
GAM 4492-01
COLLABORATIVE GAME DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT
T/TH 1:35 PM – 3:15 PM
SPRING 2022 SYLLABUS AND COURSE CALENDAR

Classroom: NQSC 125C
Instructor: Brian Heagney
Office: NQSC 331

| Professor Heagney's Office Hours | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| 3:10 – 4:10 PM | 12:45 – 1:30 PM 3:15 – 4:00 PM | 3:10 – 4:10 PM | 12:45 – 1:30 PM 3:15 – 4:00 PM | |

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LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/brianheagney/

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Capstone experience in the Game and Interactive Media Design sequence. In teams, students will work across and outside of typical production roles in order to design, prototype, and iterate a digital game. Prerequisites: Senior standing and GAM 3352. Four credits.

FLEX-CLAUSE

Due to the nature of holding University classes during a national pandemic, I am reserving the right for any part of this course to change based on pressures from anything related to COVID-19. This includes any issues faced by students in this course, but also issues faced by myself, the instructor.

I am making it my mission to deliver the content to you, the student, and if we need to be flexible in the face of a pandemic, we will do what it takes to get through any obstacles thrown in our way.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

| Student Learning Outcomes: | By the end of the course, students should be able to: | Method for Assessing this Learning Outcome |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| | Plan actions and develop solutions for designing and developing digital video games | Pitch, Alpha, Beta |
| | Link data to decision making and/or advocacy | Pitch, Alpha |
| | Develop media technology skills | All Assignments |
| | Create professional quality visual and/or audio materials | Portfolios, Beta, Gold |
| | Work well in groups with the ability to communicate efficiently with different roles on the team. | Increments, Pitch, Alpha, Beta, Gold |
| | Prepare and present game content to general and diverse audiences. | Portfolios, High-PURCS, Gold |

TEXTBOOKS AND REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- **NO TEXTBOOK**—There is no required reading for this course.
- A **USB flash drive 16GB** (or higher). Every student's storage space will differ. Some students have used 10 GB, some students have used much more. If you are saving your builds for your game on a weekly basis, you may need a lot of storage space. Bring your data/game/assets to every class to work on and show me.
- **Software/Computer Labs** – There will be some use of digital software for this class, all of which are installed on the computers in NQSC 125C (The Game Lab). It is expected that you will have to organize your time accordingly to use this software, ensuring that you schedule time to work in the Game Lab when there is not another class going on.

Every student team will decide to produce its digital video game using the software of their choice, it is up to the student team to ensure that the professor will have access to the files and have a way to examine and play its game.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- **Increments (15% of grade)** – Students will actively participate in the creation of a digital video game. Participation includes both the creation of content as well as communication with the development group. To assess this, I will be assigning weekly increments of each group game, which will be assessed individually based on the work each student contributes to the game's increment.
- **LinkedIn (5% of grade)** - All students are required to have an updated (current) LinkedIn profile that is strategically designed to showcase themselves for potential employment in the field of their choice.
- **Game Design Portfolio (5% of grade)** – All students are required to have an updated (current) game design portfolio that shows their best work in an easy-to-navigate online platform such as Wix. This is the student's choice but there will be general guidelines that students must follow.
- **Pitch and Prototype (15% of grade)** – Students will spend the first portion of the semester developing a high-fidelity playable prototype and a pitch to present for critique.
- **Alpha (Mid-Term) (15% of grade)** – By mid-term, student groups will have a playable game with key gameplay features and functionality and with stand-in assets.

As logistics will allow, a panel of faculty and others will choose a game at this point to represent HPU at a designated game design conference. Students who developed chosen game will have a chance to attend this conference. (Subject to change)

- **Beta (15% of grade)** – All games must be feature and asset complete well before the end of the semester. This ensures there is plenty of time for beta testing to fix bugs, as well as time to build and perfect web presence with images, videos, and other final touches.
- **High-PURCS (15% of grade)** - All student are required to develop and present an oral presentation on their specialization (or game development topic of choice) at High-PURCS on Tuesday, April 12, 2021, during High Point University's All Student Honor's Day. Presentations will require a well-prepared slideshow to accompany the oral presentation.
- **Gold Master and Closing Kit (15% of grade)** – At the end of the semester, students are required to have finished a complete video game. Students are required to host the game on a website (such as itch.io) that includes gameplay images, gameplay videos, descriptions, credits, and a packaged and playable version of their game.

Additionally, students are required to submit a closing kit comprising of ALL content created that over the course of the semester, including all game engine files, as well as all files including 3D models, of content created in photoshop, inkscape, animate, maya, blender, or any other content editor.

EXPECTATIONS FOR OUT-OF-CLASS WORK

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| Out-of-Class Work: | In addition to attending class and completing all course requirements, students are expected to spend at least 2 hours each week engaged in out-of class work (i.e., reading, studying, doing homework, working on projects, etc.) for every hour of credit earned in this course. |
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According to HPU's accreditation guidelines, for every 1 hour of credit earned in a course, students are expected to spend at least 2 hours each week engaged in out-of-class work (i.e., reading, studying, doing homework, working on projects, etc.). Therefore, in a 4-credit course, students are expected to commit an average of at least eight hours per week outside of class. (In a 2-credit course that meets for half of the semester, you are still expected to commit to an average of eight hours per week.) The estimates listed below reflect the out-of-class time expectations for a typical student – some students might need more or less time on these assignments.

- LinkedIn / Portfolio – approx. 10 hrs out of class
- Increments - approx. 7 hrs out of class
- Pitch / Prototype – approx. 18 hrs out of class
- Alpha (Mid-term) – approx. 32 hrs out of class
- Beta – approx. 32 hrs out of class
- High-PURCS – approx. 12 hrs out of class
- Gold Master & Closing Kit – approx. 16 hrs out of class

FORMING GROUPS

All students will form into groups of no more than 6 students from the class (there can be more than 6 if that number includes outsourcing help). Students may self-select their own groups, but the instructor of the course reserves all rights to REMOVE or ADD students to any group the instructor wishes.

SO YOU'VE BEEN FIRED...

The instructor of the course reserves all rights to REMOVE any underperforming student from any group. The instructor may do this with or against the majority of the group's wishes.

Any student removed in this way can either choose to join a new group (if there is a group that needs or wants help) OR the instructor may match this student up with any other student(s) who have also been removed from their group(s).

DEADLINES

See School of Communication policy at end of this document (short version = late work loses one letter grade per day; no late work is accepted after three days).

GRADING

Grades are assigned as follows (there is no “rounding” of grades):

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A (superior) – superior quality (90-100%) | B (excellent) – clearly above average (80-89%) | C (average) satisfactory work (70-79%) | D (inferior) – good enough to credit (60-69%) | F (failure) –work fails to meet the minimum expectations (0-59.9%) |
| A+ (97 - 100) | B+ (87 - 89.9) | C+ (77 - 79.9) | D+ (67 - 69.9) | F (0-59.9%) |
| A (93 - 96.9) | B (83 - 86.9) | C (73 - 76.9) | D (63 - 66.9) | |
| A-(90 - 92.9) | B-(80 - 82.9) | C-(70 - 72.9) | D-(60 - 62.9) | |

Please note that simply completing all required elements of an assignment does not entitle you to an A. Acceptable work of average quality earns a C. You must go above average expectations to receive an above average grade. This mimics the professional world of communication, where basic proficiency might get you in the door at the entry level, but creative thinking and a willingness to go beyond the minimum expectations are necessary to get noticed and advance.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

All students in the school of Communication are required to develop a digital portfolio on their LinkedIn page. The digital portfolio is an online collection of the work you've done during your time at High Point University.

In addition to the LinkedIn profile, all students enrolled in this class are required to maintain a game design portfolio on a website such as Wix.com. While you will be developing a portfolio piece in this course, realize that you do NOT need to wait until the game is finished before adding it to your portfolio.

WRITING STYLES

Professional work should be written in the latest revisions of the Associated Press (AP) Style Manuals for print and broadcast. (Yes, AP also has a style manual for broadcast.) The School requires academic papers to be written in the latest revision of the American Psychological Association (APA) style. If you're unfamiliar with this style, please see the Chair or the Dean. Other academic styles are not accepted unless the student work is written for a publication or event that requires a different format. Having students learn multiple writing styles only confuses them.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

After two unexcused absences you will receive a Probation Notice. After a fifth absence you will be dropped from the class. Exceptions will only be granted for university-sanctioned events (with prior notice) or hospitalization (with a doctor's note). Tardies are also unacceptable. Be on time. Better yet, be early. Two tardies will equal an absence. Students will not be permitted to make up grades for work missed due to an unexcused absence or tardy.

COPYRIGHT, PLAGIARISM, AND CHEATING

Each of you signed the HPU Honor Code and it is your responsibility to abide by it. Cheating or plagiarism can result in failure for the course. Theft of intellectual property (such as images, audio, or video) is equivalent to plagiarism. See the School of Communication policies on plagiarism and copyright at the end of this document.

On occasion, the professor will provide media/materials for use in class. These materials may include photos, video/audio files, scripts, and design templates. These items are copyrighted (by the professor and others) and may only be used in classroom exercises as specified by the professor. Consequently, students may not use media supplied by the professor in their projects unless they have been given permission to do so. Student projects containing unauthorized material provided by the professor may be penalized or disqualified. Students also may not share, distribute, or post online any media that contains media elements provided by the professor.

In addition, the professor holds the copyright on all course materials including lectures, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, video/audio media, etc. Consequently, course sessions and materials cannot be recorded, copied, or distributed in any form without the written permission of the professor.

Plagiarism involves copying the work of others and/or representing it as your own without attribution. Students should not use any media created by another student or outside entity (e.g. downloaded online) in their assignments without prior permission from the professor. In addition, students should not copy edited sequences, documents, sessions, or projects and represent them as their own. Incidents of copyright infringement and plagiarism will be treated as University Honor Code violations.

GRADE APPEAL

If a student has a complaint or concern about a faculty member regarding a grade, they should first try to resolve it with the instructor in question. If the complaint is not resolved through this interaction, the student should then go to the Department Chair. If the instructor of the course also serves as a Chair, then the student should approach the Dean as the first step in the process.

For this course, a student should pursue the following process:

1. Talk with the instructor of the course,
2. Talk with Dr. Stefan Hall who serves as the Chair of the Nido R. Qubein School of Communication's Game Design department.

The decision of the Chair/Dean is final.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a student has a complaint or concern about a faculty member regarding any matter other than a grade, they should first try to resolve it with the instructor in question. If the complaint is not resolved through this interaction, the student should then go to:

1. the Department Chair;
2. the Dean of the School of Communication; then
3. the Senior Vice-President of Academic Affairs, which is the final step in the grievance process.

Bypassing any of these steps—going directly to the president, for example—will not resolve the issue and will only delay resolution. Senior administration will not deal with grievance issue unless it has been discussed at the appropriate level.

For this course, a student should pursue the following process:

1. Talk with the instructor of the course.
2. Talk with Dr. Stefan Hall who serves as the Core Courses Coordinator of the Nido R. Qubein School of Communication.
3. Talk with Dr. McDermott, who serves as the Dean of the Nido R. Qubein School of Communication.
4. Talk with Dr. Bauer, who serves as the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs of High Point University.

The decision of the Senior Vice President is final.

STARFISH SYLLABUS STATEMENT

High Point University cares about your success!

This course is part of a HPU initiative that utilizes Starfish Connect, a communication tool for students and faculty. Through Starfish, instructors, coaches, and advisors provide feedback to you about course progress by emailing you about your academic performance. The emails are designed to be helpful by identifying strategies that increase your success in courses. Be sure to open any emails you receive and follow the recommendations.

Your instructor, coach, or advisor may also recommend that you contact a specific campus resource, such as the Learning Lab or Counseling Center. If an instructor makes a referral, you may also be contacted directly by this campus service as a follow--up.

Starfish also allows you to schedule appointments with various offices and individuals across campus and request help on a variety of topics.

BLACKBOARD **BLACKBOARD** **BLACKBOARD** **BLACKBOARD** **BLACKBOARD**

I am a self-avowed blackboard nut and evangelist. I use blackboard for all of my class administration, and therefore you MUST use blackboard as well. If you have never used Blackboard before, it will become your friend. If Blackboard is already your friend, you will become BFFs. If you dislike Blackboard, then please come see me and I will evangelize to you appropriately. The following is how I use Blackboard:

Assignments: All assignments will be hosted and explained in Blackboard. Every major assignment will have a rubric attached to it in Blackboard, which will help you understand how I will grade your submissions.

For every assignment, you MUST submit something through Blackboard. If you complete an assignment and do not submit it to Blackboard, it is as if you have not completed it and it will be counted as late.

Assignment Calendar: Blackboard has an amazing assignment calendar associated with it. When you go to the Blackboard assignment calendar, you will be able to see EVERY assignment and quiz that is assigned so you won't ever forget!

Syllabus: This syllabus will also be hosted on Blackboard.

Blackboard is Master: Blackboard assignment dates and descriptions take precedence over all dates/descriptions on this syllabus.

Problems with Blackboard: Please contact **IT IMMEDIATELY** if you do not have access to our class blackboard page. I cannot help you, only IT can help you. It is your responsibility to remedy the problem ASAP so you can participate in the course.

HOLLYWOOD

In addition to uploading major assignment submissions through blackboard, you will be expected to transfer all of your working files to the School of Communication "Hollywood" server. Instructions for transferring to Hollywood server will be found on Blackboard.

While Blackboard will be used for uploading a final compressed version of a project, Hollywood will be used to show me your ENTIRE project folder. You will transfer a major project folder which will include any number of subfolders containing all of the appropriate files (images, audio clips, video clips, etc.).

You WILL NOT use the Hollywood server in place of a jump drive: your folder in the Hollywood server will remain organized with only the appropriate folders and subfolders corresponding to our major assignments.

Additionally, you WILL NOT work directly from the Hollywood server. If you absolutely need to work on a file that is in your Hollywood folder, you MUST transfer all appropriate files to your hard drive and work on them from there. Every time a student has worked directly from the Hollywood server, problems have arisen and it is easier to just work directly from the hard drive of the computer you are working on.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This is a tentative schedule that is subject to change. Details for each week's assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

| Week | Day | Date | Topic | To Do (Before Class) | Estimated Hours |
|-------|----------|------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Tuesday | 1/11 | Pitch Prototype | | Pitch / Prototype: 8 hrs |
| | Thursday | 1/13 | | | |
| 2 | Tuesday | 1/18 | | | Pitch / Prototype: 6 hrs Portfolio: 2 hrs |
| | Thursday | 1/20 | | | |
| 3 | Tuesday | 1/25 | | | Pitch / Prototype: 4 hrs Alpha: 2 hrs Portfolio: 2 hrs |
| | Thursday | 1/27 | | Pitch Prototype due beginning of class | |
| 4 | Tuesday | 2/1 | Alpha | | Alpha: 6 hrs Portfolio: 2 hrs |
| | Thursday | 2/3 | | | |
| 5 | Tuesday | 2/8 | | Portfolio Reviews: I will be reviewing people's portfolios in class. | Alpha: 8 hrs |
| | Thursday | 2/10 | | | |
| 6 | Tuesday | 2/15 | | | Alpha: 8 hrs |
| | Thursday | 2/17 | | | |
| 7 | Tuesday | 2/22 | | | Alpha: 8 hrs |
| | Thursday | 2/24 | | Mid-term review of Game Alpha Due | |
| BREAK | Tuesday | 3/1 | | | |
| | Thursday | 3/3 | | | |

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| 8 | Tuesday | 3/8 | Beta | | High-PURCS: 1 hrs LinkedIn: 1 hrs Beta: 6 hrs |
| | Thursday | 3/10 | | | |
| 9 | Tuesday | 3/15 | | Abstracts for High-PURCS Due | High-PURCS: 1 hrs LinkedIn: 1 hrs Beta: 6 hrs |
| | Thursday | 3/17 | | | |
| 10 | Tuesday | 3/22 | | | High-PURCS: 1 hrs LinkedIn: 1 hrs Beta: 6 hrs |
| | Thursday | 3/24 | | | |
| 11 | Tuesday | 3/29 | | | High-PURCS: 1 hrs LinkedIn: 1 hrs Beta: 6 hrs |
| | Thursday | 3/31 | | LinkedIn / Portfolios due | |
| 12 | Tuesday | 4/5 | | | High-PURCS: 4 hrs Beta: 4 hrs |
| | Thursday | 4/7 | | | |
| 13 | Tuesday | 4/12 | | HONORS DAY High-PURCS Oral Presentation | High-PURCS: 4 hrs Beta: 4 hrs |
| | Thursday | 4/14 | Gold / Publish / Closing Kit | Beta Due | |
| 14 | Tuesday | 4/19 | | ECGC | Gold / Closing: 8 hrs |
| | Thursday | 4/21 | | ECGC | |
| 15 | Tuesday | 4/26 | | Gold / Closing Kit due | Gold / Closing: 8 hrs |
| Exam Block | Monday May 2 8 am - 11 am | Present & Play Games | | | |

School of Communication Policies, Practices and Expectations

Students are expected to adhere to all standards outlined in the School of Communication's Policies, Practices, and Expectations (located at http://www.highpoint.edu/communication/files/nqsc_syllabus_policies.pdf) unless alternate standards are specifically outlined elsewhere in this syllabus.