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GAM125: Introduction to Game Development

Mr. Merka

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**Did the work you accomplished match the original Sprint backlog? Why or Why not?**

The work I accomplished did not match the original sprint backlog. Originally, I was assigned to participate in the storyline, game layout, and rulebook. While I contributed to everything that I was assigned in the original backlog, my priorities changed, and I worked on additional tasks. In the first project week, I focused on creating the game board. As my team continued to discuss the board layout, I created more revisions than I originally thought. Since our team quickly finished their sprint tasks, I could draw artwork before the next sprint. Next week, I virtually drew the board. After I finished the board, I let our team lead take over the layout. I worked on concept art for the battle cards. While drawing the art, I realized my detailed art was an unnecessary waste of time. Consequently, I simplified my concept art. During our third project week, I style-matched the concept art and drew two player pieces. The first sprint did not introduce player pieces. In the second sprint, I made concept art for two characters. During the last week, our team decided to change the booby-trap spaces into cursed spaces. Our team quickly created descriptions and artwork for the new spaces. Another artist and I style-matched the characters to illustrate our aesthetic theme. I finalized the battle, cursed, and boss card art using GIMP. Since we had plenty of time left, I created the project’s cover art.

**If you had another Sprint would you or your team make any changes during this Sprint? Why or Why not?**

If we had another sprint, we would focus on playtesting and polishing tasks. Our board game’s foundation is strong. Nevertheless, these activities would enhance gameplay and artistic details. Since our team communicates well, I believe we can quickly iterate to improve the project.

**What value does your current build display?**

Our game’s current build displays all our epics. These include game layout, gameplay, storyline, and aesthetic. Our layout clearly showcases the players’ start and end points. Both sides are colored differently to reflect our aesthetic theme and indicate they are enemies. Each space type is differently colored to make it distinct. The ends-to-middle layout reflects the storyline of two enemy armies battling for control over the dragon egg. Card types and rules affect gameplay. Wild, battle, and cursed decks are unique. Our wild cards mix good and bad outcomes. Battle effects are highly determined by whether a win condition is met. Cursed cards always have severely negative consequences. Rules impose constraints and priorities on player interactions. For instance, teams must be 2v2, 3v3, or 4v4. Meanwhile, any player who rolls three doubles will lose a turn. The boss’ difficulty is increased depending on team sizes. Additionally, the boss can only be defeated by rolling multiple doubles. The storyline provides background information about the players' goal and purpose. Our board, cards, and characters have a consistent gothic fantasy aesthetic. Gothic medieval castles indicate the players’ starting points. Spaces follow a straight then turn pattern to ensure movement is simple but interesting. In the middle, a black-purple dragon guards a golden egg to illustrate the goal. Card decks are uniquely visualized by differently colored eggs. The characters are indicated by different symbols and colors. All characters have a consistent, matching aesthetic theme.

**What Went Right (at least 3-5 different items)**

Throughout the entire project, our team communicated well. Most weeks, we held several recorded meetings to discuss task assignments, suggestions, ideas, and plan future meetings. Although we did not have calls for one week, we still frequently communicated our progress, ideas, and questions. Our team artists style-matched the art well. Based on artists’ strengths and weaknesses, they decided which tasks to assign themselves. In the beginning, artists drew concept art for the board, cards, and characters in their own style. Next, artists determined which style to implement then drew art pieces in that manner. Members were able to manage time well. Before we committed to our tasks, we planned and discussed what everyone thought they could handle. If a member depended on another or believed they might fall behind, then another member is willing to help or take responsibility for a task. Everyone gave suggestions and ideas to help other members. Some ideas were used, and others were not. Regardless, we compared each suggestion’s value to our intended goals. In the end, our team created a well-developed game. All game epics went through multiple revisions. Team and playtest suggestions influenced the final product.

**What Went Wrong (at least 3-5 different items)**

During the first sprint, the board layout was a major topic of disagreement. The number of starting points, tile placements, art, and sizing were all contention points. Throughout our entire project, asset sizing was difficult to determine. First, the board was designed on letter-sized paper. However, spaces were too small for player pieces. Consequently, we changed the board's design to match legal paper dimensions. Next, our team lead had to print the card decks multiple times to determine the proper size. Lastly, our player cards were too large. Our team lead made them significantly smaller. The first sprint log caused task and timing issues. We struggled to create enough sprint tasks and greatly overestimated times.

**Lessons Learned (at least 3-5 different items)**

Frequent communication and coordination are essential to a successful final product. There were dependencies that needed extensive communication. For instance, card decks required designers and artists to coordinate their actions. Designers wrote descriptions that artists used to draw art. Playtests are important to project iteration. Our first playtest focused on strengthening the game's foundational gameplay. The final playtest focused on polishing specific game elements. Negotiation was important to our process. In this context, negotiation includes knowing when to push our suggestions vs letting others influence the project. Additionally, idea combination is part of this definition. We added, modified, and removed suggestions to establish a compromise for everyone. Scrum/agile methods were useful in pre-production and production. According to our project goals, we could prioritize our tasks. Throughout production, our time estimates became increasingly accurate. As everyone completed more task revisions, we had more technical knowledge to make better time judgements.