G290 GAME INTERFACE & EXPERIENCE DESIGN

FALL 2018

LOCATION— Franklin Hall 052
SECTION 31892 — Meets MW 04:00P – 05:15P
INSTRUCTOR — Nic Aguirre — naguirre@indiana.edu
OFFICE HOURS — Franklin Hall 030M (Basement), Friday 10:00A – 11:00A

Description

In G290, students will focus on designing interfaces and control schemes that deliver rewarding gameplay experience. Students will design attractive and usable interfaces, as well as intelligent and sensible control schemes, with focus on meeting the needs of players. Visual design such as typography and iconography will be used to create an immersive and welcoming environment for players. Students will employ tests to find issues with a game's interface, control scheme, and other design aspects that affect gameplay. While this course is intended for game designers, its principles of interface design are broad enough to help designers from other disciplines such as web and software development.

Pre-requisites

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ILS-Z399 Introduction to Game Programming
 - or -
C210 Intro to Programming
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Objectives

This course is designed to change the way that students see game interfaces. Students will be challenged to think critically about how their gaming experiences are affected by interface design. The goal is for students to leave with a strong understanding of what constitutes an aesthetic and usable game interface, and the skills to design and implement one.

In this course, you will:

- Learn principles of usability
- Learn best practices for interface design

- Build, test and refine game interfaces
- Design and create interface elements such as buttons, sliders, icons and splash sceens
- Assemble elements into interfaces such as menus, navigation, and inventory systems
- Learn visual design principles such as color schemes, typography and fonts, and how to size and position elements
- Learn how to create pleasant interactions through intuitive menus and hotkeys

Work

Use of Class Time

This class is project-driven, and demands consistent effort inside and outside of the classroom. Classes are intended to be variable and may feature lectures, tutorials, in-class exercises, discussions and lab time. An effort is made to create a more interactive and less passive experience for students.

Projects (60 pts.)

This class features **four** large-scale design projects.

Project 1— Lo-fi Interface (15 pts.)

Given a concept, students will generate a low-fidelity prototype for a game.

Project 2— Hi-fidelity Assets (15 pts.)

Given an existing interface, students will use Adobe Illustrator, or any other visual design software, to create a set of interface assets *(e.g., buttons, sliders, navigation)*

Project 3— Re-design (15 pts.)

Given a scenario, students will improve on an existing design.

Project 4— Design System (15 pts.)

I am flexible about this assignment; it can be anything that applies what we've learned in class. Here are some ideas:

Option 1— Create a design language

Students will create a style guide that informs an intelligent, harmonious visual design for a game.

Option 2— Create an asset pack

Students who are already working on a game are encouraged to use this class project to create or re-invision their game's interface assets.

Homework (30 pts.)

This class has homework assignments designed to test and reinforce knowledge from class.

Participation (5 pts.)

Participation is an important element of this class. It is not enough to read about usability and interface design; one must actively practice and hone their skills to be successful. Many of our classes will focus on the completion of certain exercises, tutorials, and discussions. Most class days will feature a small participation exercise. They are to be finished during class and are generally graded on completion.

Professionalism (5 pts.)

Students are expected to behave like adults. Unprofessional behavior will be met with a grade deduction in this category.

Unprofessional behavior includes (but is not limited to):

- Repeated tardiness
- Failure to observe course policies
- Disrespect towards classmates or instructor
- Lack of consideration for classmates or instructor
- Any behavior that distracts classmates or instructor
- Failure to practice academic integrity
- Excessive use of cell phone during class

Professional behavior includes:

- Being attentive and engaged
- Participating in class
- Keeping up with coursework and the class schedule
- Being respectful and courteous towards other students and instructor

Final

There is no final exam for this class.

Grading

Points

There are a total of **100** points in this class. The grade is divided as follows:

Assignment	Points
Project 1	15
Project 2	15
Project 3	15
Project 4	15
Homeworks	30
Participation	5
Professionalism	5
Total	**100**

Course Grade

Your grade will be assigned as follows:

Grade	Range
A+	100% to 97.0%
A	< 97.0% to 93.0%
A-	< 93.0% to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0% to 87.0%
B	< 87.0% to 83.0%
B-	< 83.0% to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0% to 77.0%
C	< 77.0% to 73.0%
C-	< 73.0% to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0% to 67.0%
D	< 67.0% to 63.0%
D-	< 63.0% to 60.0%
F	< 60.0% to 0.0%

Grading criteria will be given for each individual assignment.

Revisions

When design work is created in a professional environment, changes and revisions are common. Factoring that game development is an iterative process, students are **sometimes** allowed to revise and resubmit assignments. Re-submitting work is a **privilege** granted at the instructor's discretion.

If you are re-submitting work:

1. You must have submitted the work by its due date. Late work is not eligible for re-submission.
2. The privilege to revise submitted work is only available for students who submitted substantial work; incomplete or dysfunctional work is not eligible for resubmission. This is at the instructor's discretion.
3. You may only recover partial points lost.

Required Materials

Hardware

You are expected to have access to a reasonably powerful PC.

It is useful to have access to a large display, or dual display configuration. If you are bringing your own laptop to class, it is recommended to bring a mouse.

File backups

You absolutely must keep backups of your classwork, notes, and projects. You should use a service like Box@IU to keep backups of your work. This is also useful for collaboration.

Policies

Attendance

Students should make a serious effort to attend every lecture. While attendance is not taken, I believe **attendance is the strongest guarantor of success** in this course.

Course material is cumulative in nature and class periods are used to develop skills and work on projects. You will also miss out on labs and participation activities if you miss class.

Lost Data

You are responsible for keeping backups/duplicates of your files. As an IU student, you should have access to a Box account. You can also use Google Drive or GitHub to maintain copies of your files. Losing your files is not an excuse for late or incomplete work.

I **highly recommend** getting a [Box](#) account. It is free, helps you to stay organized, and most importantly provides **backups** for your files.

Email

If you e-mail me, make sure you tell me:

- Who you are
- What class you're in

Students should know that an e-mail response may take **up to 72 hours** depending on the time of the semester.

Food and Drink in Class

Sorry, they are not permitted.

Deadlines

Deadlines are strict and non-negotiable. Late assignments will be accepted for the first three calendar days after a deadline. I will remove 15% for each day past the deadline *(Example— If you got 85 on an assignment but submitted it two days late, you're getting a 55)*.

Assignments may not be submitted after three calendar days have elapsed (Example— Deadline is September 8th, you cannot submit after September 11th)

The only **exception to this rule** is the final project, which cannot be submitted late.

Making up work

If you have an excused absence for a lab or participation exercise, you have **one week** to make up that assignment at office hours. If you cannot attend scheduled office hours, it is your responsibility to reach out and schedule another meeting time.

Students with Disabilities

If any student requires assistance or academic accommodations for a disability, please contact me by after class, by e-mail, or during office hours. The student must have established eligibility for disability support services through the Office of Disability Services for Students.

For more information— https://studentaffairs.indiana.edu/disability-services-students/

Academic Integrity

As a student at IU, you are expected to adhere to the standards and policies detailed in the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct (Code). When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you are signifying that the work contained therein is yours, unless otherwise cited or referenced. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. All suspected violations of the Code will be reported to the Dean of Students and handled according to University policies. Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment, reduction in your final course grade, and

a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification beforehand.

Proper Attribution for Design Assets

You are allowed to use certain design assets— images, icons, interface elements— **only with the instructor's permission.**

You must give appropriate attribution for any assets you use, so make sure that you:

1. Pay attention to the license *(e.g., can you use this for non-commercial purposes?)*
2. Keep the link to the source so that you can attribute it later

Sexual Misconduct

As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to create a positive learning environment for all students. Title IX and IU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibit sexual misconduct in any form, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and dating and domestic violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with:

- The Sexual Assault Crisis Services (SACS) at (812) 855-8900 (counseling services)
- Confidential Victim Advocates (CVA) at (812) 856-2469 (advocacy and advice services)
- IU Health Center at (812) 855-4011 (health and medical services)

It is also important that you know that Title IX and University policy require me to share any information brought to my attention about potential sexual misconduct, with the campus Deputy Title IX Coordinator or IU's Title IX Coordinator. In that event, those individuals will work to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available. Protecting student privacy is of utmost concern, and information will only be shared with those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist. I encourage you to visit stopsexualviolence.iu.edu to learn more.

Religious Holidays

It is the policy of Indiana University that instructors must reasonably accommodate students who want to observe their religious holidays at times when academic requirements conflict with those observances. This policy is intended to ensure that both faculty and students are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities in the accommodation of students' religious observances.

Source: http://enrollmentbulletin.indiana.edu/pages/relo.php

Syllabus

This course is rich in content and skill levels vary widely among students. The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus to better match the needs of a given class.

Final Grade

The instructor reserves the right to adjust your final grade based on effort, participation, or conduct. This is uncommon.

Important Dates

Check the IU [Academic Calendar](#) for important dates. I have listed some of them here:

Fall 2018

Begins	Mon, Aug 20
Labor Day	Mon, Sept 3
Fall Break	Oct 5 - Oct 7
Auto W	Sun, Oct 21
Thanksgiving	Nov 18 - Nov 25
Final Exams	Dec 10 - Dec 14
Ends	Fri, Dec 14