GAME 260 – Level Design

UNM Valencia, Game Design and Simulation   updated 01-10-2018
Spring 2018
Tuesday | Thursday, 12:00pm – 1:15pm
Instructor: Jonathan Morrison
jonmorri@unm.edu

Campus Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday   10:00 - 11:30
                            Tuesday & Thursday   10:00 – 11:30

B&T 107C

Course Description

Focus on the design and creation of video game levels. Dealing with the challenges and pitfalls of different video game genres.

Objectives

- Students will demonstrate visual communication skills through critiques, written explanations, and storyboarding
- Students will be able to illustrate ideas
- Students will be able to storyboard animation and video projects
- Students will be able to create complex single player game environments
- Students will be able to demonstrate proper placement of enemies and environments
- Students will be able to produce original projects that respect intellectual property of others.

Required Text

None

Student Responsibilities/Attendance/Participation

Student Responsibilities:
- Students <u>must</u> have basic computer and file management skills for all DMA courses. Custom tutoring services are available through the TLC. Required pre/co requisite is IT 101: Computer FUNdamentals. Students that fall behind due to lack of basic computer skills will be dropped.
- Bring a USB Flash Drive (at least 32 GB) to every class. Make sure it is clearly labeled with your name on it.
- Have a UNM email to access Blackboard:
  - Students will access supplemental information, class agenda/syllabus, and their grades through WebCT at https://vista.unm.edu. Just enter your NetID and your password. You must set-up a UNM email account (https://netid.unm.edu) if you do not already have one.
- If you have a disability, please inform me of your needs as soon as possible to ensure that your needs are met in a timely manner.
- Cell phones need to be muted during class times. If you must receive a call, leave the lab before you answer. No phone conversations in the studio. No web browsing, email, or text messaging during lectures, demos, discussions, or critiques.
- **COMPUTERS WILL BE OFF DURING ALL CRITIQUES!!!**

Attendance/Participation:
- Students are required to complete all projects on time, participate in scheduled critiques/class discussions/presentations, and maintain a safe, respectable, positive lab environment.
- Students are required to attend class, arrive on time, remain present until the end of class, and be prepared for each day's work. More than three absences without prior consultation may result in a failing grade or a drop from the class. Leaving early or arriving late three times results in one absence.
- If you have not attended class for three consecutive class periods and have made no attempt to call/email/IM/contact me, you WILL be dropped.
- Students who do not attend the first week of class will automatically be dropped.
- Students will need to work a few hours each week in addition to the scheduled class times.
- Starting fall semester; we are doing away with the lab responsibility forms that each student signs when taking a class in the computer labs.

Computer Lab Responsibility:
- Please be advised that use of computer labs on UNM properties is governed by "Policy 2500: Acceptable Computer Use"
- which can be found at http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2500.html. Food and drink are also prohibited in any
- computer lab on campus. Anyone violating these policies is subject to possible suspension and loss of computer lab privileges.

UNM Email/Black Board Learn Access:
Beginning Fall 2015 semester, all UNM-Valencia students will need a UNM Net ID which can be created by going to: http://it.unm.edu/accounts/. UNM Net ID will give you access to the computer labs on campus, blackboard learn and UNM Email.

Grading Policy

Grading:
- Grading is based on a timely completion of course assignments, the quality of individual technical and critical development, conceptual progress, personal commitment and the ability to work in a community studio setting. Personal commitment involves regular attendance, consistent effort, completion of work, participation in

presentations, critiques and class discussions, and the general willingness to try. Make each project meaningful to yourself!
- Each assignment will culminate in a presentation, which will consist of discussing your work and/or projecting your completed work in class for all to see. All due dates will be announced on Blackboard, as well as on the syllabus. No full credit will be given for any late work. If an assignment is not presented on time, an automatic 0 will be issued. You will need to make arrangements with me if you are planning to make-up the work, and a fair grade will be issued once the work has been submitted, presented, and critiqued, minus an automatic one letter grade deduction.
- Incompletes are rarely issued. If 75% of the semester's work/projects/deliverables and participation/attendance have been completed with a satisfactory grade, an incomplete may be issued.

Grading Breakdown

There are a total of 4 projects with each project being worth 100 points and make up 80% of your grade
You are also graded on attendance and participation in classroom discussion
Attendance – 10%
Participation – 10%

How to Contact the Instructor

Campus Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday   10:00-11:30
                          Tuesday & Thursday   10:00 – 11:30

Email:
I prefer all email to be from the UNM email. I will check this regularly and will respond to all emails within 48 hours if not sooner.
Although less preferred, you can email me at jonmorri@unm.edu In the Subject Line of the email, ALWAYS write your full name and class number. For example – "Jonathan Morrison GAME 205"

Support Information, Resources, & Tutorials

Access to the book:

- University of New Mexico Valencia Bookstore:
    o http://www.unm.edu/~unmvc/Bookstore/Bookstore.htm

- Library System:
    o University of New Mexico Valencia Campus Library:
        ▪ http://www.unm.edu/~unmvclib/
            • There will be one copy on reserve. You will need to check it out at the front desk. It will only be available for 2-hour checkout, and cannot ever leave the library.

- Purchase Online:

- If you plan on purchasing this book online, you need to do so immediately. We will start using it right away! A couple of sources for purchase online are:
  - Amazon.com: www.amazon.com - some new, some used
  - Half.com: www.half.ebay.com - discounted prices for used books!

Support for WebCT:
- - Blackboard help:
https://learn.unm.edu/webapps/portal/execute/tabs/tabAction?tab_tab_group_id=_21_1

DMA / UNM Valencia Tutoring Services:
- We are proud to have our very own DMA tutor available for Digital Media Arts specific courses! You can walk-in or if you prefer to make an appointment during these times, please call the Learning Center at 925-8900.

- Custom tutoring services are available through The Learning Center http://www.unm.edu/~tutor/. Even online tutoring is available!

Other tutorials:
- I will post a number of links to video tutorials in Blackboard for this course.

Instructor Support:
- Please see "How to Contact the Instructor" for methods of contacting the instructor for help.

__Course Schedule__

Tentative Schedule

Dates	Schedule	Projects
Week 1	• Introductions • Review Syllabus • Lecture: Intro • Program Overview	
Week 2	• Creating the basic level layout • Why we design first	
Week 3	• **Project 1 – Sarthol's Misadventures**	**Project 1**
Week 4	• Project 1 Presentations • Level Design in Teams	
Week 5	• **Project 2: 1st Person Shooter**	Project 2
Week 6	• Project 2 Presentation • Shared Asset creation • **Project 3 – Cohesive look**	Project 3
Week 7	• Designing with concept art in mind • **Project 4 – Concept art level**	Project 4

Week 8 *Fall Break	• Work on project 4	
Week 9	• Project 4 presentations • Creating compelling level objectives	
Week 10	• **Project 5 – Level Flow diagram**	Project 5
Week 11	• Work on Project 5	
Week 12	• Project 5 Presentations • **Project 6 - Develop a new level for your favorite game or from your design document from Game 101**	Project 6
Week 13	• Work Time	
Week 14	• Work Time	
Week 15	• Work Time	
Week 16	• **Final Project presentations**	