

Throughout this course, I feel that I finally took my first step into experiencing what could potentially be waiting for me after college. One of the possible career paths that is most interesting to me at the moment is the video game production industry. This course, I feel, gave me a good look into the thought process behind making a game, and how those ideas are turned into a finished, functioning game. The idea of making small, individual components and mechanics and adding them all together for a finished product was totally new to me. When we were making parts such as turrets, and abilities for the player to use, testing them was like no other computer science class I have ever taken before. Being able to fully manipulate and interact with a virtual turret that I was a part of creating was so much more impressive to me than running the programs I had written previously. This has a lot to do with actually having a visual product as opposed to text output in a terminal. When we came together to plan for the creation of EpicMan, I loved bouncing ideas off everyone for things such as power-ups that we could make. Taking these ideas and assigning everyone a few to make and implement was exactly what I imagined it would be and I loved every step. Trying out the speed boost power-up for example was a lot of fun, because after running it through some basic tests, we then got together and discussed the particulars of its final implementation; i.e. how much of a boost it would provide, and how long it would last. The independent developing of the power and the collaborative brainstorming surrounding it was a really fun process that I really enjoyed being a part of. In terms of the different coding methods we used, I found Blueprint to be a fresh new look at the process, and I like how accessible it is to almost anyone. I did feel like it was a bit more

constraining to not be actually writing direct code as I am used to. C++ was a struggle for me to grasp initially, as it is by far the lowest level language I have worked with. I had a hard time particularly trying to learn small nuances. For example, in my Pi Estimator, I used `rand()` to generate random numbers. However I had not noticed that this was producing the *exact* same numbers every single time it was run. I later found out that instead I would have to call `srand(time(NULL))` to generate my random numbers properly. In addition to this, it was very interesting working with arrays from which you cannot get their length. This especially came into effect when Edward and I worked on the C++ Text RPG, more recently dubbed the Edrian RPG. Because of how difficult we were finding arrays to work with, we decided to store character data in vectors instead. I was fascinated by how simple it was to change the different playable characters and add to or remove them. In summary, I really felt like this was a great learning experience that left me wanting to get into even deeper in the game design industry.