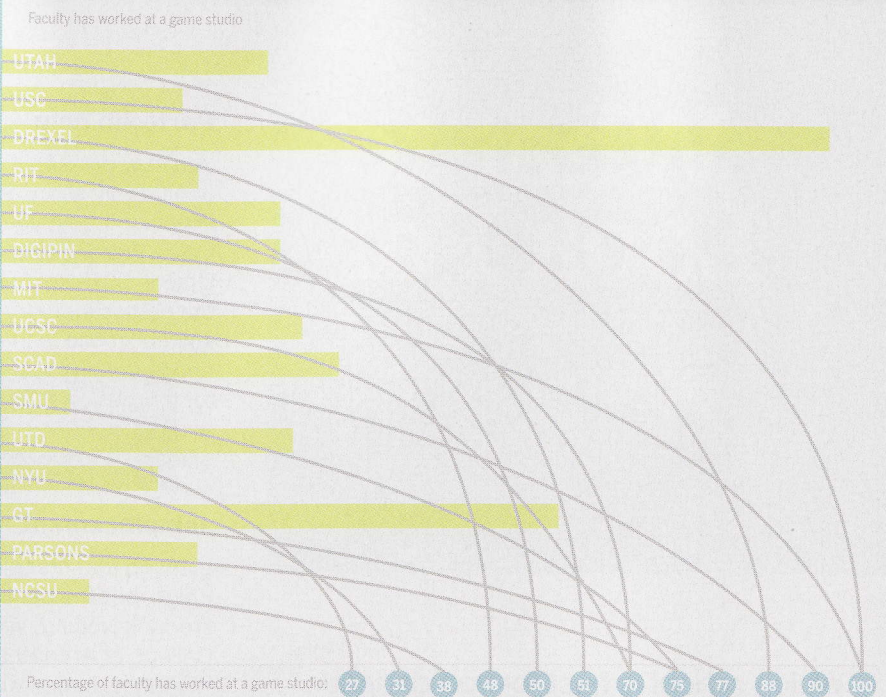


# Top Undergrad Schools

Undergraduate programs are the best starting place for hobbyist designers or gamers who want to start making games instead of playing them. And you couldn't ask for a better place to start than the schools on this list: they have the best undergraduate game design programs in North America.



Rank	School	Gaming Classes	Faculty Studio XP*	Degrees	Fun Fact
01	<b>University of Utah</b> Salt Lake City, UT	71	88%	Major, Minor, Concentration, Certificate, Masters, PhD	The freshman laboratory is set up like a startup game company with desks, computers, tablets, and personal space for each student that they can decorate as they like.
02	<b>University of Southern California</b> Los Angeles, CA	48	100%	Major, Minor, Masters, PhD	It already has one of the 10 largest motion capture studios in North America, and it will double in size in 2013.
03	<b>DigiPen Institute of Technology</b> Redmond, WA	218	51%	Major, Minor, Masters, PhD	Audio development gets a lot of love here, including a full audio lab, music rooms, mobile recording workstations, and every piece of audio editing software you could want.
04	<b>Rochester Institute of Technology</b> Rochester, NY	53	48%	Major, Minor, Concentration, Masters	RIT is the only school on this list that had 100% of its 2012 graduates find a game development job before graduating.
05	<b>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</b> Cambridge, MA	74	50%	Major, Minor, Concentration, Masters, PhD	MIT game design students collaborate with local game companies and students from nearby music schools and MIT's Singapore institutions to build games.
06	<b>Drexel University</b> Philadelphia, PA	74	70%	Major, Minor, Concentration, Certificate, Masters, PhD	Classes try to mirror actual production environments by hosting large game projects that involve up to 30 people.
07	<b>Shawnee State University</b> Portsmouth, OH	43	100%	Major, Minor	A new Laptop Orchestra program focuses on using gestures and controllers to allow groups of players to produce complex music live.
08	<b>Savannah College of Art and Design</b> Savannah, GA	80	70%	Major, Minor, Concentration, Certificate, Masters	SCAD offers 46 majors and 50 minors, encouraging its students to take advantage of the hundreds of design and art classes offered.
09	<b>The Art Institute of Vancouver</b> Vancouver, British Columbia	90	90%	Major, Diploma	Every designer is trained on Unity, the impressive browser-based engine that fuels <i>MechWarrior Tactics</i> and <i>Slender: The Arrival</i> .
10	<b>Michigan State University</b> East Lansing, MI	19	75%	Specialization	The capstone course pairs students up with employees at local game design companies to be mentored and contribute to a real game release for a full semester.



## Top Undergrad Schools

Rank	School	Gaming Classes	Faculty Studio XP*	Degrees	Fun Fact
1	<b>Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute</b> Troy, NY	77	27%	Major, Minor, Masters, PhD	The Emergent Reality Lab uses multiple stereoscopic projection screens, surround sound, and motion tracking technology to build experimental virtual reality environments.
2	<b>Worcester Polytechnic Institute</b> Worcester, MA	42	31%	Major, Minor, Masters	WPI facilitates large focus group testing for students' games to let them get immediate and honest feedback on their projects.
3	<b>Becker College</b> Worcester, MA	148	77%	Major, Concentration, Certificate	Game design students live in renovated Victorian-era housing that has been overhauled with the latest technology to be a combined living and learning community.
4	<b>New England Institute of Technology</b> Warwick, RI	52	75%	Major	NEIT puts emphasis on helping students learn from their mistakes as well as their successes, and hosts postmortems after major projects where their performance can be discussed.
5	<b>North Carolina State University</b> Raleigh, NC	24	38%	Concentration, Masters, PhD	Students are hosted by local gaming companies to gain contacts and to experience a real working environment.

### Honorable Mentions

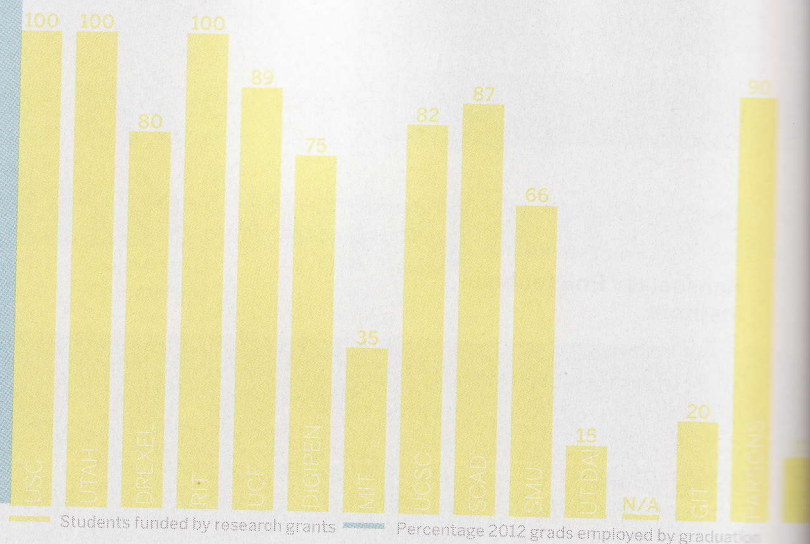
Bradley University; Champlain College; DePaul University; Ferris State University; Full Sail University; Georgia Institute of Technology; Miami University; NYU / NYU POLY; Northeastern University; Oklahoma Christian University; Quinnipiac University; University of California, Santa Cruz; The University of Texas at Dallas; University of Wisconsin - Stout; Vancouver Film School

\* Faculty has worked at a game studio



# Top Grad Schools

After you've conquered the undergraduate world, you can take your design skills to the next level with a graduate program in game design. Start your search with these schools, because they have the best graduate game design programs in North America.



01

## University of Southern California

Los Angeles, CA

**Prominent Professor:** Laird Malamed, former Senior Vice President and Head of Development at Activision

**Prominent Alumnus:** Roger Hughston, Gameplay Software Engineer at Blizzard (*Diablo III*)

02

## University of Utah

Salt Lake City, UT

**Prominent Professor:** Craig Caldwell, former 3D Technology Specialist for Walt Disney Feature Animation

**Prominent Alumnus:** Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari (so many games)

03

## Drexel University

Philadelphia, PA

**Prominent Professor:** Paul Diefenbach, former CTO of OpenWorlds Inc., which provided technology for NASA, Sony, Mitsubishi, and Boeing.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Seth Kendall, Cinematics Lead at NCSoft Carbine Studios (*WildStar*)

04

## Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester, NY

**Prominent Professor:** David Schwartz, who designed the first formal Ivy-league game design program in 2006.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Josh Gilpatrick, Program Manager for XBOX at Microsoft

05

## University of Central Florida

Orlando, FL

**Prominent Professor:** Ben Noel, former Vice President and COO of Electronic Arts-Tiburon.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Justin Schram, Level Designer at Bethesda Softworks (*Skyrim*)

06

## DigiPen Institute of Technology

Redmond, WA

**Prominent Professor:** Claude Comair, co-founder of Nintendo Software Technology, a first-party developer.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Sean Shypula, Server and Tools Engineer at Bungie Studios (*Halo*)

07

## Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Cambridge, MA

**Prominent Professor:** T.L. Taylor, who has written several books chronicling the growth of eSports and multiplayer games like *EverQuest* and *World of Warcraft*.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Tom Cadwell, Design Director at Riot Games (*League of Legends*)

08

## University of California, Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz, CA

**Prominent Professor:** Michael Mateas, co-creator of *Façade* and leader in AI and interactive story research.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Tim Schafer, CEO of Double Fine Productions (*The Cave*, *Psychonauts*) and former designer at LucasArts (*Grim Fandango*, *Monkey Island*)

09

## Savannah College of Art and Design

Savannah, GA

**Prominent Professor:** Stuart Robinson, Visual Effects Supervisor for *What Dreams May Come*, which won an Academy Award for its visual effects.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Will Miller, Lead Designer at Firaxis (*Civilization IV* and *V*)

10

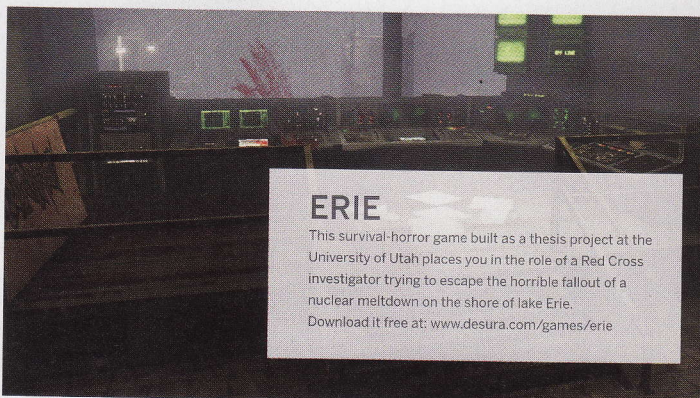
## Southern Methodist University

Plano, TX

**Prominent Professor:** Gary Brubaker, former lead programmer on LucasArts classics like *Curse of Monkey Island* and *The Dig*, and veteran of Atari and Stormfront Studios.

**Prominent Alumnus:** Andreas Papatheanis, Lead Software Developer at BioWare (*Dragon Age: Origins* and *Dragon Age II*)





## ERIE

This survival-horror game built as a thesis project at the University of Utah places you in the role of a Red Cross investigator trying to escape the horrible fallout of a nuclear meltdown on the shore of lake Erie.

Download it free at: [www.desura.com/games/erie](http://www.desura.com/games/erie)

11

### University of Texas at Dallas

Richardson, TX



**Prominent Professor:** Kyoung-Lee Swearingen, Technical Director at Pixar Animation Studios

**Prominent Alumnus:** Matt Charles, Producer at Gearbox Software (*Borderlands 2*)

12

### New York University

New York, NY



**Prominent Professor:** Frank Lantz, co-founder and Creative Director at Area/Code (*Macon Money*)

**Prominent Alumnus:** N/A

13

### Georgia Institute of Technology

Atlanta, GA



**Prominent Professor:** Ian Bogost, independent game developer (*Cow Clicker*, *A Slow Year*)

**Prominent Alumnus:** Chaim Gingold, Designer at Maxis (*Spore*, *The Sims: Online*)

14

### Parsons The New School for Design

New York, NY



**Prominent Professor:** Colleen Macklin, independent game developer (games for The Red Cross and Boys and Girls Club)

**Prominent Alumnus:** Zack Gage, independent game developer (*Spelltower*, *Halcyon*)

15

### DePaul University

Chicago, IL



**Prominent Professor:** Ed Keenan, Executive Technology Director at Midway Games (*Mortal Kombat 4*, *Blitz: The League*)

**Prominent Alumnus:** Nick Ehrlich, COO at Robomodo (*Tony Hawk Pro Skater HD*)

### Honorable Mentions

Full Sail University; Michigan State University; Sacred Heart University; University at Buffalo; WPI



Students funded by research grants

Percentage 2012 grads employed by graduation