the final projects of your undergraduate careers
- Learning more about the early stages in a game's development
- Preparing to look for jobs
  - Tools – Resume, Business Card, Portfolio
  - Information – What the industry is like
- Learning how to be a professional
Avoiding Failure Modes

- Not being technically prepared
- This is why being a senior is important
- This is why there are prerequisites

Q: Does everyone have to program?

A: Yes
Avoiding Failure Modes

- Working on a game you don’t care about
  - Only some games pitches get “greenlit”
  - Teams work on greenlit projects
  - Only projects with full teams can make a final pitch

Hint: You should agree to be on multiple pitches
Avoiding Failure Modes

- Trying to create a game you can’t finish
  - Biggest problem: needs graphics that team can’t make
  - Pulling engineers to do amateur graphics makes both fail
- Only games with documented sources for *all elements* can be greenlit
Building on Strengths

- Your great strength: a team of engineers who understand games
- This makes possible gameplay innovations (e.g., new mechanics) that are much harder for those with less programming skill
- You can explore new areas (mobile, social network, motion control, weird interfaces) in rich ways — system & content together
- Your game doesn’t have a restriction (platform, license, etc) — your design

This is your chance to take risks and make something really cool!!
FAQ

• Does our final senior project need to be a complete game?
  • Yes, but it doesn’t need to (and probably shouldn’t) have more than 30 minutes of gameplay
FAQ

• Can people switch teams?
• People can be fired if 2/3 of their team agrees — must find spot on another team
• If you are without a team for two weeks (or more) at end of quarter, you do not continue to next 170 sequence course
FAQ

• What about intellectual property?
• I am not a lawyer (and don’t accept legal advice from any prof not in a law school)
• But the UC has never tried to assert any ownership of a student-produced game (or film, or...) to my knowledge
More Course Details in Section

And soon at:
https://courses.soe.ucsc.edu/courses/cmps170/Fall12/01
Speaking of Section...

Please switch to Thursday or Friday section!

Tuesday sections are overfull – you will get more TA support if in a smaller section. Better for everyone if the sections are balanced.
This week in section

- Sections start tomorrow (yes, there is Friday section this week)
- If you want to change sections, go to the section you want to be in.
  - However, do not try to change into the Tuesday sections – they are overfull
- This week: More course information, how to create a compelling pitch
First Assignment: Prototype 1

1) Pitch
2) Team Formation
3) Prototype
4) Playtest
5) Prototype playable in class
Prototype 1 – Pitch

- By 5pm next Wednesday (Oct. 3rd) you need to create a 3-slide pitch
- Slides should be PDFs, turned in via SVN (more on this in a moment)
- Each slide will be projected for 20 seconds, giving you 1 minute for your pitch
Prototype 1 – Team Formation

• After the pitches, during class, you will form teams of 3-4 people
• You can decide to move forward with one of the pitches or combine elements
• Before leaving the room, give your TA a sheet with your team members, basic concept, and times you plan to meet for joint prototype work
Prototype 1 – Prototyping

- *Read Fullerton prototyping chapters (7&8)*
- You can prototype with any materials you like: physical, computational, hybrid
- Your prototype must be *playable* and capture heart of the game experience (more on this shortly)
- We can help you brainstorm prototype approaches — but don’t delay coming to us
Prototype 1 – Play-Testing and Presentation

- Prototypes will be presented in class Oct. 11th — have them there to show
- At least one day before presentation, do a playtest w/ outside person
- 5pm the night before class, turn in slides presenting prototype and playtest results
Questions about Prototype 1?
10 Minute Break!
Get up and move – it's good for creativity
Finding/Developing Ideas

Conducting Individual Brainstorming
Rules for Brainstorming

- Focus on quantity: Ideas breed more ideas
- Withhold self-criticism: Record everything that comes to mind
- Welcome unusual ideas: Look at things from different perspectives
- Combine to improve ideas: Good ideas may be combined to form a single better good idea, as suggested by the slogan "1+1=3". It is believed to stimulate the building of ideas by a process of association.
Mind-Mapping
Mind-Maps:

- Associating ideas
- Movement is important for creativity
- The farther from the center you get, the more divergent ideas will emerge
- Can be messy (its about the process)
Mind-Mapping

• Work on your game concept using mind-mapping
• What is exciting about your concept?
• Solve particular problems such as:
  – Audience
  – Technology
  – Mechanics
  – Story
Mind-Mapping

Don't have a concept yet? Use one of these words as the center of your mind map:

- Trust
- Flowers
- Blue
- Friends
- Fire
- Exploration
Things Happening!

Next Monday:

- Paolo Pedercini, Molleindustria
  - Monday, October 1, 2012, 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
  - Location: Engineering 2, Room 599
- SPIN Studio Summer 13 Info Session
  - Monday, October 1, 2012, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM
  - Location: Engineering 2, Room 280
  - Check your email for more information