DigiPen Spring 2016

MGT451: Product Management

Instructor: Christin Overton
Class Hours: Tuesday 6:00-8:50PM, Descartes
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Course Description

This course provides an in-depth examination of theories, techniques and issues while considering how real-world challenges affect projects. Lectures will cover various aspects of product management including leadership, marketing, budgeting, project planning, contract and legal, people management, and many other project considerations. The course will include weekly exercises and interactions that explore challenges of dealing with the realities of project management.

Welcome to Reality Games and running your first project. The course is taught as a combined lecture, discussion and assignment that incorporates a peer feedback review cycle with a focus on increasing awareness of how game projects evolve and come to fruition.

Each week a topic will be discussed or presented via guest lecture that will be integrated into the Wheel of Reality assignments covering game impacting events such as Money, People, Tech, Logistics and Wild Card. Each Wheel of Reality event assignment comes from real-world events gathered from experienced game and industry professionals.

The class will be divided into 3 segments:

- Wheel of Reality Event Discussion and Peer Feedback
- Topic Discussion/Guest Lecture
- Wheel of Reality Assignment and Expectations Discussion

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Gain a broad overview of the game development lifecycle and the events that can influence the outcome of a project.

2. Understand concepts such as project planning, managing risk, budgets, leadership and more.

4. Understand an initial project "pitch process" and the elements that should be explored as part of creating a pitch.

5. Gain awareness of the legal issues that can impact a project including managing Intellectual Property, licensing, contracts and contractors.

7. Recognize different types of production processes and "tools" and understand their impact and value.

8. Gain an understanding of how teams are organized and nurtured, communications within and without the production team and "externals", and learn what are some of the common problems that teams engaged in the development of entertainment products may face.

9. Develop an understanding of elements "outside" the development process than impact project success including community, events, localization, marketing, PR and monetization.

10. Provide awareness of the impact of a broad variety of events that can impact your project – positively and negatively – and provide tools for evaluation and support of the path beyond them.

Course Requirements

Class attendance and participation policy:

Attendance is mandatory and each class has a participation element that makes up 25% part of each week's Wheel of Reality event assignment and potential participation bonus points. If a student is not in class to participate in the peer feedback element, the maximum point value for the assignment will be reduced to reflect that.

See the Late Policy for additional information on submitting assignments after the due date.

Tentative Class Calendar

* May change to accommodate guest presenter or student need

Week	Date	Topic	Phase	Assignment Due	Assignment
1	1/5	Class Intro & Project Kick-off	Intro/Overview	N/A	Project Kick-off
2	1/12	Budgets & Funding	Pre-production	Project Kick-off	WoR 1
3	1/19	Schedules, Risks & Obstacles	Pre-production	WoR 1	WoR 2
4	1/26	Business Basics & Impact	Pre-production	WoR 2	WoR 3
5	2/2	Legal, Contracts, & Business Relationships	Production	WoR 3	WoR 4
6	2/9	Analytics & Metrics	Production	WoR 4	WoR 5
7	2/16	Leadership, Execution & Control	Production	WoR 5	WoR 6
8	2/23	Status & Reporting	Production	WoR 6	WoR 7
9	3/2	Meetings & Presentations	Production	WoR 7	WoR 8/Sign-up for Resource Pitch slot
10	3/9	**Resource Pitch**	Production	WoR 8	WoR 9
Off	3/16	Spring Break		N/A	N/A
11	3/23	Demos, Shows and Release Countdown	Production	WoR 9	WoR 10
12	3/29	People & Awareness	Production	WoR 10	WoR 11
13	4/5	Executive Perspective	Launch/Live	WoR 11	WoR 12/Sign-up for Project Postmortem slots
14	4/12	**Project Postmortems Presentations - Session #1**	Launch/Live	WoR 12	Project Postmortems (limited)
Final	TBD	**Project Postmortems Presentations – Session #2**			Project Postmortems

Grading Policy

The grading scale is based on simple model with all students starting the class with a "C" and can maintain that grade by completing and submitting assignments that meet the base requirements and participating in assignment peer reviews. During each class the instructor will grant bonuses or subtract penalties from 0-5 points of based on a participation, interaction and reaction criteria (+1% is good, +2% is great, +3% or more is exceptional).

- Bonuses can be earned for awareness, insights, participation, focusing feedback on the issue not the person giving it, constructive criticism, and class engagement.
- Penalties given for lack of professionalism, lack of respect for opinions and feedback, negative interactions/responses to feedback, and non-participation.

Rank	Grade	Percentage
5	A	90%
4	B	80%
3	C	70%
2	D	60%
1	F	50%

Assignment Breakdown

ITEM	Assignment	%
1	Project Kick-off – Pitch & Plan	10%
2	Wheel of Reality Event & Peer Feedback (x12)	2% & 1% each week
3	Resource Pitch	10%
4	Project Postmortem & Peer Feedback	15% & 5%
5	Participation and Interaction	+/- 0% to 5% each week

Project Kick-off will consist of two parts based on the project intro detail provided by the instructor:

- Project Pitch – a game project intro that fits on *one side of one page* and includes:
  - 3-5 bullet points about the game features
  - 2-3 short paragraphs about the game and its target audience
  - 1-2 picture that captures the idea/mechanic of the game
- Project Plan: A section, *of no more than 1 page,* covering each of the following:
  - Project Detail – basic info about the project
  - Money – rough budget breakdown
  - People – staffing breakdown
  - Tech – device overview & impact
  - Logistics – workspace impact
  - Wild Card – rough feature roadmap

Wheel of Reality Event Assignments are 12 weekly assignments (starting in week 2) submitted in electronic form **before** the start of class using the Wheel of Reality (WoR) form (see Moodle). Students are expected to bring a hard copy to class to gather feedback as part of the participation and structured

peer feedback segment. Peer feedback will be provided using the WoR Peer Feedback form (see Moodle). WoR assignments are to be handed in at the completion of the first segment of the class along with the notes the feedback segment and the WoR peer feedback from the WoR event group.

Resource Pitches will take place during week 10 and consist of a 3-minute resource request pitch presentation and 2 minutes of feedback from the Resource Request Review Panel. Students will need to sign-up for a Pitch slot during week 9 of class. Resource Pitches will follow the same format as the Wheel of Reality assignments with presentation and feedback segments contributing to the final grade.

Postmortem Presentations will take place during week 14 and 15. A bonus of 3 points will be granted to those students who elect to present during Presentation Session #1 which will have a limited number of slots (to be announced during Week 13). Postmortem Presentations will follow the same format as the Wheel of Reality assignments with assignment presentation and peer feedback segments contributing to the final grade.

Late Policy

Assignments will be accepted late if the student has contacted the instructor in advance of missing the class in which the assignment is due. The highest achievable grade for a late submission is dependent on the assignment type:

- The Project Pitch will have a maximum available 50 points.
- Wheel of Reality assignments will have a maximum available 15 points due to lack of participating in the peer feedback segment (10 points).
- The Resource Pitch will have a maximum available 30 points due to lack of the presentation element (20 points) unless the student takes the initiative to schedule a make-up presentation.
- The Project Postmortem assignment will have a maximum available 75 points due to lack of participating in the peer feedback segment.

Recommended Resources

- **Adapt: Why Success Always Starts with Failure** by Tim Harford
  http://www.amazon.com/Adapt-Success-Always-Starts-Failure/dp/B0085RZFAU
- **The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations** by James M. Kouzes & Barry Z. Posner http://www.amazon.com/Leadership-Challenge-Extraordinary-Things-Organizations/dp/0470651725
- **Please Understand Me II: Temperament, Character, Intelligence** by David Keirsey
  http://www.amazon.com/Please-Understand-Temperament-Character-Intelligence/dp/1885705026
- **So What?: How to Communicate What Really Matters to Your Audience** by Mark Magnacca
  http://www.amazon.com/So-What-Communicate-Matters-Audience/dp/0137158262
- **Running Lean: Iterate from Plan A to a Plan That Works** by Ash Maurya
  http://www.amazon.com/Running-Lean-Iterate-Works-Series/dp/1449305172
- **Human Factors in Project Management: Concepts, Tools, and Techniques for Inspiring Teamwork and Motivation** by Zachary Wong PhD http://www.amazon.com/Human-Factors-Project-Management-Techniques/dp/0787996297

- **Effective Project Management: Traditional, Agile, Extreme 7th Edition** by Robert K. Wysocki http://www.amazon.com/Effective-Project-Management-Traditional-Extreme/dp/1118729161
- **Identifying and Managing Project Risk: Essential Tools for Failure-Proofing Your Project** by Tom Kendrick http://www.amazon.com/Identifying-Managing-Project-Risk-Failure-Proofing/dp/0814436080
- **Principles of Contracting for Project Management** by Yamping Chen & J. Davison Frame http://www.amazon.com/Principles-Contracting-Project-Management-2nd/dp/0972672990
- **Project Quality Management: Why, What and How 2nd Edition** by Kenneth H. Rose http://www.amazon.com/Project-Quality-Management-What-Second/dp/1604271027
- **Constructing Effective Criticism: How to Give, Receive, and Seek Productive and Constructive Criticism in Our Lives** by Randy Garner PhD http://www.amazon.com/Constructing-Effective-Criticism-Productive-Constructive/dp/0977499715
- **Executing Data Quality Projects: Ten Steps to Quality Data and Trusted Information** by Danette McGilvray http://www.amazon.com/Executing-Data-Quality-Projects-Information/dp/0123743699

Additional Resources

- Taking Constructive Criticism Like a Champ http://www.forbes.com/sites/dailymuse/2012/11/07/taking-constructive-criticism-like-a-champ/
- Agile Purpose http://agilepurpose.com/resources/

Instructor Bio

Christin Overton has spent almost 20 years working on software and web development projects as a project manager and producer. With 10 years as a producer building teams and video games with credits on 18 games from *Geometry War: Retro Evolved* to *Marvel Super Hero Squad* to *Gigantic*, her focus has been on improving the processes and sanity around releasing video games. She has provided production support at all levels and disciplines covering art, user interface, game systems, design, platforms and live services while fulfilling roles in system design, architecture, web design, content creation, legal, and user experience - expanded responsibilities that provide her a boarder awareness of what it takes to successfully release a product.

Christin currently works as a Scrum Master and Agile Coach overseeing the Agile research and development teams on the part of the Agile Operations organization as part of Concur's agile transformation. Christin attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks as a dual degree Honors Program student focusing on International Business and History. She as a degree in History with a focus on the Pacific Rim and minor in Japanese from University of Alaska Fairbanks, is currently a Certified Scrum Master and Certified Scrum Professional, and has been practicing Agile development principles for 9 years. Christin serves as an Adjunct Professor at Digipen Institute of Technology teaching Product Management.

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in this course. Cheating, copying, plagiarizing, or any other form of academic dishonesty (including doing someone else's individual assignments) will

result in, at the extreme minimum, a zero on the assignment in question, and could result in a failing grade in the course or even expulsion from DigiPen.

Disabled Student Services

If students have disabilities and will need formal accommodations in order to fully participate or effectively demonstrate learning in this class, program, or activities, they should contact the Disability Support Services Office at (425)629-5015 or dss@digipen.edu. 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.