



## Interactive Arts + Media

# INTRODUCTION TO GAME DEVELOPMENT

36-1500 (UG08-02) – 3 credits  
Thursday, 6:30 PM

Torco Building, 624 S. Michigan Ave, rm. 606

Columbia College Chicago  
600 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago IL  
<http://iam.colum.edu>

**Instructor Name:** *Theresa Devine*  
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**Fax Number:**  
**Office/ Mailbox:** Interactive Arts and Media, 623 South Wabash Avenue, room 400A  
**Office Hours:** *Monday 5:30 to 6:15pm*  
**Class portal:** <http://oasis.colum.edu>

**Dept. Phone:** (312) 369 7578  
**Office Phone:** NA  
**Home Phone:** 312-545-7727

**Class website/TWiki:** *gamesare.amedium.net*

**Introduction:** This is a foundation course of the Game Design Major, focusing on the many facets of the game development process. During the course of the semester, students learn about the five primary disciplines in game development – *concept, design, programming, art, and audio*, as well as the structure of the development team, production cycle, and business realities. Students are also exposed to game design documentation formats and by the class's end students are asked to produce written documentation and develop their own game concept.

**Course Description/Rational:** The students are taught that games are a medium to be used for expression. A personal game design is pursued and utilized as a vehicle to motivate interactive art and game design majors to think more critically and creatively as they gain technical writing and presentation skills.

**Prerequisites:** Enthusiasm for games. ☺

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Review the history of video/computer games with regard to evolving genres and taxonomies.
- Develop game analysis and criticism competency as applied to both existing game/products and their own game ideas.
- Review both creative idea techniques as well as industry idea development related processes.
- Create an original Game Concept/Design Document and Pitch Presentation.

**COURSE WORK and GRADING:**

In addition to the general work discussed above, your performance in this class is judged in part on participation, writing and critique assignments, exams, and the final project.

**Assignments and Projects:** Assignments and Projects are to be submitted via Oasis, or by the process indicated by the instructor, prior to the start of the class they are due. You may place a safety copy in the [\\Siam2\ClassFolders\ "Drop" folder if you wish. If you do not submit the assignment at the time it is due, your grade on that assignment will be reduced as follows: 10% of your final grade on the assignment, per day. No assignment will be accepted over 1 week late. THIS IS A HARD AND FAST RULE -- NO EXCEPTIONS. No assignments will be accepted after the end of the last class. Problems with computers \(printers or emails\) do not suffice as explanation for late assignments. In the event that you email an assignment because of an absence, you must confirm receipt of that email and still turn in a hard copy to the instructor's mailbox upon your return to campus.](#)

**Course Work Percentage Breakdown**

Exams	25%
Projects	55%
Attendance/Class Participation	20%

Please note that grades are assigned as follows:

A = 93 % and above	C+ = 77 - 79%
A- = 90 - 92%	C = 73 - 76%
B+ = 87 - 89%	C- = 70 - 72%
B = 83 - 86%	D = 60- 69%
B- = 80 - 82%	F = 59% and below

The instructor is the final arbiter of all grades for the class.

**Grade Requirements for Major:** You are required to finish with a "C" grade or better if this class is required for your Major, or is a prerequisite for a class required by your major. If you do not, you must take this class again and cannot advance to the next required class.

**Incomplete Grade:** An Incomplete Grade (I) can only be issued for an undergraduate student who has met the following criteria: The student has successfully completed all course requirements to date but is faced with unexpected circumstances during the final weeks of the semester resulting in the inability to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. The student must have, in the instructor's estimation, the ability to complete missed course requirements outside of class and by the end of the eighth week of the following semester. The instructor must agree to evaluate the student's work and replace the Incomplete grade before the end of the following semester. An agreement specifying work to be completed and a due date must be signed by both instructor and student and approved by the Department Chair. In the event that an instructor is no longer employed by the College, a program Coordinator, Director, or the Department Chair can evaluate the work and assign the course grade.

**Course Readings:****Required Texts –**

- *Game Development Essentials: An Introduction* by Jeannie Novak (Thompson, ISBN: 1-4180-4208-0).

**Additional or Background Reading –**

- TBD

**CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

**Email:** All students are assigned a @loop.colum.edu email when they first register. This is the only email that instructors use to contact you about assignments, scheduling, or other classroom issues. It is your responsibility to check this email regularly for information. You can access your @loop.colum.edu email via a link at the bottom of the left hand column of the Oasis portal. (<http://oasis.colum.edu>) We recommend that you either check that email daily or forward it to an email account that you do check daily.

**Backup and Archival Policy:** Students are responsible for maintaining their own backup copies of all digital works. The Interactive Arts and Media department provides each registered student with server storage space as a courtesy and convenience, but does not guarantee access to that server space nor does it guarantee the safety of those digital files. Maintain your own electronic backup of your important files.

Additionally, as part of this class, you may be asked to provide all class work, documentation, proposals, and projects in electronic form on a CD or DVD-ROM on the last day of class. Your instructor will inform you if this is required, and of the specifics of the requirement.

**Academic Honesty and Conduct:** Academic honesty is expected of all students. Any inappropriate use of materials or plagiarism will not be tolerated. (See Academic Integrity Policies on pg. 18 of the Columbia Catalog.)

In line with Columbia's Student Code of Conduct, students are reminded that Columbia expects students to treat each other, faculty, and staff with respect. Harassment of any kind is forbidden, as is exposing students or faculty to material and images that might be considered offensive.

All work submitted in this course for academic credit must be your own original work, the original work of the group of students cooperating in a project, and/or adhere to all relevant copyright and intellectual property ownership laws. You are all responsible for your own work, and while consultation and discussion of course topics with other students is encouraged, submitting another student's work as one's own - in whole or in part - will result in a zero for that assignment for all students involved. Additional penalty for violation of this policy could be extended to include failure of the class or other disciplinary action at the discretion of the instructor, the department, or Columbia College Chicago.

For more information on the use of copyright material please consult the following sources –

Copyright and Fair Use - <http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>

The U.S. Copyright Office - <http://www.copyright.gov/>

Digital Millennium Copyright Act - <http://www.copyright.gov/legislation/dmca.pdf>

Fair Use of Online Video - <http://tinyurl.com/5gw89s> (American University)

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend every session and arrive on time, prepared for the class at the indicated start time. It is the Interactive Arts and Media departmental policy that a student automatically fails the class upon their third unexcused absence. (You are out on the third strike.) Two late arrivals (after the beginning of class) equal one absence. Lateness of more than one-half hour is the equivalent of an unexcused absence. Students leaving class early are considered late for the amount of time missed. Students who do not get to class before mid-class break, or do not return after the break, will be marked as absent for that session. Medical and other emergency leave of absences follow a different policy. Please contact your instructor if such a situation arises.

Students are expected to maintain communication with their instructor regarding their presence in class. Maintaining communication with the instructor allows that instructor the option of marking an absence as excused, rather than unexcused, at his or her discretion. All communication regarding an absence or lateness should occur before the session in question. Contact information for the instructor is at the top of this syllabus.

An absent student is still responsible for turning in all required assignments on time, unless a prior arrangement is made with the instructor. The instructor may, at his or her discretion, require make-up work or assignments in the place of missed class work.

**Class Website and Blog Policy:** As part of this class, you will be expected to create and maintain a class portfolio website or blog. This website should feature all of your in-class and homework assignments. It is your responsibility to maintain working links to all of these projects. These links will be used for grading the projects and a missing link will be considered the same as a missing assignment. You are responsible for insuring that a blog posting appears properly after submission. You are also solely responsible for the content of your class website and/or blog. (See the information on Academic Honesty and Copyrights in a preceding section.)

### CONAWAY CENTER STATEMENT

Students with disabilities are requested to present their Columbia accommodation letters to their instructor at the beginning of the semester so that accommodations can be arranged in a timely manner by the College, the department or the faculty member, as appropriate. Students with disabilities who do not have accommodation letters should visit the office of Services for Students with Disabilities in room 520 of the Congress building (312.344.8134/V or 312.360.0767/TTY). It is incumbent upon the student to know their responsibilities in this regard.

### WRITING CENTER

Everyone is invited to visit Columbia College's Writing Center. Students may drop in or have a standing weekly appointment. Writing consultants can help a student develop a paper idea, organize a paper, or revise a paper.

[http://www.colum.edu/Academics/English\\_Department/writingcent/index.php](http://www.colum.edu/Academics/English_Department/writingcent/index.php)

### IAM OPEN LAB HOURS:

**Computer Labs:** 624 South Michigan, 603 and 623 South Wabash, 407

**Game Lab:** 624 S. Michigan, 604 (limited open gaming hours)

For lab hours and software inventory, see <http://iam.colum.edu/facilities/studios.aspx>

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Class	Date	Lecture	Discussion - Development
1	Sept 4	Course Introduction and Mystery Box	
2	Sept 11	Industry Perspective and Creativity	Favorite Game and Mystery Box – Perspective Lecture
3	Sept 18	Video Game History	History Video History Timeline
4	Sept 25	Types of Players Game platforms, genres & goals/applications	Game concept documents, paper table top game presentation, what type of player are you?
5	Oct 2	Immersion and Storytelling	Immersion, storytelling exercises
6	Oct 9	Ludologists, Narrativists, Conceptualists	Ken Levine; Exquisite Corpse; Examination of design approaches
7	Oct 16	Board Game presentations	Understanding the table top game as a tactic for successful game design
8	Oct 23	Mid-Term Exam	
9	Oct 30	Intellectual Property, Ethics , Concept	Overstepping the bounds, Examine your motivations, Non-competition contracts, Getting in the creative driver's seat
10	Nov 6	Character Development	Building characters – what are they for and how can the definition of “character” be reframed?
11	Nov 13	Visiting Artist	
12	Nov 20	Gameplay and Level Design	Deconstructing gameplay, types of challenges, Zero sum/Non zero sum; Structure, time and space
13	Nov 27	Thanksgiving	
15	Dec 4	The Pitch	Sell sheets; presenting your ideas
16	Dec 11	Final Exam	Design Doc Final Review Final Presentations

**NOTE:** This syllabus is subject to change as the course proceeds. You will be notified of any and all changes.

A copy of this syllabus is available electronically in the section for this class in the Oasis online portal.

(<http://oasis.colum.edu>)