

The Icarus Protocol

Project Solution Approach

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I. Introduction

This document, Project Solutions Approach, serves as a comprehensive overview of the inter-relational design of the gamified project commissioned by Lincoln Middle School. It will focus on three main designs, Architecture, Data, and User Interface. For Architecture, each subsystem within the overarching design of the project will be thoroughly explored and explained, with a focus on the subsystem's concepts, algorithms, and interface properties. For Data, any data type and database interaction and properties will be diagrammed and evaluated. And for User Interface, each page will have a mocked version and a detailed description of components and functions.

The purpose of this document is to create a guideline for the developers to follow throughout the development phase of this project. The developers will be able to perform verification tests during development based on the detailed description of

- i. Subsystems descriptions
- ii. Subsystem relationships
- iii. Data type objects
- iv. Data type and Database relationships
- v. Database schema
- vi. User Interface Mocked pages

Additionally, another purpose for this design document is for stakeholders. With these designs created and documented within this solution, stakeholders will be able to cross reference the prototype with the intended goals and design outlined here.

Our team aims to explore the potential of games as a tool for education by producing a fully featured game designed to teach basic programming skills to students at a middle school or early high school level with no prior programming experience. While games of a similar nature exist, they often fall into one of two traps which our team sees as pitfalls. Some, while employing the surface level appearance of a game, fail to truly embody the game design principles that make games powerful for learning; Others use a proprietary scripting language that has lessened impact in teaching actionable programming skills. In the construction of this project (working title: "Icarus Protocol") we aim to solve this problem by producing a game that is a genuinely fun and interesting experience, while also serving as an effective tool for teaching real Python programming.

II. System Overview

This project's main functionality surrounds the idea of teaching python to students with a novel and engaging experience, focusing on skill and knowledge retention through the avenue of

gaming. The functionalities of this project can be loosely divided into three major categories; User Interface and Python IDE, IronPython Integration, and Core Game Systems. Our design methodology is heavily influenced by the engine specific requirements caused by using the Unity Engine to drive development. The effect of this influence on our system architecture and component design patterns will be more thoroughly discussed in the Architectural design overview section. In regards to the design of our data structures, there are two major considerations that will be discussed. The first is the method of storing user progress in reliable and extensible save files. The second major consideration is the structure of our level data, which will have to be designed to be both highly flexible and easily modified without recompilation of the primary executable. The core consideration when designing our UI will be the strengths and limitations of the Unity UI system. While this system is flexible enough to be useful for our purposes, its limitations will have to be taken into account when creating UI layouts. The specifics of our component interfaces, data structures, and UI layouts will be discussed in the following sections.

III. Architecture Design

III.1. Overview

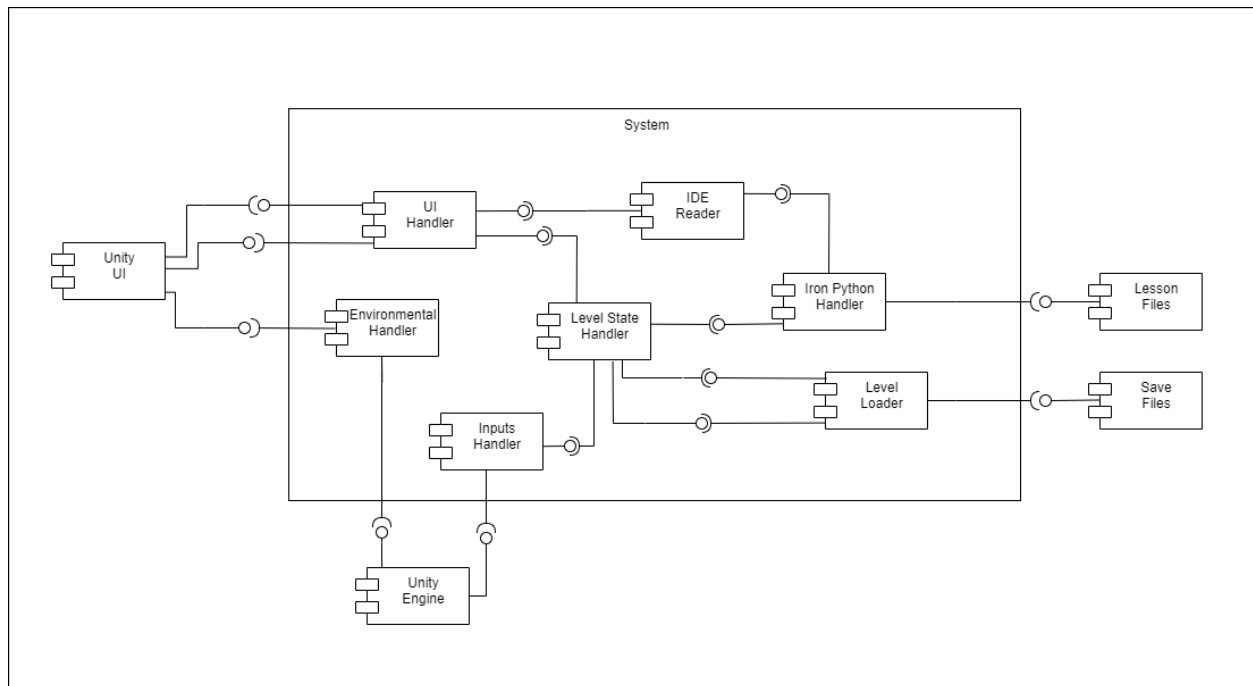
This section should describe the overall architecture of your software. The architecture provides the top-level design view of a system and provides a basis for more detailed design work. This will be the initial draft of your software architecture. Next semester you will revise this draft and finalize your design.

- Provide a bird's-eye view of your software architecture. Mention the architectural pattern you adopted in your software and briefly discuss the rationale for using the proposed architecture (i.e., why that pattern fits well for your system).
- Please refer to CptS 322, CptS 487, CptS 321, and CptS 422 materials to refresh your knowledge on system decomposition and software architectural patterns.
- Briefly describe each layer/component in the architecture and explain its responsibilities.
- Provide a block diagram (e.g., UML component diagram) that illustrates the proposed architecture. The block diagram should show all major subsystems and identify the layers/components in the architecture.

Architecture: Object Scripting Model

The Pluribus Doctrina Team has chosen to use an Object Scripting Model for this project. Since the application is developed in the Unity Engine, the architecture model must conform to the engine specifications. Given these requirements, the team has decided on an engine specific model that will utilize the strengths of the Unity Engine. Within the context of solely working on the game in the Unity engine, the team couldn't see another pattern that would take advantage of the Unity system as well. Below is a component diagram that illustrates the overarching architecture of our game. This diagram's purpose is two-fold, one, it serves as a guide for the developers to reference and base development around, and two, it provides a visual representation of the component architecture that is decomposed in the following section. Here is an overview of the components, as seen in the diagram below. Given the nature of working in the Unity environment, the player will start with the Unity User Interface. The Unity UI will then communicate with select system handlers. Such systems would be, one, the UI Handler, which will facilitate any UI element such as page layouts and icons, and two, the Environmental

Handler, which modifies environmental properties such as camera positioning. From the UI Handler, there is a connection to the Level State Handler, which is the main subsystem that handles the levels which the player interacts with. Level State Handler connects to the Iron Python Handler - facilitates the interpretation and simulation of the python code inputted and loads lesson files -, the Level Loader – saves and loads levels as the player progresses -, Inputs Handler – abstraction for user input from unity engine. Additional in-depth descriptions of these subsystems will be elaborated on in the following section.



III.2. Subsystem Decomposition

This section explains how you decomposed your system into subsystems. A subsystem typically corresponds to the amount of work that a single developer can tackle. You will show your system decomposition, identify the major subsystems, describe the assignment of functionality to each subsystem, and define the interfaces between them. When you decompose your system into subsystems, you need to consider the dependencies within and between the subsystems, i.e., cohesion and coupling measures.

- Briefly explain how you decomposed your system into subsystems.
- Discuss the rationale for the proposed decomposition in terms of cohesion and coupling.
- Redraw your architecture diagram (in section III.1) and show all the services each subsystem provides and requires (for example, UML component diagram that uses ball-and-socket notation to depict provided and required interfaces).
- For each subsystem in your architecture, include a sub-section.
- To improve clarity, you may provide multiple figures that show different parts of the architecture (illustrating services) and place each figure right before the corresponding subsection.

I.1.1. [UI Handler]

a) Description

The UI Handler subsystem manages any user interaction with the UI elements as well as UI details such as the displayed layout and icons. It handles inputs from the Unity UI external component such as actionable functionality that is tied to UI elements or player code entered into a UI element.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

Similar to the structure of Unity's systems, the UI Handler is dispersed across many sub-classes. The most prominent of these sub-classes would be the UI-Layout class that dictates to the Unity UI which layouts should be displayed. The UI Handler also consists of the scripts tied to each UI elements' input events. In alignment with the Unity Engine's design philosophy, each button or UI element may have one or more atomic scripts which handle event actions. For the purposes of simplicity these are all considered to be part of the UI Handler subsystem. These classes will handle the interaction between the Unity UI elements and other subsystems.

c) Interface Description

Services Provided:

1. **Service name:** UpdateLayout
Service provided to: Unity UI, Level State Handler
Description: The UpdateLayout service will allow the Unity UI or the Level State Handler to call for an update to the page layout, this will occur for the transitions between the home page, the level select page, the manual page, and the level page, with any variations due to level phase.
2. **Service name:** BundlePlayerCode
Service provided to: IDE Reader
Description: The BundlePlayerCode service will package the code written in a UI element into a compiled data object that is passed to the IDE reader, this will happen once the player has selected simulate.

Services Required:

1. **Service name:** ModifyUI to UI Handler
Service provided from: Unity UI

I.1.2. [Environmental Handler]

a) Description

The Environmental Handler system manages all the interaction between the Unity UI and the application system. It also handles the interactions between the internal environmental objects and the Unity Engine. It will handle services pertaining to both the Unity UI and Engine systems, such as camera direction and scope.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

Following a similar structure to the UI Handler, the Environmental Handler is decomposed into many sub-classes. However the one largest class is the Camera controller class. Given the

strengths of working in a Game Engine, the game objects, such as layouts and UI elements, will always be on screen and the camera will display of obscure these objects as needed.

c) Interface Description

Services Provided:

Services Required:

1. **Service name:** ModifyCamera to Environmental Handler
Service provided from: Unity UI
2. Service name: ModifyEvents to Environmental Handler
Service provided from: Unity Engine

I.1.3. [Inputs Handler]

a) Description

The Inputs Handler's responsibility is to abstract the inputs from the Unity Engine from the internal application system environment. It will handle inputs from the Unity Engine and provide a sanitized version to the level State Handler.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

Following the design philosophy of the Unity Engine, the Inputs Handler will also consist of several smaller classes. These classes will be tied to the script that is paired with game objects. The responsibilities of the Inputs Handler, while on any game object, is to act as a sanitizer for the raw inputs from the Unity Engine. It will then pass the inputs to the Level State Handler.

c) Interface Description

Services Provided:

1. **Service name:** GetPlayerInputs
Service provided to: Level State Handler
Description: The GetPlayerInputs service will abstract the interaction process of the player's input and the internal application's properties. This process will take the input from the Unity Engine as a result of player actions and will facilitate and sanitize what is provided to the Level State Handler

Services Required:

1. Service name: GetPlayerInput to Inputs Handler
Service provided from: Unity Engine

I.1.4. [IDE Reader]

a) Description

The IDE Reader, similar to the Inputs Handler manages packaging the user's input, specifically the input in the Python text editor UI element. The UI Handler will provide the IDE Reader the raw text from the player, which the IDE Reader will package into a compiled object in the internal application system. Afterwards, the IDE Reader will provide this object to the Iron Python Handler. This adds a layer of abstraction which allows for sanitization of the user's text so as to avoid unintentional interactions between the code written by the player and the code written by the developers.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

The IDE Reader is responsible for the sanitizing and packaging of the player code, written in the UI element for the Python IDE, into a compiled object. Additionally the IDE Reader is responsible for providing this object to the Iron Python Handler for compilation. The IDE Reader will consist of one main class that is tied to the script of the UI element for the Python IDE. While most of this project's architecture parallels that of the Unity Engine, the IDE Reader is only used in an instance of the Python IDE UI element within a level. Something to note here, is that this component is only used in the script of one UI element, however variations of the UI element will be created for every level. So, in the greater scheme of things there will be multiple classes that compose the IDE Reader but they are multiple instantiations of this component.

c) Interface Description

Services Provided:

1. Service name: CompilePlayerCode

Service provided to: Iron Python Handler

Description: The CompilePlayerCode service will take in the raw text input of the player, compiles it into a data object, which is then provided to the Iron Python Handler. This will occur once the player has selected simulate.

Services Required:

1. Service name: BundlePlayerCode to IDE Reader

Service provided from: UI Handler

I.1.5. [Iron Python Handler]

a) Description

The Iron Python Handler is responsible for the interaction between the python code that the player has written and simulation of that code. This component will take input from any instantiation of the IDE Reader, as well as any given lesson file, which will consist of an external python file for the specific lesson. It will then provide the Level State Handler the results of the Python simulation of the player's code.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

Diverging from the similarities of the previously explored components, the Iron Python Handler will consist of only one class. This one class will take inputs from two places, one, the IDE Reader class which will provide a compiled data object to run the Iron Python simulation on, and two, a lesson file, as mentioned before, the lesson file will consist of python environmental objects and methods specific for the lesson. The Iron Python Handler will also provide to the Level State Handler the results of the Iron Python Simulation.

c) Interface Description

Services Provided:

1. Service name: SimulatePlayerCode

Service provided to: Level State Handler

Description: The SimulatePlayerCode service will simulate the compiled data object from the IDE Reader, and provide the results to the Level State Handler. This occurs after the player selects simulate.

Services Required:

1. Service name: LoadLesson to Iron Python Handler
Service provided from: Lesson Files
2. Service name: CompilePlayerCode to Iron Python Handler
Service provided from: IDE Reader

I.1.6. [Level Loader]

a) Description

The Level Loader subsystem is responsible for the loading and creation of save files. An important aspect of this project given the nature of video games is saving and loading. Players should be able to save their progression within the phases of a level and load their previously completed data for levels. The Level Loader is responsible for transposing the internal level data into a JSON file that can be accessed and read at a later time. It is also responsible for the reversal action, where given a save file, the Level Loader will read and interpret the save file and update the internal level data to reflect the progress within the save file.

b) Concepts and Algorithms Generated

Similar to the Iron Python Handler, the Level Loader subsystem will consist of a single class. This class will take an input of the internal class data from any instance of the Level State Handler and will transform the given data to a JSON file format as a Save file. Additionally, the Level Loader will take a JSON file input and transpose it into compiled data objects that provide the internal level objects with previously saved states.

c) Interface Description

Provide a description of the subsystem interface. Explain the provided services in detail and give the names of the required services.

Services Provided:

1. Service name: SaveFile
Service provided to: Level State Handler
Description: The SaveFile service will take the input of the Level Loader's data objects progression then it will output the data transformed into a JSON file format and save it to a local storage location.
2. Service name: LoadFile
Service provided to: Level State Handler
Description: The LoadFile service will take the input of the JSON file from the Save Files subsystem, then it will transform the JSON data into a compiled data object and provides it to the Level State Handler. Afterwards, the Level State Handler will update its internal data objects based on the compiled JSON object.

Services Required:

Service name: GetLevelData to Level Loader
Service provided from: Level State Handler

I.1.7. [Level State Handler]

a) *Description*

The Level State Handler is the main gameplay subsystem that is responsible for managing the services from the UI Handler, Iron Python Handler, Level Loader, and Inputs Handler to create a cohesive and fun level. It will handle displaying the level layout, running the player python code, the simulated results, and saving level progress at key milestones.

b) *Concepts and Algorithms Generated*

The Level State Handler subsystem will consist of a single class attached to the Level UI Component. Similar to the IDE Reader, the Level State Handler will have multiple instances for each Level that the player can play, such as main, challenge, and boss levels. Additionally, it will provide Level data objects to the Level Loader in order to create or update a player's save file, which can be loaded in later.

c) *Interface Description*

Services Provided:

1. Service name: GetLevelData

Service provided to: Level Loader

Description: The GetLevelData service will provide the data objects of the level's progress to the Level Loader. This Level data will then be converted into a JSON file and saved to a local location.

Services Required:

Service name: UpdateLayout to Level State Handler

Service provided from: UI Handler

Service name: GetPlayerInput to Level Loader

Service provided from: Inputs Handler

Service name: LoadFile to Level Loader

Service provided from: Level Loader

Service name: SimulatePlayerCode to Level Loader

Service provided from: Iron Python Handler

IV. Data design

V. User Interface Design

[You may skip this section if your project doesn't have a GUI component] – but! If the tools is ever to be used by humans (even just starting and stopping it), there's some form of user interface design. It can be very simple, but it does exist. Make sure you document how you expect people to use your product, even if it's just:

- Installation

- Configuration file edits
- Launch daemon by running command [x]

Provide a detailed description of user interface. The information in this section should be accompanied with proper images showing how exactly you vision the interface to be like (for example mock-ups). Make sure to mention which use cases in your “Requirements Specification” document will utilize these interfaces for user interaction.

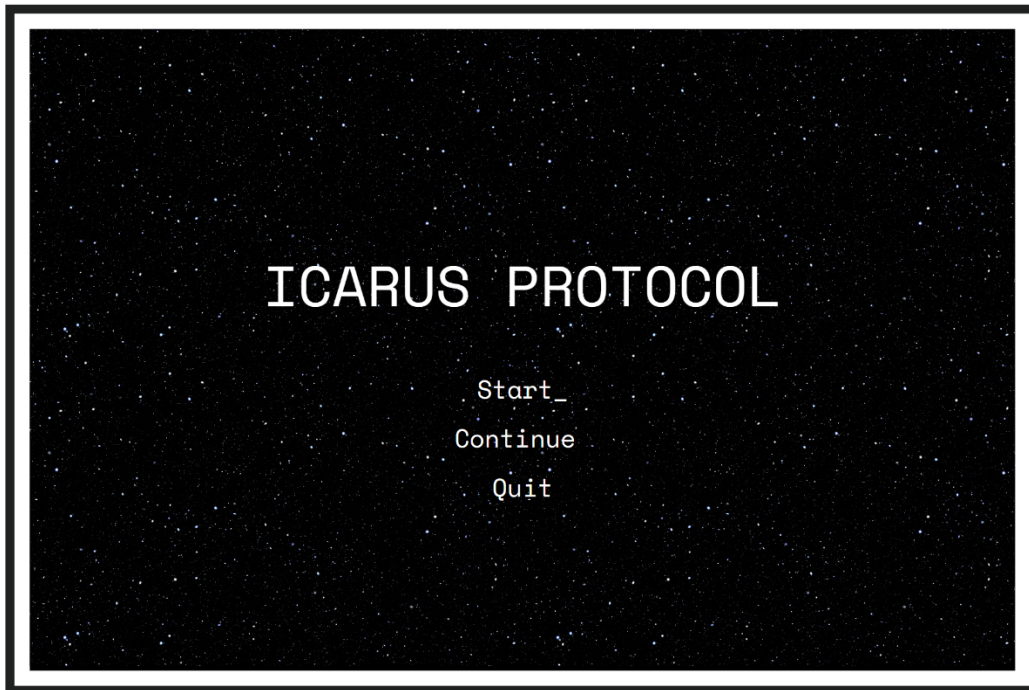
VI. Glossary

HUD: Heads Up Display

IDE:

VII. References

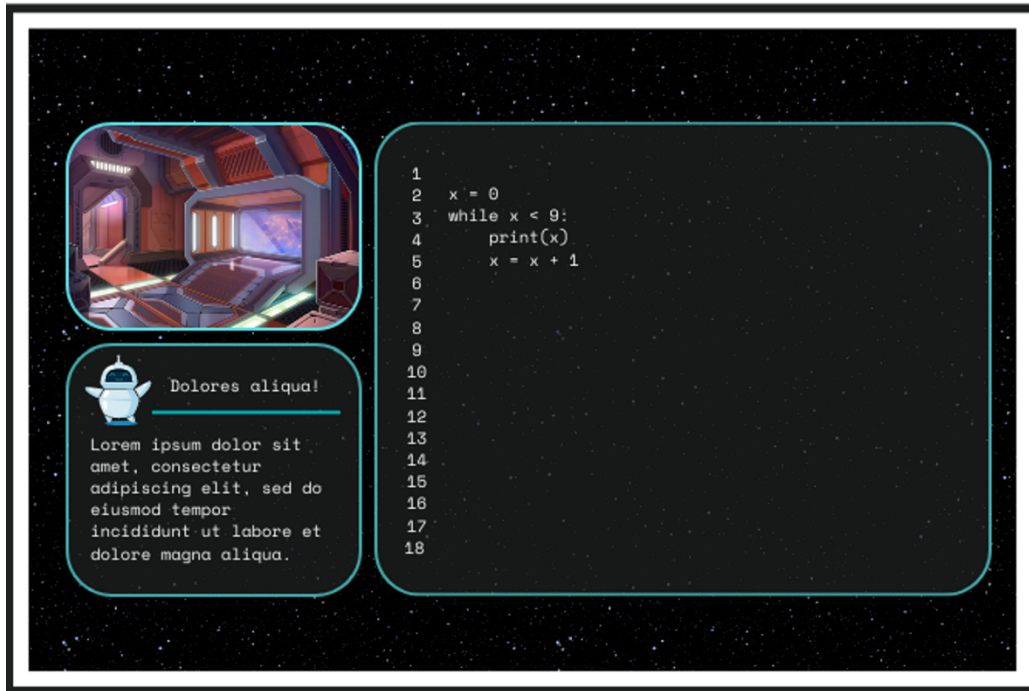
VIII. Appendices



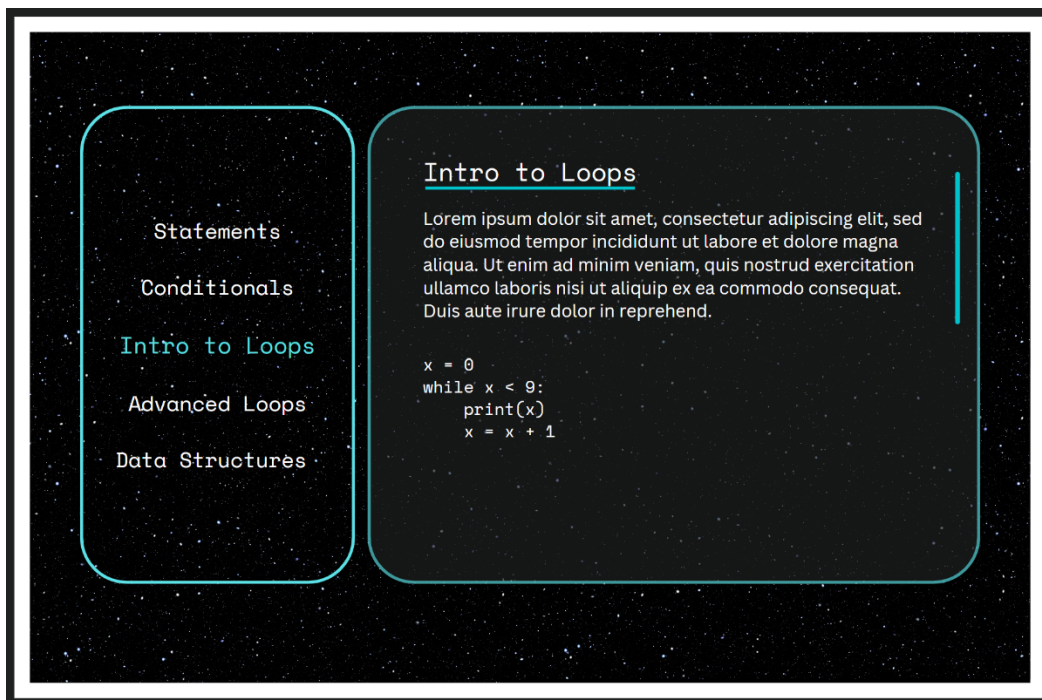
(Image 1)



(Image 2)



(Image 3)



(Image 4)