

Play_Space

Objective of class: Illustrate the essentials of the process of Game Conception and Design through the process of gaming itself.

At the beginning of the course students will be broken into 3 separate teams consisting of 5 members each. Over the course of 5 classes it will be the responsibility of each team to conceive of a game concept, expand upon it, and present it to their classmates by the end of the class. Each class students will play games that will help illustrate specific elements of the game development process. The skills developed throughout the course will apply to the particular field of game development but also provide experience with the wider process of structured conception, enhancement and presentation of an idea.

Each group will be given a binder that will be used to assemble the information and materials they develop about their game. Activity sheets and visual aids will be given to the students to add to their binders as they progress through each class.

To adjust for the age difference between classes, certain changes will be made in some of the game selection, terminology and level of expectation. Some adjustments may be made as the course is in progress, to accommodate for the needs of the class.

Class Breakdown

Class 1

As a group students will be introduced to the basics of the game development process. We will begin by discussing a basic question: What makes a good game? Students will be encouraged to bring up examples of games they personally enjoy or have experience with. As a group we will generate a concrete list of what the students feel are the most important aspects of a successful game. At this point the class will be broken into 3 groups and each group will be given a binder and the list will be added to it. Students will be reminded that these are the core principles, which they should keep in mind while designing their game over the course of the class.

The remainder of the class will be devoted to a card game activity that will allow the students to begin brainstorming the basis of their games. Each group will design and play a round of Chronicle, (a custom card game developed for this class) which allows the students to think of game elements, illustrate them and then test them out in game play.

Class 2

This class will focus on defining different modes of play. The class will begin with a group brainstorming session on the different ways one can play, with some basic examples provided to illustrate the idea. We will record our brainstorm session and the students will break into groups with each group being assigned a different game to play. Each game will have a dramatically different mode of strategy. The older class will play Carcassonne, Settlers of Catan and Pandemic. The games for the younger class are still being decided upon.

Older students will be provided with worksheets that allow them to record the ways of playing they see emerging in the game as they play. After each group has finished their game we will come back together as a class and each group will talk about the strategies and modes of play they experienced while playing their game. (The younger class will explain how to play the game and what they learned about it in more general terms).

We will use this discussion to outline core mechanisms and methods of gaming, while also noting how some games can contain multiple methods and strategies.

Modes of Play we will touch upon: Player vs. Player, Team vs. Team, Collaborative, Player vs. AI, Skill based play, Strategy based play and Random or Luck based play.

In the time remaining, students will break back into their groups and review the elements of their game they created in the card game from the last class. They will then select 2-3 modes of play they believe will best support their game concept and record it in their binder

Class 3

This class will outline the core considerations of player demographic and platform. While somewhat esoteric concepts, we will approach these in quiz game format to make them more tangible. The class will play as a group. The categories of the quiz game will include game history, popular games, cultural and geographic gaming trends, and general platform statistics. Through playing the game, students will get a general idea of the ways games are distributed and utilized throughout different age groups and cultures.

After playing the game as a group we will talk about the process video game developers use to target specific demographics and how they pick which platform to use. Afterwards the students will break into groups and decide which group of people they intend to target with their game and what platform (both traditional or video based) they plan to use. They will record this in their binder.

Class 4

After spending the previous classes determine the basics of their game concept, including story, characters, dynamic and platform, this class will allow students to develop and finalize the materials for their final game pitch.

The start of the class will be used to outline the different roles required for a pitch, (producer, artist, designer and publisher). The process of the pitch will be explained and a set of tasks will be given to each team to complete in order to prepare for presenting their game. Each group will complete a flowchart of the game's level structure (provided on a work sheet), character sketches and concept art, a title and a tagline, and a plot summary for their game. The class assistants and myself will assist them throughout this process and provide the groups with tips and suggestions.

Class 5

Each group will pitch their game to the rest of the class who will play out the role of the game publisher. After they pitch the game, the rest of the class will offer and comments on their pitch and suggestions on ways to improve the game.



Rough Game Concept



Key Characters: (3 best from Chronicle)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Key Locations: (3 best from Chronicle)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Key Events: (3 most interesting events from your game story)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Modes of Play



Types of Strategy:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Ways to Play:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Character



Name: _____

Role: _____

Goal: _____

Strength: _____

Weakness _____

Game Items

Name

Effects

Name

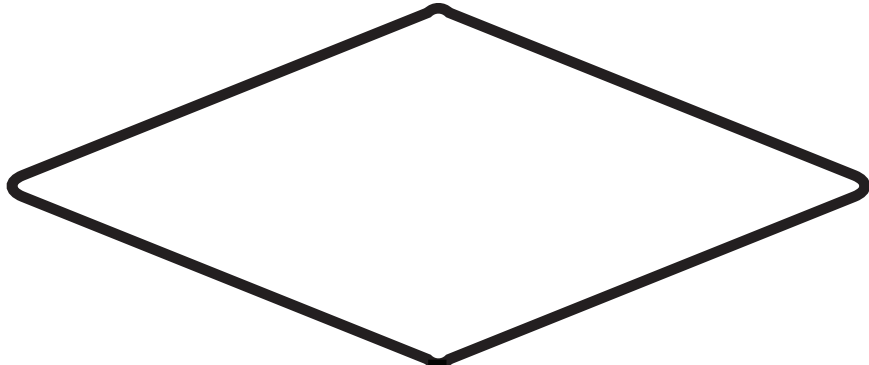
Effects



Levels



Start



level: _____



level: _____



Levels



level: _____



level: _____



level: _____





Final Game Concept



Game Name: _____

Tagline: _____

Setting: _____

Platform: _____
