

Rick Smith
CS 1010 – Intro to Interactive Entertainment
Cody Squadroni
11/09/2024

Module 7 – TIO: Design Discussion – The User Experience

1. Does the gameplay require a pointing or steering device? Should these be analog or will a D-pad suffice? What do they actually do in the context of the game? – *Shadow Realms* will be designed to be played with a typical analog control stick (Xbox/PlayStation controller).
2. Does the function of one or more buttons on the controller change within a single gameplay mode? If so, what visual cues let the player know this is taking place? – I think there should be a dedicated interact button that would be context sensitive and be able to change. Visual prompts would appear above objects or character to indicate these changes.
3. If the player has an avatar (whether a person, creature, or vehicle), how do the movements and other behaviors of the avatar map to the machine's input devices? Define the steering mechanism. - The protagonist's movement is mapped to the analog stick for directional control, while combat actions like attacks and jumps are mapped to specific buttons.
4. How will the major elements of your screen be laid out? Will the game use a windowed view, opaque overlays, semitransparent overlays, or a combination? – The game will use an overlay for vital information which will include health, magic, stamina, and items/weapons currently equipped. Semitransparent overlays may be used to show damage amounts dealt/received.
5. What camera model will the main view use? What interaction model does the gameplay mode use? Is it one of the common ones or something new? How does the camera model support the interaction model? – A side-scrolling camera with dynamic zoom will support the 2D action-platformer model. This will allow players to see their surroundings while focused on exploration and combat.
6. Does the game's genre, if it has one, help to determine the UI? What standards already exist that the player may be expecting the game to follow? Do you intend to break these expectations, and if so, how will you inform the player of that? – As a 2D action-platformer, the game will follow genre UI standards (health bar, inventory, etc). I do not anticipate breaking conventional UI expectations.
7. Does the game include menus? What is the menu structure? Is it broad and shallow (quick to use but hard to learn) or narrow and deep (easy to learn but slow to use)? – Yes, the game will include a narrow menu for accessibility. Sub menus for details on skill, enemies encountered, lore, etc. will also be available. I want the menu to be easy to use.
8. Does the game include text on the screen? Does it need provisions for localization? – Occasionally there will be on-screen text for locations/areas found, bosses defeated, and dialog with NPCs.

9. What icons does the game use? Are they visually distinct from one another and quickly identifiable? Are they culturally universal? – Visually distinct icons will exist in the form of items equipped. These will be easily identifiable so one will know what weapon or potion type the player has available to use.
10. Does the player need to know numeric values (score, speed, health)? Can these be presented through nonnumeric means (power bars, needle gauges, small multiples), or should they be shown as digits? If shown as digits, how can they be presented in such a way that they don't harm suspension of disbelief? Will you label the value and if so, how? – The numerical values will be presented, but nonnumeric means for quick identification is available in power bars.
11. What symbolic values does the player need to know (safe/danger, locked/unlocked/open)? By what means will you convey both the value and its label? – Using a greyed out icon if an item is unavailable to use is the only anticipated symbolic value the player should encounter.
12. Will it be possible for the player to control the game's camera? Will it be necessary for the player to do so in order to play the game? What camera controls will be available? Will they be available at all times or from a separate menu or other mechanism? – Players will have limited control in the camera where if the player looks up/down the camera may move slightly in that direction. Otherwise, the camera will follow the player.
13. What is the aesthetic style of the game? How do the interface elements blend in and support that style? – The style for *Shadow Realms* could be defined as dark and gothic in style.
14. How will audio support the player's interaction with the game? What audio cues will accompany player actions? Will the game include audio advice or dialogue? – There will be audio cues for attacks, item pickups and use, and interactions. Atmospheric sounds will enhance immersion. Voice acting for NPCs may also be used.
15. How does music support the UI and the game generally? Does it create an emotional tone or set a pace? Can it adapt to changing circumstances? – Music should establish an emotional tone and shift dynamically to heighten tension during combat or exploration.