# GAT250: 2D Game Design I

# Spring 2015

**Prerequisites:** CS170 (or CS175), GAT210, PSY101

**Schedule:** Lecture Tuesday, 9:00am – 10:20am in VAN GOGH

Lab (Section A) Wednesday, 11:30am – 1:20pm in DA VINCI

Lab (Section B) Monday, 1:30pm – 3:20pm in DA VINCI

**Classroom:** VAN GOGH for Lectures, DA VINCI for Labs

**Professor:** Bill Morrison

[**Morrison's Spring Schedule**](https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=billmorrisondesign@gmail.com&ctz=America/Los_Angeles%20)

**Contact:** [wmorrison@digipen.edu](mailto:wmorrison@didpen.edu)

**Class Web Page:** The **GAT250** course at [distance.digipen.edu](http://distance.digipen.edu/).

**Office Hours:** Monday 10:30am – 12pm

Tuesday 1pm – 4pm

Thursday 9am – 12pm

*Or by appointment*

**Description**

In this course, students will work individually, using an existing game engine to build three games based on a specific engagement type, as defined by the MDE framework: “Physical Challenge”, “Mental Challenge”, and “Accomplishment and Challenge”. Students will create the games in their entirety, focusing on design, but including art, sound and scripting. The course combines lectures, hands-on content creation, focus groups, and opportunities for feedback. Lecture will cover the essential design skills a designer must have to work on any game, reinforced by the hands on use of these skills when examining existing works.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

Over the course of this semester students in this class will build three 2D games based on “Physical Challenge”, “Mental Challenge”, and “Accomplishment and Challenge”.. After completing this course, students will have applied what they have learned about design to the practical task of creating games. By the end of this course the students will have hands on experience using basic design tools and a firm grounding in the basics of 2D game and level design.

**Textbooks**

There are no required books for this class.

**Optional Textbooks**

None, though students should have a familiarity with each of the genres being covered.

**Outline and Tentative Dates**

This class will roughly follow the outline below, although the order and/or content of the lectures are subject to change. The milestones will only be changed in extreme and unexpected circumstances (and will never be moved earlier).

**Week 1**

**Lecture:** Intro to GAT250 / MGD Review

**Labs:** Syllabus Review, Zero Engine Overview

**Week 2**

**Lecture:** Game Dynamics, Intensity, and Challenge

**Labs:** Physical Challenge Prototype Review

**Week 3**

**Lecture:** Control and Teaching the Player

**Labs:** Physical Challenge Progress Review

**Week 4**

**Lecture:** Visual and Audio Feedback

**Labs:** Physical Challenge Progress Review

**Week 5 *PHYSICAL CHALLENGE PROJECT IS DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT***

**Lecture:** Mental Challenge Lecture

**Labs:** Physical Challenge Feedback and Final Testing

**Week 6**

**Lecture:** Goals and Motivation

**Labs:** Mental Challenge Prototype Review

**Week 7**

**Lecture:** Micro Dynamics

**Labs:** Mental Challenge Progress Review

**Week 8**

**Lecture:** Macro Dynamics

**Labs:** Mental Challenge Progress Review

**Week 9 – Spring Break**

No Classes

**Week 10**

**Lecture:** Meta Dynamics

**Labs:** Mental Challenge Feedback and Final Testing

**Week 11 *MENTAL CHALLENGE PROJECT IS DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT***

**Lecture:** Accomplishment Lecture

**Labs:** Accomplishment and Challenge Prototype Review

**Week 12**

**Lecture:** Accomplishment Game Analysis

**Labs:** Accomplishment and Challenge Progress Review

**Week 13**

**Lecture:** Game Endings

**Labs:** Accomplishment and Challenge Progress Review

**Week 14**

**Lecture:** Fantasy & Expression

**Labs:** No Labs (Thanksgiving)

**Week 15 *ACCOMPLISHMENT & CHALLENGE PROJECT IS DUE BY SUNDAY AT MIDNIGHT***

**Lecture:** Wrap Up and Review

**Labs:** Accomplishment and Challenge Feedback and Final Testing

**Grading Policy**

Grades for this class are primarily based on the three projects (Physical Challenge, Mental Challenge, Accomplishment and Challenge). The student’s final grade is modified by attendance penalties and penalties for poor lab preparation and/or participation. A student can also get a bonus for exceptional lab preparation, analysis and testing.

**Overall Grade Weighting**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 40% | Highest Project Grade |
| 30% | Second Highest Project Grade |
| 30% | Third Highest Project Grade |
| -5% | Every unexcused absence from a lecture or lab |
| -2% | Every lab student is not prepared for analysis or testing |
| -1% | Every lab student is poorly prepared for analysis or testing |
| -1% | Every journal entry student does not complete |
| +1-5% | Student does an exceptional job of preparation, analysis, journaling and testing throughout the entire semester. |

**Mechanisms and Procedures**

There are a variety of procedures and mechanisms used in this class to make it run as smoothly as possible.

**Instructor Questions and Meetings**

You will undoubtedly have many questions for the instructors and will often wish to have individual meetings as well. In addition to asking questions through email, if you talk with an instructor in person (whether in class or otherwise) and there is some follow-up action the instructor has agreed to perform, you must email that instructor with a reminder. If you don’t send a follow-up email, whatever you talked about will be forgotten and not followed up on (regardless of what the instructor said at the time). Making follow-up emails a habit is excellent practice for the real-world of working with busy bosses, producers, executives, etc.

**Attendance**

Attendance at all labs and lectures is required, although if you email the instructor about any absences, they might be excused (especially if you send the email beforehand, but send one regardless). Poor attendance will result in a -5% penalty to your final grade for each absence. You will also be considered absent if you show up more than a few minutes late to class. Note that absences are counted by the number of attendance sheets that you have not signed. Even if you have photographic proof that you were in class, it does not count if you do not sign the attendance sheet, as this is an accreditation requirement (email the instructor right away if you forget to do so).

**Late Policy**

All late projects have their final grade cut in half. Projects can be improved and resubmitted after they are initially turned in, in which case the new grade is averaged with the old one.

**Last Day to Withdraw**

In order to withdraw from a course it is not sufficient simply to stop attending class or to inform the instructor. In accordance with the policy, contact your advisor or the registrar to begin the withdrawal process. The last day for withdrawal from this course is cited in the official catalog.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

Cheating, or academic dishonesty in any form, will not be tolerated in this course. Penalties for cheating may include receiving a zero on an assignment, or a failing grade in the course, or even expulsion from DigiPen. For further details, please consult the *DigiPen Academic Integrity Policy*.

**Disabled Student Services**

If students have disabilities and will need formal accommodations in order to fully participate or effectively demonstration learning in this class, they should contact the Disability Support Services Office at (425)629-5015 or [dss[at]digipen[dot]edu](javascript:linkTo_UnCryptMailto('jxfiql7appXafdfmbk+bar');). The DSS Office welcomes the opportunity to meet with students to discuss how the accommodations will be implemented. Also, if you may need assistance in the event of an evacuation, please let the instructor know.