GD210 Game Studio Capstone Project

Vision

The Game Studio Capstone Project is an 8-week long project meant to apply and contextualize all skills and knowledge acquired throughout the A.A.S. Game Design program. It is the final assignment in GD210 Game Studio, which is intended as the final course game design students take.

Intended Audience

- Game Design students who have successfully completed their core DD and GD classes and/or GD205
- GD students that have first hand experience with code, art/asset creation and digital game development
- GD students who are versed in essential game design concepts and structures

Learning Objectives

- Resourcefulness/self-reliance
- Students will learn how to communicate their ideas clearly, succinctly and effectively (online and offline)
- Gain first-hand experience with each aspect of the development and production process of a fully completed game
- Students will improve their ability to realistically scope their games
- Develop better collaborative methodologies

Deliverables

- A web presence for their game featuring a short description, screenshots and a download link to the game.
- A Game Design Document meant to be used as a team communication tool to synthesize their ideas into something stable and coherent.
- A pitch presentation as an individual assignment
- A final presentation in which the team conveys their design process and outcomes
- 3 weekly development logs detailing their development plans and playtesting findings

Skills Developed and Reinforced

- Creative problem solving within game design and production
- Collaborative work methodologies
- Professional presentation and communication of ideas
- Critical distance and self-awareness within game design

Evaluation

- Presentation feedback from guest critic(s)
- Game completion / how far along in development is it?

- Documentation and virtual presentation of their game

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Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

- Produce a functional and polished game that is portfolio worthy.
- Build stronger collaborative methodologies.
- Demonstrate resourcefulness and self-reliance.
- Communicate ideas clearly, succinctly and effectively (online and offline).
- Gain first-hand experience with each aspect of the development and production process of a fully completed game.
- Evaluate and demonstrate how to realistically scope the design of one's game.
- Develop better collaborative methodologies.
- Demonstrate critical distance and self-awareness within game design.

General Education Core Competencies

Fundamentally Relevant

- A1. Utilize deductive and inductive reasoning skills with special emphasis on problem-solving, analysis and clarity of understanding.
- C1. Access and identify the information necessary and appropriate to the production of projects, such as course papers, reports, and portfolios.

COMPETENCY	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
A1: Use Reasoning Skills	**Consistently** uses a clear and developed reasoning process to explain, analyze, or solve a problem.	**Often but not consistently** uses a clear and developed reasoning process to explain, analyze, or solve a problem.	**Relatively infrequently** uses a clear or developed reasoning process to explain, analyze, or solve a problem.	**Rarely** uses or develops a reasoning process to explain, analyze, or solve a problem.

COMPETENCY	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
C1: Research Independently	**Consistently** demonstrates a facility with sources, as evidenced in citations and length. Integrates sources through paraphrase and independent discussion.	**Often but not consistently** demonstrates a facility with sources, as evidenced in citations. **Often but not consistently** meets length expectations. **Often but not consistently** uses paraphrase and independent discussion.	**Relatively infrequently** demonstrates familiarity or facility with sources. **Relatively infrequently** uses paraphrase or independent discussion.	**Rarely** demonstrates familiarity or facility with sources, as evidenced through citations. **Rarely** integrates, applies, or independently discusses ideas from outside sources.

Relevant to Components

- A2. Develop the acts of speaking, reading, listening, and writing; demonstrate the act of speaking and synthesizing information correctly and effectively with the ability to use context-appropriate vocabulary and communication technology; parse lectures, text, and other educational material.
- B2. Make meaningful interdisciplinary connections, recognizing that subject area knowledge may go beyond a particular course.
- C4. Interpret data and observations; comprehend research material. Be able to present and explain conclusions.
- D2. Exhibit an appreciation, understanding, acceptance and respect for human differences.
- D5. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the various ways human societies value and interact with their natural surroundings.

Program Learning Outcomes

AAS Game Design

PRODUCE a body of work suitable for seeking transfer to bachelor's programs at other colleges and universities or entry-level opportunities for employment in their chosen field of game design.

SOLVE CREATIVE PROBLEMS within their field of game design & production, including research, prototyping, playtesting, assessment, development and synthesis of technical, aesthetic, and conceptual knowledge.

DEVELOP collaborative work methodologies in preparation for careers in the media arts.

COMMUNICATE their ideas professionally and connect with their intended audience using visual, oral, and written presentation skills relevant to their field.

BUILD a working knowledge of coding fundamentals and utilize in game development.

EVALUATE work in their field, including their own work, using professional terminology and the vocabulary of game design and development.

RECOGNIZE the influence of media culture and aesthetic trends in game design.

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Assignment Guidelines (Draft)

Capstone Assignment

The Game Studio Capstone Project is an 8-week long project meant to apply and contextualize all skills and knowledge acquired throughout the A.A.S. Game Design program. It is the final assignment in GD210 Game Studio, which is intended as the final course game design students take.

Deliverables

- **Pitch Presentation** (10 points)
  Each student will prepare a game proposal one-sheet and short presentation. These proposals will detail the goal of a game that they have devised, its core mechanic, narrative, and what assets will be needed to build it. The concept should be conceptualized and communicated in terms of MDA (Mechanics, Dynamics and Aesthetics; see resources below). In addition it will be important for students to outline and describe influential precedents being referenced.

  The entire class will review the proposals in order to greenlight ~7* games, which will be formed into groups in order to build over the course of the remainder of the semester.

  *3 person teams, except for those students wanting to work on solo projects must schedule a brief meeting with the instructor for approval

  Conceptual Constraints

  Class will collectively select 3 optional themes. Each student will choose one of the 3 themes for their game being pitched. (Origin: Ludum Dare Game Jam Themes)

  - ...impossibly difficult, but can be beaten in 5 seconds
  - ...one-button game
  - ...two-button controls
  - ...growing
  - ...you are the monster
  - ...can't stop moving
  - ...you are the power source
  - ...an unconventional weapon
  - ...entire game on one screen
  - ...one rule
  - ...avoid the light
  - ...strength in numbers
  - ...you are your own enemy
  - ...everything is connected

- ...no enemies
- ...night and day
- ...one-screen party game

Individuals choose 1 aesthetic theme from the following:

- ...text-based
- ...8-bit
- ...abstract
- ...isometric
- ...pixel-art
- ...low-poly
- ...voxel
- ...cel-shaded
- ...neon-infused
- ...two colors
- ...three colors

****ABSOLUTELY NO PLATFORMER OR SIDE-SCROLLER GAMES****

Why not?

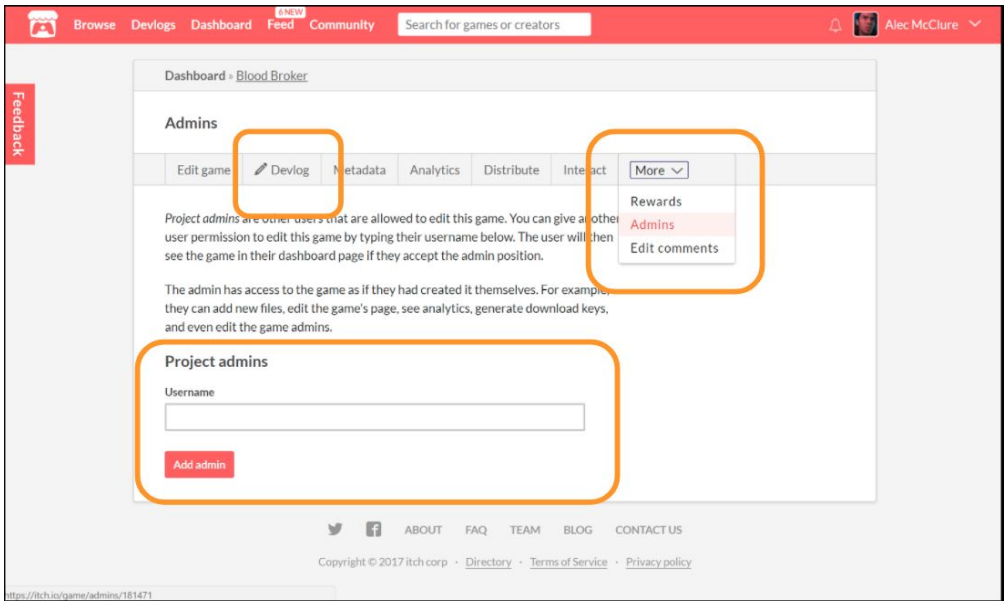
- "*If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail.*" (Maslow's Hammer)
- Game engines like Unity and GameMaker are excellent tools for making conventional platform games. If a game designer is not vigilant, their innovative concept will devolve into the lowest common denominator, a platform or side-scrolling game.

Resources

- MDA: A Formal Approach to Game Design and Game Research
- Mechanics, Dynamics & Aesthetics Blog Post on The Quixotic Engineer
- MDA Framework- Unconnected Connectivity on GamaSutra
- One-Sheet Template

- **Team Contribution Agreement**
  Each team must draft a contribution agreement one week after assignments are made, which must be signed by all team members.
- **Weekly Development Logs** (3 total; 3 points each)
  The WDLs detail the team's accomplishments for the week, development goals for the next week and playtesting findings. Each team member will be responsible for their own WDL, which is an itch.io development post that specifically outlines the team member's contribution to the project.
  - Each submission should include a playtesting report with the following:
    - Playtester demographic information
      - This must be someone outside of the class.
    - Goal/purpose of playtest
      - What do you want to learn from this playtest?

        - Feedback received
            - A short description of the feedback received.
        - Analysis of feedback
            - Will this feedback be incorporated?
            - Why or why not?
            - If so, how?
- **Documentation**
    - **Itch Page** (8 points)
        - A live web presence for their game featuring a short description, screenshots and a download link to the game.
        - It is recommended that teams use the itch.io platform for both their website and devlogs. This is in order to gain exposure, as well as provide a suitable platform for hosting the game, earning profits and act as an online portfolio.
            - After creating a new project on itch, each team member must be made an administrator in order to make edits to the game page and post devlogs. Under the "More" label, select "Admins." Type in the username of each person's username and have them accept the role.



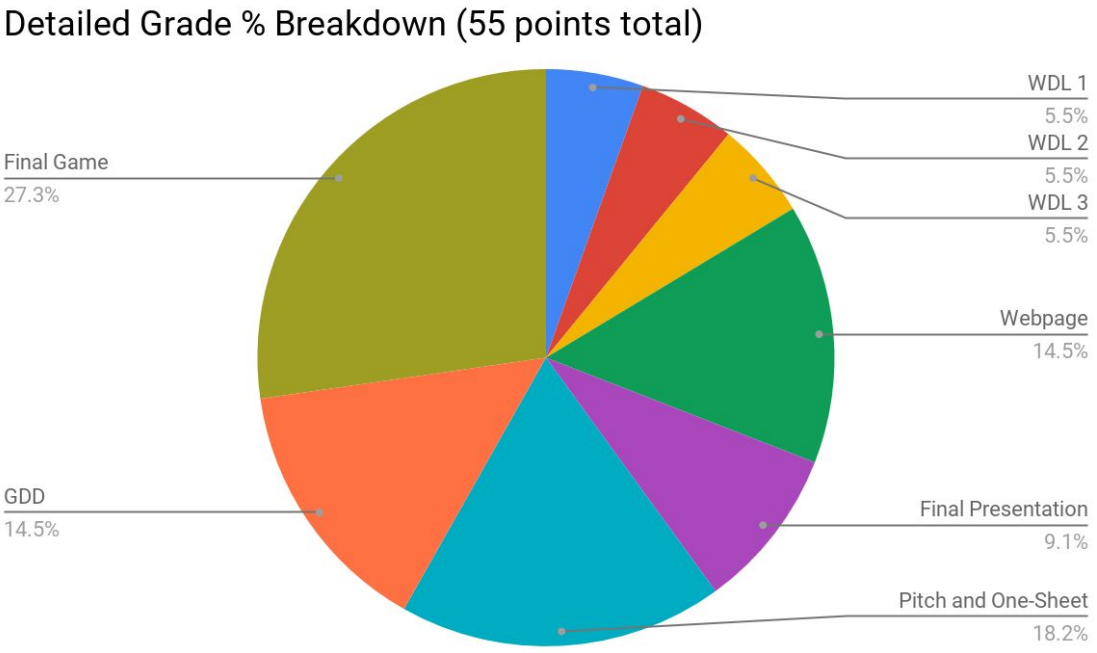
    - **Game Design Document** (8 points)
        - A game design document (often abbreviated GDD) is a *highly* descriptive **living** design document of the design for a video game. A GDD is created and edited by the development team and it is primarily used in the video game industry to organize efforts within a development team.

        - The GDD is meant to be used as a team communication tool to synthesize concepts and designs into something consistent, stable and coherent.
        - Resources for making a GDD
            - The Anatomy of a Game Design Document on GamaSutra
            - Creating a Game Design Document on GamaSutra
- **Final Game**
    - Final/Fully-Functional Game (15 points)
    - Final Presentation (5 points)
        - A final presentation in which the team conveys their design process and outcomes

Grade Breakdown

General (55 points of final grade)

- Pitch - 10 points
- Weekly Development Logs - 9 points
- Final Game - 20 points
- Final Documentation - 16 points



Additional Information

Team Breakdown

Following the pitch, individual students will complete a form indicating their relative design and development skills and preferences for project to work on. The instructor will assign teams based upon the complementary skillsets and personal preferences of each student. Students that do not complete the form will be assigned based upon need. Teams will consist of 3 students.

Each team will have 3 point people for each of the following categories:

- Code
- Art
- Design

Each team member will be responsible for overseeing the completion of their area of expertise. They will not personally be responsible for this workload, only ensuring it is completed by the team.

Students that have received permission to work alone will be responsible for the entirety of the workload.

Final Game

Final presentations will be critiqued by one or more guest professionals from the media industry. The final presentations will be a branded event, open to the college. Final presentations should include the following:

- Description of the game
- Game pitch
- How did the project change over time?
- What was learned throughout this process?
- What aspects worked well? What didn't?
- What is the future of this game?

Team members will evaluate each other's contributions following the final presentations. Any gross discrepancies in contribution may affect an individual's grade.

Dates

- **Week 1**
  - Pitch Presentation and One-Sheet (assigned 2-3 weeks earlier)
  - Team selection form following presentations
- **Week 2**
  - Team Assignments made
- **Week 3**

    - Team Contribution Agreement due
    - Itch.io Page placeholder/draft due
- **Week 4**
    - WDLs
- **Week 5**
    - WDLs
- **Week 6**
    - WDLs
- **Week 7**
    - Game Design Document due
    - Final Itch.io Page due
    - All WDLs due
- **Week 8**
    - Final Presentations
    - Final build on itch.io

GRADING RUBRIC::

ADDITIONAL DOCS::

- team survey
- one-sheet template

- hostos arcade logo +

RESOURCES::