Final Project Proposal

**Proposed Project Title:**

The project’s title that I am working on for this final year is “Role-Playing Game Development”. Over the development period the title will change into a more specific one that can better reflects the game.

**Brief outline of the work:**

For my final year project I will develop a video game that combines elements from both roguelikes and traditional role-playing games in order to create a challenging experience. The game’s target is to push the player to experiment and explore while trying to adapt and survive for as long as possible in a punishing and cruel world. A key design element for me is to create a strong feeling of fiero through hard and challenging sequences of gameplay that ultimately will greatly pay off. The harder is to succeed, the substantial the prize will be. The main skills that I will be focusing on will be designing and programming and secondary, 3D modelling and animation.

**Rationale**

The main reason why I considered and RPG game development for my final project is because I always loved the genre. As an example, I have more than fifteen hundred hours spent in the Blizzard’s game, Diablo 3 therefor it is quit an easy task for me to identify and analyse mechanics and elements that build a pleasing experience within the genre. Also, the beauty of being able to follow a personal progression path, combined with the liberty of exploration and possibility of direct control over difficulty make RPGs an amazing experience for me.

When it comes to popularity, role-playing games are, in most charts ([source1](http://uk.ign.com/articles/2015/09/18/tgs-2015-the-most-popular-game-platforms-and-genres), [source2](http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2015/06/26/americas-favorite-video-game-genres-infographic/#73b099d134a0), [source3](https://www.statista.com/statistics/189592/breakdown-of-us-video-game-sales-2009-by-genre/)), rated in the first three-four places which makes them quit a choice for most gamers. If we take a look on [Twitch.tv](https://www.twitch.tv/directory) (a famous live streaming web-site) we can see games like Dark Souls III, Path of Exile or Diablo 3 among the popular of the games, which are all labelled as RPGs.

**Narrative and gameplay**

The narrative is going to be set around 17th century when the “Salem witch trial” occurred, in the Salem Village, Massachusetts ([source](http://www.history.com/topics/salem-witch-trials)). Therefore, the environment will be created based on that and all the assets will be inspired by that places at that time. In game, the story begins by showing a family held in cages, pulled by soldiers’ carts on horses to the village’s gallows in order to be hanged for the accusation of witch crafting. On the way to their destination, the soldiers are attacked and the main character, along with a couple of the family members manage to escape but everyone is forced to split and go different directions. Now, the MC is left alone in an unwelcoming world, searched by soldiers to be hanged and it is up to the player to keep him alive as long as possible.

Gameplay-wise, the game can be labelled as role-playing game with roguelike elements. The view is going to be top-down similar to games such as “Sacred” or “Torchlight” series. The main mechanics will be combat, which will contain attacking and dodging, as well as exploring and adapting. My goal with this game is to make the player curious about everything that comes in its path because any item can be a potential reward and a boost of power. The game has to be challenging at the same time in order to push the audience to search for every minor upgrade that they can get.

**Inspiration**

The “Salem witch trial” event is the main inspiration for the story.

In terms of gameplay, I am going to use elements from traditional top-down RPGs (“Titan Quest” or “Baldur’s Gate”) such as camera view, level and character upgrade system combined with roguelike mechanics: permanent death and randomized items([source](https://gamedevelopment.tutsplus.com/articles/the-key-design-elements-of-roguelikes--cms-23510)).

For the game feel I am looking primarily at “Dark Souls” series. Upon spending numerous hours analysing the game, I was amazed how well succeeds in making me feel always on the point of losing. The experience is very challenging, the enemies are merciless and mistakes are definitely heavily punished. During my sessions, I felt very obnoxious and stressed out by my future encounters, similar to watching a horror movie. The way tension and relief is generated is amazing and makes me strongly consider “Dark Souls” design choices to be of great help for achieving the same for my game.

The game aesthetic will be inspired mainly by “[Necropolis](http://store.steampowered.com/app/384490/)”, because assets they have in game are low polygons and textures look plain. The reason for this choice is because 3D modelling is not within my expertise.

**Game engine used**

My first though when looking at which game engine to choose from was Unreal Engine 4 over Unity 5 as I heard that was a lot more powerful for rendering shadows and reflections and the overall graphics have better quality. I decided to make a research upon this matter. When it comes to visuals, Unreal Engine 4 has a more “reality-like” look ([video source](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTt7AGIpV2I)) while Unity 5 tends to be more “cartoonish” in comparison ([video source](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lBy4XBv48wU)). Going through an article written on [blog.digitaltutors.com](http://blog.digitaltutors.com) we can find a fair comparison of those two ([Source article](http://blog.digitaltutors.com/unreal-engine-4-vs-unity-game-engine-best/)). It covers prices, graphic potency, programming languages supported, asset store and ease of use. After a closer analysis, giving the fact that I have an experience of two years in Unity, I reached the conclusion that Unity 5 fits me best because of the C# programming language, reach asset store and easy to manipulate and iterate within the default interface.

**Relevant specialist skills**

The primary skills that I am wishing to use for this project are designing and C# programming. With my designing abilities I am targeting to create rich, intense and immersive experience driven by challenging gameplay and finalised with meaningful rewards in order to create a pleasing feeling of tension and relief.

The programming skill will be put to test by my desire to create A.I. that can behave in accordance to specific situation, lively environment and fluent overall gameplay.

**Issues, problems and concerns and how to solve these**

My main concern with the game development is creating poor quality assets as 3D modelling is not one of my strong point. In order to solve such issue, as I said above, will draw inspiration from games such as “Necropolis”, low polygon models with plain and shaded texture.

**Employability statement**

My goal with this project is to create an appealing game that will demonstrate my designing and programming skills to companies such as Blizzard Entertainment (for the Diablo series), 2k Games (for the Borderlands series), Bethesda (for the Fallout and The Elder Scrolls series), Runic Games (for the Torchlight series), Deep Silver (for Sacred series) and perhaps From Software (for the “Dark Souls” series).

**Project Timeline**

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| **Project Milestone** | | |
| **2016-2017** | **Week#** | **Milestone Deliverables and Tasks** |
| 26-30 Sep | Week 1 | -game idea research and inspiration- |
| 3-7 Oct | Week 2 | -game idea research and inspiration- |
| 10-14 Oct | Week 3 | -game idea research and inspiration- |
| 17-21 Oct | Week 4 | -game engine research, game idea polish- |
| 24-28 Oct | Week 5 | -market and job prospects- |
| 31 Oct-4 Nov | Week 6 | -main character movement and main stats- |
| 7- 11 Nov | Week 7 | -research grey box level design-  **r** |
| 14 - 18 Nov | Week 8 | -introductory scene (code and models)-  **Submission of Final Project Proposal: by noon, Friday 18 Nov 2016** |
| 21-25 Nov | Week 9 | -enemy attack and dodge system- |
| 28 Nov- 3 Dec | Week 10 | -implementation of the first 5 passives- |
| 5-9 Dec | Week 11 | -expanding map, level design and research- |
| 12-16 Dec | Week 12 | **--** |
| 19-23 Dec | Holiday |  |
| 26-30 Dec | Holiday |  |
| 2-6 Jan | Holiday |  |
| 9-13 Jan | Holiday |  |
| 16-20 Jan | Holiday |  |
| 23-27 Jan | Week 13 |  |
| 30 Jan- 4 Feb | Week 14 |  |
| 6-10 Feb | Week 15 | **Seminar Presentation** |
| 13-17 Feb | Week 16 | **Seminar Presentation** |
| 20-24 Feb | Week 17 |  |
| 27 Feb- 3 Mar | Week 18 |  |
| 6-10 Mar | Week 19 |  |
| 13-17 Mar | Week 20 |  |
| 20-24 Mar | Week 21 |  |
| 27-31 Mar | Week 22 |  |
| 3-7 Apr | Week 23 |  |
| 10-14 Apr | Holiday |  |
| 17-21 Apr | Holiday |  |
| 24-28 Apr | Week 24 | **Submission of Final Product and Blog: by noon, Friday 28 Apr 2017** |

**Bibliography**

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