**Progress Report**

**- Increment 2 -**

**Group #8**

# Team Members

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1. **Project Title and Description**

* Ascend: Path of No Return is a metroidvania game where the player can explore a map and interact with items and NPCs to progress through the map. There will sometimes be enemies that the user will have to defeat and travel throughout the map to gain items to proceed through the game, with the goal being to get through the map and ascend to freedom.

1. **Accomplishments and overall project status during this increment**

* In this increment we enhanced various aspects of the map, adding multiple new areas to be used for progressing through the game. Music has been added as an auditory element to make the game more appealing for users. The player is capable of more advanced movement, being able to damage enemies, as well as walking, jumping, double jumping, and even warping. More enemies have been added to the different levels that match their corresponding theme and present a new obstacle to the player. The UI has implemented different menus, as well as a health and coin tracker. We also expanded the state-based machine for the enemies, player interaction with NPCs and chests, a larger system to control the flow of menus and scenes and then elements within the map such as doors.

1. **Challenges, changes in the plan and scope of the project and things that went wrong during this increment**

* ***Challenges:*** We continue to have some learning curves with the game engine, which slowed down the development process a bit as we explored the features and limitations Godot has to offer. At some points, it was difficult for certain individuals to make headway in their designated fields due to dependencies from things being worked on by other team members. Additionally, it was challenging to pinpoint the overarching story we wanted for the game, leaving us feeling stuck at times.
* ***Changes:*** We set up a plan for the map which has better helped us structure the game progression, which wasn’t planned originally. This helped clarify our goals as the structure of our map is crucial in a metroidvania. We also had to scale down some elements we wanted to include previously, such as an interactable inventory and a merchant that would provide a use for the coins to buy items.
* ***Things that went wrong:*** Time spent debugging things like camera-follow logic took longer than expected, which delayed work on other features.
  + Getting the menu buttons to resize according to the screen’s size was also a challenge that delayed further development of UI features.
  + With everyone working at the same time, sometimes changes that have been made would get reverted due to pushing code that wasn’t up to date when merging with the master branch.

1. **Team Member Contribution for this increment**

* ***Ash:*** 
  + Progress Report:
    - #2 Project Title and Description
    - #4 Challenges: Changes
  + Requirements & Design Doc:
    - #1 Overview
    - #2 Functional Requirements for the coin
    - #3 Non-functional Requirements: 1-5
  + Worked on the Source Code for the Coin and all code associated with it.
  + Made the “Changes” portion of the video
* ***Zak:***
  + Progress Report:
    - #3 Accomplishments and project status during this increment
    - #6 Plans for next increment: Enemies
  + Requirements & Design Doc:
    - #2 Functional Requirements for the Enemy
    - #4/5 Use Case and Class diagrams: specifically, parts related to the enemy/enemy\_sentinel
    - #6 Operating Environment
  + Worked on Source Code for all the enemies and the player attacks/health
* ***John:***
  + Progress Report:
    - #3 Accomplishments and project status during this increment
    - #4 Things that went wrong: Button resizing
    - #6 Plans for the next increment: UI
    - #7 Stakeholder Communication
  + Requirements & Design Doc:
    - #2 Functional Requirements for the Main Menu, Pause Button, and Pause Menu
    - #3 Non-functional Requirements: 6 & 7
  + Worked on the Source Code for showing the Game Over menu and getting the Retry button to take the player to the beginning of the scene
  + Implemented a Main Menu, Pause Menu, and Pause Button
  + Made the “General Overview” portion of the video
* ***Taj:***
  + Progress Report:
    - #8 Video Link
  + Requirements & Design Doc:
    - #2 Functional Requirements for the Player
  + Created GitHub repository
  + Worked on the Source Code for player movement and animations
  + Made the “Demo” portion of the video
  + Provided OneDrive share to house all document templates for edit by group members
* ***Taylor:***
  + Progress Report:
    - #3 Accomplishments and project status during this increment
    - #4 Things that went wrong: Git Intergration
  + Requirements & Design Doc:
    - #2 Functional Requirements for Map. Helped design all the levels, implemented the tilesets necessary for each level, and added music to enhance user experience.
  + Worked on the Source Code for the Map and all code associated with it.
  + Made the “Increment Overview 3” portion of the video

**\*\*The Implementation and Testing Document was worked on by all of us during a meeting\*\***

1. **Plans for the next increment**

*This is the last increment, so no more plans for a next increment.*

1. **Stakeholder Communication**

Dear Stakeholders,

To show our gratitude for your support throughout the development process of this project, the team behind Ascend: Path of No Return wishes to provide you with an update on the current status of the game as the launch date quickly approaches. Since we are reaching the end stages of development, our team’s focus has been on expanding the core functionality and features within the game, while also making any necessary adjustments to align the mechanics with our vision for a Metroidvania-inspired RPG and platformer-style game within the given timeframe.

During this phase of development, the goal of our team was to implement a greater amount of gameplay elements to expand upon the demo we showed you last time. Some of the primary accomplishments we’ve made so far include:

**The Storyline:** We’ve crafted a storyline that immerses players in the lore of the Ascend universe, providing context for their journey and objectives. This narrative is woven seamlessly into the gameplay, enhancing engagement and motivation.

**New Features:**

* **Exploration Expansion:** We’ve significantly expanded the game map, introducing new areas with unique themes, challenges, and hidden secrets. These additions ensure a richer and more varied exploration experience.
* **Improved Player Mechanics:** The player’s movement and combat capabilities have been fine-tuned to deliver smoother interactions and a more dynamic feel.
* **Enhanced Enemy Interactions:** Enemies now exhibit more complex behaviors, creating engaging and strategic encounters.
* **Item Collection and Interaction:** Players can now discover and collect a broader variety of items, enhancing the reward system and sense of progression.
* **Menu Improvements:** The user interface has been polished to provide a more intuitive and visually appealing experience. Menus are now better adapted to different window sizes, addressing earlier issues.

As with any project, some challenges arose and prompted a shift in our focus toward what needs to be addressed during the following development phase. Such challenges include:

* **Game genre and style**: Initially, we wanted to incorporate rogue-like elements into the game, but after evaluating the scope of the project, and the amount of time and work that would be required, we decided to pivot and focus on the Metroidvania aspects of the game. This allowed us to refine the map as a single, explorable world rather than needing to implement the randomized levels commonly found in rogue-like games. We will, however, be implementing differently themed areas within the map to provide a more expansive player experience.
* **Menu screen issues**: The buttons on the different menus currently do not change to reflect the window size, making them appear too large or small depending on the size of the window.
* **Shop System:** Initially planned to provide players with a place to trade collected items for upgrades and gear, this feature will instead be part of a post-launch update.
* **Additional Mini-Games and Side Quests:** Although these were part of our original vision, they will be introduced in future expansions to maintain our timeline and focus on delivering a polished core experience.

Overall, our team had put in our best effort to shape Ascend: Path of No Return into a game we can be proud of. While some challenges emerged, we are confidently looking toward the future and already have plans for upcoming features to implement that couldn’t be adopted before the game’s launch. Be excited for updated game mechanics, more intense combat and story quests, and an in-game shop.

Thank you for your continued support, and we hope you enjoy our game.

Best regards,

*Ascend: Path of No Return* Development Team

1. **Link to video**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQYwzy7ONyc**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQYwzy7ONyc)