Jokers

Sacred Heart University Senior Project

Revision: 3.0.0

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# Overview

## Theme / Setting / Genre / Problem Statement

- <The general theme of this game is that of a virtual blackjack game. Our game, Jokers, provides a twist in the traditional realm of virtual blackjack where YOU play as the dealer. This game would fall under the category of casino games/entertainment games. >

Jokers Problem Statement:

When playing a typical game of blackjack, one may find it to be simple in terms of mechanics. To master this game, a player must go beyond folding and raising, and hitting. They must efficiently calculate their odds of winning, react accordingly, and bluff in a convincing manner to make a profit. To newcomers, this game seems to be just a game of chance, because they cannot possibly bluff when they do not know the estimated value of the dealer hand. Some video game versions of this game calculate the player’s chances of winning for them. In addition, players do not have to pay attention to their own “tells” because their computer does not have the ability to read them. In that case, why bother playing? To effectively make a blackjack game in the context of a video game, one should focus on the difference between the physical and virtual mediums. Enter Jokers, a reimagined game of video blackjack that encourages players and opponent AIs to cheat. By using different cheating methods and card mechanics such as false shuffles, dealing seconds, bottom dealing, and so forth; you, the dealer, will have to find ways to out cheat your opponents. We intend to invite new players who have never played blackjack before to understand the game a lot better through a different lens.

## Core Gameplay Mechanics Brief

- Gameplay Mechanic #1: Deck

* Manipulating the positions of cards by doing different kinds of shuffles and false shuffles

- Gameplay Mechanic #2: Card

* The player can deal from different parts of the deck

- Gameplay Mechanic #3: Marked Cards

* The player will be able to mark cards through a physical marking system and card count

- Gameplay Mechanic #4: Currency

* The player’s income is dependent on how well they did in the game

## Targeted platforms

- PC/Steam

## Project Scope

- Game Cost / Time Scale

- We estimate costs to be about $500

* $250 dollars allocated to resources and art work
* $250 dollars allocated to labor

- Time estimates to completed Beta version are approx. 6 months and for a complete Alpha version approx. 7-8 months.

- Team Size

- Core Team will consist of 3 members

- Ryan Rogers

- Lead Programmer

- Daniel Murtagh

- Lead Game Designer

- Christian Moncada

- IT Analyst

- IT Documentation

- Data & Research

- Licenses / Hardware / Other Costs

We will be using Unity 2018.2.10f Personal on our own personal computer devices.

- Total Costs with breakdown

## Influences (Brief)

### - Papers Please

- Video Game

- Papers Please day-to-day income system influenced us to make Jokers; a story where the main protagonists’ daily job as the dealer is to survive day-to-day on paychecks. Based on his success in winning blackjack games for the casino.

### - Fortune 499

- Video Game

- The game features a card-based attack system that allows you to use card mechanics (e.g. palming cards), which adds an element of strategy to an otherwise luck-based game.

### - Richard Turner on Penn & Teller Fool Us!

- Television

- Richard’s excelled card mechanic play is the type of feeling we want the player to achieve. By manipulating the card deck in certain types of ways using different card mechanics as shown by Richard Turner, we aim to make the player a master manipulator of cards just like him.

## The Elevator Pitch

What if you could take a break from the traditional way of playing blackjack and play something that not only is different but can teach you blackjack player mentality?

# What sets this project apart?

- Reason #1: This project aims to create a fun and thought-provoking atmosphere that isn’t found with traditional video game blackjack (i.e. We do not intend to create another blackjack simulator). We set to change the way video blackjack is played by introducing elements of cheating via different card mechanics the dealer (you) can do.

- Reason #2: By introducing a new way of playing blackjack, we want to create an environment where both pros and new comers can enjoy the experience of blackjack at the same level. Pros can challenge their true understanding of card mechanics by being placed in situations they would never otherwise be in. Meanwhile, newcomers would be introduced to card mechanics and understand fundamentally how they change the way blackjack is played. This creates a new experience for both pro and newcomer that they can understand.

- Reason #3: Typically, video blackjack aims to simply emulate the physical game in a virtual environment. The problem is, you cannot read social cues, bluff, or worry about what your face is saying while evaluating your hand in a virtual blackjack game. Even if such functionality was put in, it would hardly be effective. In its place, we hope the mechanics of cheating can create a new dynamic of play that can only be found in a video game environment.

- Reason #4

- <etc.>

## Core Gameplay Mechanics (Detailed)

### - Deck Mechanics

- Deck Mechanics

Manipulating the positions of cards by doing different kinds of shuffles and false shuffles.

- Before each round, the dealer (i.e. the player) must shuffle the cards in the following order: Riffle, riffle, strip, riffle, cut. However, the player can opt to do a false shuffle on any of these operations to gain an advantage. During the shuffling phase, a user interface will pop up that will display where they are in the shuffle operation order and present buttons that will allow the player to either shuffle or false shuffle.

### - Card Mechanics

- Dealing Cards

The player can deal from different parts of the deck. This is the player’s primary tool for manipulating the game.

- How it works

During each game, the player can select which type of deal they would like to perform. The player is able to deal normally as well as perform second deals (dealing the card second from the top) and bottom deals (dealing the card from the bottom of the deck).

### - Marked Cards

- Details (remember: Temporary and permanent)

The player will be able to mark cards through a physical marking system (which are tracked throughout the game) and via card counting (which are tracked throughout each round). While a card is marked, the player will be able to see where that card is while it is in someone’s hand, on the table, or in the deck.

- How it works

At the start of the first round, the player will select a set of cards (the size of this set is defined by what upgrades they have) to permanently mark as well as three cards that they will temporarily mark for the round. At the end of each round the temporarily marked cards from the last round are forgotten, then the player will be able to select a group of cards (a group is defined as either the cards in a single player’s hand or the community cards) that then become the next set of temporary cards.

### - Currency

- Details

The player’s income is dependent on how well they did in the game, represented as a percentage of their winnings. They have a base amount of expenses that they pay after each day. Optionally, the player can buy cosmetics and upgrades with their remaining cash.

- How it works

Currency will be based on the players performance each match. Depending on if the player won the match, they will be rewarded a base currency of $500 a night, plus any bonuses (e.g. they gain a percentage of their winnings). If the player no longer has any money and loses a blackjack match, they will get a bad ending. The penalty is simply having to replay that blackjack match.

# 

# Story and Gameplay

## Story (Brief)

* You are playing as a dealer for a corrupt casino, Jokers Casino. Your objective is to find anyway to win via using card mechanics, deck shuffles, marked cards, and different types of deals to win the game either for the casino or a specific person for the casino.

## Story (Detailed)

Go into as much detail as needs be

## Gameplay (Brief)

* This will be a 2D first person blackjack game where the player will play as the dealer. They will have certain options at the beginning of the round such as selecting which cards to mark, how to shuffle the deck, and how to deal out the deck. Some of these mechanics can be noticed by the other player AI, and if they notice it, they will call out the player for cheating and the round will end.>

## Gameplay (Detailed)

<Go into as much detail as needs be>

<Spare no detail>

<Combine this with the game mechanics section above>

# Assets Needed

## - 2D

- Textures

- Card Textures

- Character Sprites

- Character Animations

## - Sound

- Sound List (Ambient)

- Inside

- Jazzy casino music

- Main Menu Music

- Cutscene Music

- Bad end music

- Game won music

- Shop Menu music

- Sound List (Gameplay)

-Cards

-Deck being shuffled

-Card being dealt

## - Code

- Character Scripts (Player Pawn/Player Controller)

- Ambient Scripts (Runs in the background)

- Example

- NPC Scripts

- Example

- etc.

## - Animation

- Environment Animations

- Dynamic Background (people moving, lights changing, etc.)

- Character Animations

- NPC

- Idle Animations

- etc.

# Schedule

### - Game Concept

- First 2 months

- Game Title and concept

- Problem Statement

- Data Gathering and Research

### - Documentation & Resource Management

- Following 2 months

- Rough Outline of GDD complete

- Allocation of Tasks

- Acquiring necessary resources

### - Development & Testing

- Following 2 months

- Code front end

- Code back end

- Artwork

- Testing

### - Updates and Presentation

- Last 2 months

- Fix bugs

- Gameplay Testing

- Work on Presentation

- Final Presentation