How to Succeed in this Course

Every semester, I ask students to give tips for the next semester of students!

What do many of these have in common?

- **Start the projects early**.
- Actively engage with the **Lecture Videos**.
- Ask the Professor for help.
- Be creative.

Below are the students' comments from the previous semesters:

1.The lectures provide everything you need to know for this course. So, I would recommend to definitely watch all the lectures, code along with the professor and play around with the code by switching up the values.

2. Start the assignments early. When you start the assignments early, you will be able to address and get help for any issues you run into.

3. Be creative and code different features for your games.

- I personally copy notes while watching the lecture videos, pretty useful.

- I never used GitHub before, so setting up was a bit confusing. For pc users, you just have to download gitbash before using command prompt to upload any files.

- Use 2 folders. One for your projects to upload to GitHub, and one for professor Guida's stuff as well as your own code from lecture.

The main advice I have would be that everything you need for every project is available in the lectures. Don't spend hours trying to figure out how to do something without reviewing the lectures. Also, send an email to the Professor if you're stuck! It could save you a ton of time and clear up some key misconceptions.

Tip 1: Definitely try to be creative when making games, it is all worth it when you finish the project

Tip 2: Keep track of the deadlines and do not do the projects last minute

---

In terms of managing stress levels, focus on getting the requirements done first, and only then think about making enhancements.

Write the code from the lectures yourself so that you have a good understanding of the project concepts. Keep your assignment files saved separately from your lecture code so that you can refer back to the lecture work. Also, some lectures build directly off of previous lecture code, so you want to have it saved for convenience.

There's no mandatory project for 3D game but it is very fun! Worth doing it!

1) Try to be as creative as you can with these games. Each of the projects build upon one another, and pushing yourself to learn how to make one thing work in one of your games can be reused in your other games.

2) Draw out plans for your games on graph paper. It will be easier to see the scope of your game if you draw it out, and you will be able to easily derive what you need to code for your game with the diagram.

3) Work on assignments slowly and early. Making a game from ground up in under a day is not fun, and it'll stifle the creative process. Try to pace yourself to do some work for your game throughout the two-three weeks you have to make them.

4) Have fun with it! The field of Games Design is one of the most artistic and flexible fields of computer science.

As you work on projects, save intervals of the project in a different folder. This way, you can create a copy of the previous one and just start updating it for the next one, and you don't have to go through and remove irrelevant features or re-add simple stuff, like jumping and the scene / map files.

This class offers students the ability to get as creative as possible, therefore, students should take advantage of that; whether it's creating their own sprites or making it a game that reminds them of something in their own life, anyone can be successful in this class in their own way.

They should also remember to keep track of their previous project as every new project builds on top of the previous ones and that will make life a lot easier for them.

With this being an online class, and all the lectures readily available from the start, do not fall behind on watching them. The lectures are set up by week for a reason. Check with the professor if you are confused about something.

Since it's entirely project-based, you have a unique opportunity to learn as well as develop a creative portfolio of your work. Let yourself be creative with your games, and have fun developing them!

Definitely watch the lectures and follow along with the code before attempting projects.

Don't wait until the weekend to start your games! (I learned this the hard way)

Document your work on GitHub so you can share your hard work with your peers!

Make sure that you watch the entirety of the videos before you go ahead and try it on your own! Everything you need to know is there and sometimes there are little tips that you only get out of the videos. Also make sure that you start ahead of time! Give yourself plenty of time to take advantage fo the creativity aspect of this class.

This class has been fun and challenging! I wish I did several things, some of which I did implement towards the end:

Start early! Even if you can do a couple videos a day, it helps so much in the long run. This class has really been an important one on pacing myself.

Keep organized! I'm glad I saved and kept track of each project, because it's made it so much easier to understand what parts of the code I want in each project. I noticed some students talked about using GitHub to save and track branches of work --> should've done that myself.

When in doubt, go back to the videos! Honestly, the videos answer the questions you have. Rewatching the videos helped me resolve many bugs.