GD3J03 Game Project: Alpha

ALPHA & BETA BUILD

[*Niche: A Genetics Survival Game* (Stray Fawn Studio, 2017) Image source: https://i.ytimg.com/vi/lY50Dgo_pvk/maxresdefault.jpg]

Class:

DGD18073 – (BCT18073 and BSE18073)

Date Issued:

Week 1 – 18th February 2019

Submission Deadlines:

Week 1 – 22nd Feb, 5:30pm - Alpha Milestone Goals
Week 5 – Date&time TBA – Alpha Review Presentation and Alpha build submission

Week 5 – 22nd March, 5:30pm – Beta Milestone Goals
Week 10 – Date&time TBA – Beta Review Presentation

Week 10 – Friday, 5:30pm Group and Individual submission deadline

Submission filename:
YYYY-MM-DD-GD3J03-AlphaBuild-TeamName.zip
YYYY-MM-DD-GD3J03-AlphaBuild-StudentName.zip
Eg:
2019-05-21-GD3J03-AlphaBuild-TheAwesomeTeam.zip
2019-05-21-GD3J03-AlphaBuild-LaraCroft.zip

Lecturers

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Brief

At this stage of production, students are required to create a feature-complete, playable game which is of an appropriate technical and aesthetic standard that is cohesive in its theme and function. The level of content is expected to be appropriate to the scope of the project and expectations for each project are to be determined based on the discussions with the production faculty.

Each team is required to use version control software in an effective manner while stable builds are expected on a **weekly basis**. Teams must continue to use project management software of choice to plan and track tasks in an organised manner.

Milestones

This production period has an Alpha and a Beta milestone. Alpha milestone is an interim milestone while Beta concludes with **feature freeze**. Each team is expected to prepare a document stating their goals for the milestones in **week one** and **week five** for the respective milestones. On the milestone deadline, a playable build is expected as well as a short review presentation that discusses the progress and reflects on the goals. A time and location for the presentations will be communicated by the production faculty.

Playtesting

Teams are expected to conduct regular external (outside of the team) playtest sessions, which are documented and reflected upon. These playtests should always be conducted on the latest build. Playtest reports should include at least the date of playtest, number of participants, questionnaire/test targets, results and actions taken by the development team in response to the feedback.

Documentation

The entire team is expected to contribute to their group's documentation. All documents (at least Game Design Document, Technical Design Document and Creative Design Document) should be kept up to date with the latest build. Outdated and unneeded information is to be removed (or marked as removed) and new features should be described in detail. In addition, the rationale behind new features or changes to existing ones should be documented. All members must have access to these documents.

Individual Documentation

Students are expected to demonstrate their individual work as an evidence to their contribution to the project. The documentation required for this purpose is explained in Assessment Requirements section.

Assessment Requirements

By the end of the Beta milestone, the game (the product) must be feature complete, packaged as a release build, free of major bugs that would prevent the game from running.

The team should work collaboratively and efficiently in creating the group submission elements. In addition, each student is required to document their personal contribution to the development process of the product.

Group work

- Product: Playable, feature-complete product that hits the defined goals in terms of gameplay, art direction and technical standard as well as being ready to polish. The product, at this stage, may have very few and minor bugs yet no major issues.

- Process: A thorough project management that is suitable to both the product and the team set-up
    - Alpha and Beta milestone goals are identified and submitted (Week1 and Week5).
    - Continuous logging and planning of work with a suitable project management tool
    - Bug reports are logged with a suitable project management tool
    - Continuous use of version control software
    - At least four play-tests are advised to be recorded and reflected upon for both Alpha and Beta builds.
    - Design documentation (game design, technical design and creative design documents) should be built on the previous and up to date to the current state of the project.
    - Milestone Review Presentations (Alpha-Week5; Beta-Week10)
        - Short video showcasing current status of the game is required for Beta Build
        - Updates on the completion of goals and reflection on the development process leading to the milestone
    - [Optional] Any other supporting documents for the process such as meeting minutes from daily or weekly stand-ups.

Individual work

- Developer journal: Developer journal needs to have at least weekly entries that demonstrate individual's contribution to the project. The entries should have explanation on the approaches to development, technical and artistic problems faced and solutions to these problems while refraining from a diary style. It is advised to include images/gifs/flowcharts of work to demonstrate fulfilled tasks.

- Task log: A document that demonstrates the weekly task log for each week throughout the development process. This document should be drawn from the project management tool, should include time estimations and completions.

- ▪ Post mortem: A post mortem for this production period should critically reflect on the alpha & beta phases of production while evaluating the relation of these stages to the project as a whole, focussing on what went right, what went wrong and what the next steps are. Post mortem should be 500-600 words, written in a suitably professional tone with proper formatting.

Performance

Group contribution performance is a percentage that is used to scale the group mark for each student in the team. It is evaluated throughout the production process based on **attendance**, **participation** and **task accomplishment**. Students are expected to participate in team meetings, discussions and production planning while also fulfilling the responsibilities of their role.

Submission Requirements

Group Submission

Product

- Alpha Build (executable and source) (due Week 5)
- Beta Build (executable and source) (due Week 10)

Process

- Alpha Milestones (Due by the end of Week 1)
- Beta Milestones (Due by the end of Week 5)
- Log file from version control software (commit log)
- Design documents (GDD, TDD, CDD at the very least)
- Playtest reports (at least four for each)
- Alpha Milestone Review presentation (Week5)
- Beta Milestone Review presentation (Week10)
  - Gameplay video

Individual Submission

- Developer Journal
- Individual task log
- Post mortem

Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess your work:

Group Criteria (70%)

- **Product (40%):**
    - Quality, quantity and suitability of content is appropriate to the overarching design of the project and meets the expectations of the product for production at this stage of development.
    - Coherent and logical design displaying consistency in gameplay, depth of interaction, user experience, interface and controls.
    - Audio/visual elements, design and mechanics are cohesive and appropriately serving for the intended gameplay experience.
- **Process (30%):**
    - Project management demonstrates clear planning, organisation and tracking with a product backlog, goals and milestones, task tracking, refining, retrospectives, goal adjustments etc.. A suitable production pipeline is adopted, refined and re-appropriated by the team to facilitate their development process.
    - Version control is used effectively.
    - Milestones were hit and adjustments to production were made where necessary.
    - Product is critically refined via playtests.
    - Design documents inform the development and are kept up-to-date throughout the development to reflect the current status of the product.
    - Both Alpha and Beta phases of the development process and the status of the product are critically reviewed by the team with reflections on goals, achievements, what went right, what went wrong and how to improve for the future stages of production.

Individual Criteria (30%)

- Individual tasks are completed to the highest quality as per the specifics of objectives and goals.
- Quantity, suitability and relevance of work meets the needs of the project in relation to the expected level for the presented tasks.
- Fulfils the assigned role and their responsibilities with a high quality delivery.
- Post mortem is written in a professional manner and reflective with specific points raised on what went wrong, what went right and future improvements.

Performance (coefficient out of 100%)

Group contribution performance is evaluated throughout the production process based on attendance, participation and task accomplishment. A student who fulfils the performance requirements would receive 100% of the group mark.

Learning Outcomes

See component overview for the learning outcomes as well as the production structure.

Submission Policy

Please refer to BCT-BSE Joint Paper Submission Policy document on Classfolders and/or your Student Handbook for further details.