



Team Charter

CHOSEN

By Slommy Studios

**Honours Bachelor of Game Design
Capstone Year
2022-2023**

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Instructions

Use this document to produce a Team Charter.

Document Purpose

A team charter is a document approved by the program that formally introduces a team and provides the team with the direction to apply resources to the project activities.¹

The purpose of the charter is to obtain formal approval on the general parameters and structure of the proposed project, including:

- the project objectives and outcomes, benefits, scope, and risks;
- the project deliverables, schedule, milestones, and estimated resources; and
- the project organization, governance structure, and stakeholders.

Using this Template

Replace the <bracketed text> on the cover page with the name of your project and team.

Replace the <bracketed text> in the document header with your project name.

Complete the entire template. Each section contains abbreviated instructions, shown in italics, which can be removed once your document is finalized. Tables are also provided as a suggested layout for some of the information required.

Update the table of contents by right-clicking and selecting Update Field, then update entire table.

*When you have completed your draft team charter, **delete this page.***

Submit in PDF via SLATE as instructed.

Additional information and references:

<http://project-management-knowledge.com>

¹ This Team Charter document template is based on the Treasury Board Team charter Template.

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	<i>Checklist for reviewing your team charter:</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Section 1. Charter Introduction

1.1 Document Change Control

Revision Number	Date of Issue	Author(s)	Brief Description of Change
1.0	09/20/2023	Chris Dichmann	Initial pass on Team Charter

1.2 Executive Summary

CHOSEN is a retro guns-akimbo FPS all about stealing, shooting, and throwing guns.

As a team, Slommy Studios has worked together many times in the past. When we came together to brainstorm for our final Capstone project, we knew we wanted to create a project that showed off the team's varied skillsets, but was also tightly scoped to allow for real polish to be on display. We decided to tackle the genre of retro arena FPS due to an observed market gap. This particular genre would also allow us to rapidly prototype with its simple graphics and well-established mechanics, allowing the team to explore familiar ground and seek that polished presentation we all desired. At the same time, the inclusion of new twists on the genre allow the team to flex their design skills, and hopefully create gameplay that is truly unique and engaging in a way never seen before.

The team has committed to an outwards-facing mindset when it comes to the development of this project, focusing on polishing core pieces of the product we wish to deliver before we move on to further development. Every step beyond the first Minimum Viable Product is essentially an extension of our goal, and we want to continually build on quality developments rather than strive for one high-impact quality deliverable at the end of the project. The team has split main Milestones across four builds to be completed across the Capstone term, each one adding more gameplay features for the team to focus on.

- Proof of Concept Build: Week 7, prototype mechanics implementation
- Alpha Build: Week 12, refined mechanics with prototype enemies and level space
- Beta Build: Week 20, polished mechanics with refined enemies and complex level space
- Final Build: Final Week, polished vertical slice of game offering

Ultimately, the team aims to deliver a product complete with a refined first-person character controller, a small suite of unique weapons to engage with, polished combat mechanics, a small offering of well-designed enemies, and at least two art-complete arenas to explore and fight in. As we progress through development, the team is keeping a keen eye on major risk factors such as burnout or over-scoping, ensuring we keep a flexible but diligent schedule, and always maintaining our outwards-facing game design mentality to allow for constant upwards motion across production.

As a team, our goal for *CHOSEN* by the end of the Capstone Term is to produce a quality vertical slice that can be pitched to a publisher or development group, to potentially continue working on this project as a team in the professional sphere. This document outlines the processes through which we will achieve this goal.

1.3 Team

This team charter formally introduces the game project, *CHOSEN*, and provides the project team with direction to apply resources to project activities described herein. If there is a change in the project scope, the team charter will be updated and submitted for re-approval.

Abby Norris

Name: Abigail Norris

Role: Environment Artist

Carlo Tejada

Name: Carlo Tejada

Role: Programmer

Chris Dichmann

Name: Chris Dichmann

Role: Project Manager

SAM

Name: Sam Cameron

Role: Programmer

Sarita Sou

Name: Sarita Sou

Role: Sound Designer

Tiggi Pengelly

Name: Tiggi Pengelly

Role: Character Artist

Team Mentor

Sponsor Contact <if applicable>

Section 2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Summary

This document summarizes Team Slommy Studio's plan for the project *CHOSEN*, which the team is producing during the Capstone Term for the 2023-2024 year. *CHOSEN* is a retro arena first-person shooter stylized after the shooter boom of the early 2000s. The project aims to provide fast-paced dual-wield shooter combat with an emphasis on an attack/defend dichotomy across the weapons available, and the added hook of being able to rapidly grapple and/or steal weapons at high speeds.

Slommy Studios identified a significant market gap surrounding arena shooters. While a popular genre, recently "competitive shooters" have become the focus of the FPS market recently, leaving the arena shooter genre somewhat barren. Recent arena shooter titles such as *Halo: Infinite* languished due to lack of developer support, while competitors such as *Splitgate* are no longer supported by their respective developers as they produce a sequel with modern hardware specifications. Meanwhile, the retro-shooter genre has blossomed, with titles such as *ULTRAKILL* and *DUSK* accruing a cult-like following over recent years. However, most retro-shooters focus on the *Quake* era of games from the late 1990s. As a result, there is an exact market gap over the genres of "arena shooters" as well as retro shooters of an arena style.

This is the exact niche Slommy Studios aims to target with *CHOSEN*, marketing around a return to "arena shooter style" both in gameplay and retro art style, as well as incorporating modern "hooks" to spice up gameplay in unique directions. On top of this, the team intends for the final product to display a level of artistic and technical polish that we can be proud of displaying.

2.1.1 Project Team Goals

Early in Preproduction, the team established a number of goals for ourselves. These goals focus not on the product, but on interpersonal relations and individual workplace desires.

Goal: Create an environment that fosters Psychological Safety.

How we achieve this: Ensure that all voices are heard across the project: everyone's opinion is represented and heard. Democratic meetings determine major project decisions. Feedback is always welcome, but must be constructive and friendly.

Goal: Rely on a schedule to work efficiently but comfortably.

How we achieve this: Establish a detailed schedule early into the project, and regularly update. Keep the schedule flexible to allow for unconstrained working conditions, but document and track scheduling changes in real time to ensure no tasks are accidentally lost. Regularly meet in person and vocally discuss schedule progression through SCRUM meetings, and routinely check the progress of all team members' tasks.

Goal: Ensure each team member is satisfied with their role in the project and able to develop their preferred skillset.

How we achieve this: Democratic decision-making process ensures everyone's opinion with regards to project direction is considered. All team members have chosen their own roles, and a Psychologically Safe workplace allows team members to speak up in the event they feel dissatisfied with their tasks or role.

Goal: Work on production together to act on feedback immediately.

How we achieve this: Scheduled in-person office hours allow the team ample time and space to work on the project together. The rapid prototyping this workspace provides is invaluable, as it allows the team to collaborate directly on cross-disciplinary tasks, and quickly test new implementations to begin on tweaks and changes early in development rather than near publication.

2.1.2 Project Design Goals

There are several high-level Design Goals the team aims to meet by the end of this project. Widely speaking, meeting these goals will deem the product a “success” by the team’s definition. These goals are measured in the features we develop to bring the game closer to our stated standard of polish in each department.

- **Refined Gunplay:** Every weapon feels good to use and contains complex factors that make shooting effortless and satisfying.
 - **Achieved Through:** Deep systems within our weapons & bullet system, including adjustable variables such as aim assist, bullet spread, and damage falloff.
- **Attention to Detail:** The game has a professional level of polish, and is as detailed as can be reasonably achieved.
 - **Achieved Through:** The addition of small details in moment-to-moment gameplay, such as sound effects, weapon animations, enemy dialogue, adaptive audio, and environmental details.
- **Reactive Combat:** Combat design that seamlessly conveys information to the player and rewards on-the-fly reaction & creativity.
 - **Achieved Through:** Informative enemy and weapon design (largely through color-coding), detailed SFX that responds to player input, responsive AI that drive the player to make meaningful choices throughout gameplay, and a thought-provoking combat system that rewards player knowledge.
- **Exceptional Environment:** The environment of the game is complete, interesting, and engaging.
 - **Achieved Through:** Careful usage of modular kits, thorough playtesting of arenas, the inclusion of skyboxes & terrain, implementation of unique hero assets at critical moments of level progression.

2.1.3 Project Scope

Scope is a main risk factor for the team, given the absolutely massive potential scale of what *CHOSEN* could be based on its initial pitch. Because of this, the team has ensured that tight restraints on scope have been established from the project’s inception, to balance our expectations of “success,” as well as avoid issues such as overwork and crunch. The team employed two strategies to limit the scope of the project into a feasible range: a “scope cap,” and an “outwards-focused” scope mentality.

The “scope cap” is the hard limits on production set by the team early into preproduction. It was important to establish a firm “end point” for our time within Capstone: a point at which we can consider our goals met for the year of work, as well as have a product we are proud of. To this end, the team selected a “vertical slice” of gameplay to focus on and produce over the Capstone term, with all development beyond this slice being considered out of scope. This content was narrowed down to:

- One Player Character Controller
- Four Enemy AIs
- Four Weapons
- One Complete Playable Level
- Two Adaptive Music Tracks

In approaching this scoped-down project, the team embodies an “outwards-focused” mentality. This means that the team is wholly focused on finalizing and polishing the project’s core, before expanding on our developments with new tasks and deliverables. This essentially gives the team a mobile Minimum Viable Product, and should allow production to stop at any point in the project passed the Proof of Concept with the team having satisfactory work to display. These mobile Minimum Viable Products essentially follow our Milestone deliveries, beginning with the Proof of Concept build and expanding until our final goals are met. Our outwards-focused Milestones are as follows:

- **Proof of Concept Build**
 - Rough Character Controller
 - Simple Metrics Playground
 - Testable Mechanics
- **Alpha Build**
 - Refined Character Controller
 - Asset-Complete Arena
 - Functional Mechanics
 - Two Weapons
 - One Enemy
- **Beta Build**
 - Refined Character Controller
 - Multiple Asset-Complete Arenas
 - Refined Mechanics
 - Four Weapons
 - Three Enemies
- **Final Build**
 - Refined Character Controller
 - Asset-Complete Level
 - Refined Mechanics
 - Four(+) Weapons
 - Four(+) Enemies

The team treats each build as an dependency, finalizing all requirements with a level of polish before moving on to the next Milestone.

2.1.4 Boundaries

Activities in Scope	Activities Out of Scope
1. Keep an up-to-date Game Design Document	1. Maintain an exhaustive list of potential features
2. Outline Narrative contexts of the vertical gameplay slice	2. Fully develop the project’s expected narrative beyond the framing of this project
3. Develop core shooter features to be built upon as needed	3. Expand beyond our core gameplay interactions
4. Create modular & environmental assets to populate gameplay spaces	4. Individually create hero assets on an ‘as-needed’ basis
5. Design & produce gameplay spaces in accordance with the progression of the overall project	5. Design & produce an entire playable level regardless of the project’s progression
6. Design & produce a small number of polished weapons with unique gameplay loops	6. Design & produce a huge number of unique weapons
7. Design & produce a small number of unique enemies	7. Design & produce a huge number of varied enemies

Game Design Document:

The team is committed to extensive documentation of our decision-making process, gameplay direction, systems, and metrics. To keep these documents organized, the team utilizes Confluence, which also doubles as our overall Game Design Document. Design documents are placed into a carefully organized hierarchy, where they can be sorted through via links and a table of contents similar to a Wiki page. All inclusions into the GDD have been reviewed extensively by the full team, and represent game elements that the team has made a conclusive decision with regards to the direction.

Narrative Design Document:

While the team collectively has many ideas regarding narrative issues such as character development and worldbuilding, our ultimate end goal for the Capstone term is to deliver a vertical slice of the product that demonstrates exceptional gameplay rather than story content. As such, the decision was made to scope down on narrative elements that would not be immediately relevant within the targeted vertical slice. The team's Narrative Design Document outlines key contextual information, such as character traits and motivations as well as basic worldbuilding tenants. However, a full Narrative Design Document that details the entire story Slommy Studios wishes to tell with *CHOSEN* as a full product is simply beyond our scope.

Shooter Features:

Our intent in developing *CHOSEN* is to deliver a product that has tightly developed shooter mechanics that are genuinely fun to engage with and unique from anything else on the market. To that end, we are tightly focused on the shooting gameplay features that make up the core of our game, that being offensive/defensive dual-wielding and weapon stealing/throwing. We are set on developing and refining these mechanics, and committed to not exploring nor including any additional mechanics until these core features have been optimized to our standards.

Asset Creation:

To maintain team organization and streamline the asset creation process from metrics to concepting to in-engine implementation, the team carefully details and documents the specific need for various assets before the design process begins. The majority of these assets are modular kits, resulting in widespread and flexible usage throughout the game. Hero and environmental assets go through a similar process, although on an individual level. Primarily, the team aims to avoid "freeflow" asset creation, where last-minute inclusions or ideas drive the creation of major game assets. This style of asset creation is too disorganized and stressful: having a solid plan for every asset in the game is not only more within scope, but healthier for the team.

Gameplay Spaces:

Similar to narrative, the team has many ideas for gameplay spaces and levels across *CHOSEN*. We are being exceptionally careful not to over-scope, especially considering how costly level design mistakes can be. The team is following our outwards-facing approach with special rigor in regards to level design, building first a metrics playground, then a full arena, and then potentially expanding to a full level. Having the expectation of creating a full level from the inception of the project is far out of scope.

Weapons:

Once again, the team is driven by our outwards-facing approach to game design, as well as the desire to create quality over quantity. The team's ultimate goal is to create a small handful of well-crafted weapons that each function uniquely within the overall system, rather than a swathe of uninteresting and poorly crafted weapons.

Enemies:

As with weapons, the team is driven by an outwards-facing approach to game design, and a desire for quality over quantity. We aim to have a few enemies that are incredibly responsive and engaging to fight, rather than hordes of unintelligent targets-on-legs.

2.2 Milestones

Project Milestone	Description	Expected Date
1. Proof of Concept Build	An initial build of our game showcasing a working character controller and prototyped versions of our mechanics, as well as some rudimentary environment and character art.	Week 7
2. Alpha Build	A more feature-inclusive build with a refined character controller, functional mechanics, at least two weapons to engage with, an active enemy AI, and an asset-complete arena.	Semester 1 End
3. Beta Build	A nearly feature-complete version of the product, containing a refined and feature-ready character controller, feature-ready gameplay mechanics, four weapons, three enemy AI, and at least two asset-complete arenas.	Semester 2 Middle
4. Final Build	A feature-complete vertical slice of the product, containing a feature-ready character controller, gameplay mechanics, weapons, enemy AI, and entire level potentially with narrative dressing.	Semester 2 End

2.3 Dependencies

At this time, there are no apparent external dependencies on the project. The only significant software being utilized for development is the Unity Engine, which may prove to be problematic near publication due to issues with the platform's pricing changes.

One note for the future is the potential use of voice actors, who would be brought on from outside the team to provide their services at their listed rates.

2.4 Project Risks and Constraints**2.4.1 Risks**

No.	Risk Description	Probability (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	Risk Management Plan
1	Illness	High	Low	Flexible Schedule
2	Accident	Low	High	Outward-Facing Design
3	Mechanical Bug	Medium	Medium	Flexible Schedule
4	Burnout	High	High	Safe Team Environment
5	Over-scope	Low	High	Outward-Facing Design

Illness:

One or more team members falling ill and being unable to come in to the office or complete their immediate tasks is inevitable – in fact, as of the time of writing, it has already happened! Our flexible schedule allows for any teammate unable to complete their tasks for any reason to quickly communicate their absence to the group. Our schedule also prioritizes having minimal cross-disciplinary dependencies, so a group member's absence should never halt or hinder any other team member's work significantly.

Accident:

In the event a team member is seriously injured or unable to complete a significant amount of work/absent for a significant amount of time, it is inevitable that their tasks will remain unfinished. While the team's schedule is quite flexible, it is hardly flexible enough to allow one team member to undertake another's entire workload without significant risk. As such, the team can rely on our outward-facing design in this case. Because the project proceeds in phases, with the team meeting the full deliverables for a specific Milestone Build before proceeding to the next batch of content, the team can rely on the previously-completed deliverables from the absent team member, and continue scaling the project outwards where possible.

Mechanical Bug:

While the team's programmers are quite competent, there is always the possibility of a critical bug arising during playtesting. Serious bugs have the potential to stall programmer process, delaying some of the most significant deliverables from being met. Once again, the team's flexible schedule is our response, with ample time set aside for addressing risks such as these. Because the team aims to work in development batches, these major bugs will need to be solved before the team can move on to the next phase of development, which imposes an additional dependency on the team that will need to be addressed as a priority.

Burnout:

Losing morale is a major concern for such a lengthy project. While the entire team is motivated by our desire to create a fun, engaging product, and each team member has hand-selected their role to ensure they remain excited by their tasks throughout the Capstone Term, it is inevitable that momentum is lost at some point. We have many systems in place to prevent burnout from having a destructive impact on our project, and they all revolve around maintaining psychological safety in the workplace. The team keeps open lines of communication not only for development and production issues, but also personal communication as well. Continual checkups on team members occur implicitly as we all work and collaborate side-by-side. In our workplace, we've established a system wherein team members can communicate their "energy levels" on any given day, so the rest of the team can accommodate and anticipate their desired workload. Keeping work safe and fun in every way we can will help us combat the threat of burnout.

Over-Scope:

Over-scoping is an issue many members of Slommy Studios have faced in the past, to disastrous results. We've strived from the very inception of this project to schedule incredibly carefully, to allow the team enough time to complete their deliverables and address any risks that may occur in the meantime. Most importantly, we've incorporated our system of outward-facing game design, wherein the project's success is not dictated by the completion of an arbitrary list of tasks, but rather treated as an ever-evolving demonstration of our skills. Because of this mindset, the team is incapable of over-scoping: with each Milestone met, the team has crossed a Minimum Viable Product threshold, and only expands upon what is already an acceptable product in our eyes.

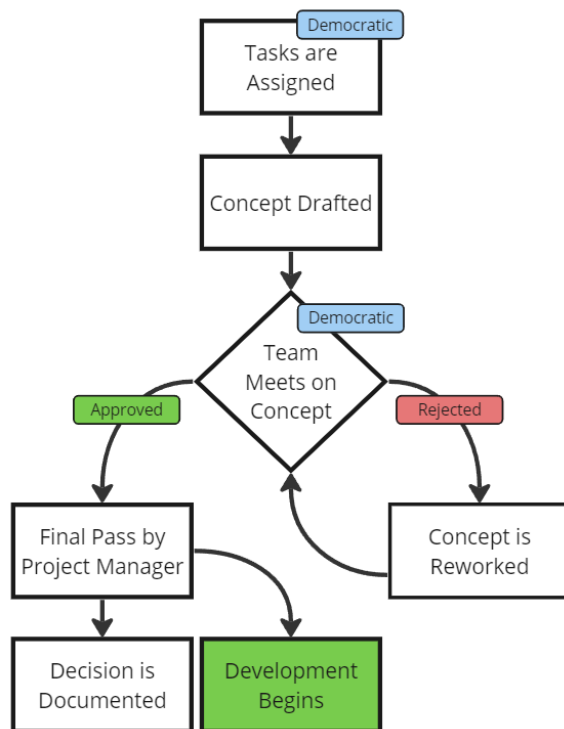
2.4.2 Constraints

The following table lists the conditional factors within which the project must operate or fit.

No.	Category	Constraints
1	Deadline	Proof of Concept Build due Week 7.
2	Deadline	Minimum Viable Product Build (Alpha) due Week 12.
3	Set Milestone	The final product will only contain one level or less of game space

Section 3. Project Organization

3.1 Project Governance



Slommy Studio's decision-making process is largely democratic, with key moments set aside to allow individuals to freely design and reconvene with the team afterwards for approval.

First and foremost, tasks are assigned. This is done democratically, with the entire team meeting during SCRUM meetings to discuss relevant tasks and deliverables.

Next, an individual team member will draft a concept for their task. This could be anything from concept art to metrics layout: a brief pitch of the specifics of the task to present to the rest of the team.

The team informally meets when these concepts are done and provides feedback. If the concept isn't approved by the team, it must be reworked until all team members are satisfied.

When a concept is approved, a final pass is done by the Project Manager to ensure the decision fits with the direction and scope of the project. The decision is then documented by the Project Manager, and the team member can begin individual development of the task.

3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Project Role	Responsibilities	Assigned to
Project Management	Documentation, Game Direction, Scheduling	Chris Dichmann
Environment Artist	Environment Concept Art, Environment Assets	Abigail Norris
Character Artist	Character Concept Art, Character Assets, Animation	Tiggi Pengelly
Systems Programmer	Weapons & Combat System, Character Controller	Sam Cameron
Implementation Programmer	Enemy Behavior & Statistics, Sound & UI Implementation	Carlo Tejada
Sound Designer	Music Creation, Sound Effects Creation	Sarita Sou
UI Designer	UI Design	Sarita Sou
Level Designer	Testable In-Engine Metrics, Design & Implement Playable Spaces	Chris Dichmann
Narrative Designer	Determine Narrative Context, Scripting, Barks	Abigail Norris Chris Dichmann Sarita Sou

3.3 Acknowledgements

We at Slommy Studios acknowledge that our project, currently operating under the title *CHOSEN*, will comply with Sheridan College's policies, including:

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Sheridan Code of Conduct
- Copyright and Intellectual Property Usage
- Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- Student Code of Conduct