



GAM-402-D1: Game Workshop II — Spring 2024

Course Syllabus

Meeting Time and Location: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM, Fine Arts 263

Instructor: Matthew DiMatteo (he/him)

Email: mdimatteo@rider.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:30-1:30 PM or by appointment, Fine Arts 214

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Mutual respect and a commitment to inclusiveness are crucial to a positive learning environment. In this course, we will honor the diversity of all members of the Rider community by fostering a learning environment that is respectful of other classmates based on their identities and past experiences, including race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexuality, age, religion, culture, veteran status, and disability. I encourage any student who has concerns about the climate of this classroom or the behavior of others in the class to discuss matters with the instructor or the chair of the instructor’s department.

Health and Wellness Resources

Student Health Center: Poyda Hall — healthcenter@rider.edu **609-896-5060**

Counseling Center: Zoerner House — counseling@rider.edu **609-896-5157**

Healthy Broncs Portal — Appointments, Medical Forms

National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: **Dial 988**

Local Therapy Resources: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

Report an Incident

Tutoring and Accessibility Support

[Academic Success Center](#): Bart Luedeke Center, Suite 237, academicsuccesscenter@rider.edu

[Student Accessibility and Support Services](#): Bart Luedeke Center, Suite 201, accessibility@rider.edu

Course Description

The [Game Workshop](#) courses are designed to give participants a “real world” understanding of the digital game production process from a product’s inception to its public release. While learning the methods, tools, and techniques used by game development teams, students will work in teams to create a digital game, test it, market it, and release it to the public. Aspects of design, aesthetic, interface, monetization, and social and cultural context will all be considered.

Course Learning Goals

By successfully completing this course, students will:

1. Understand the current standards, practices, and production methods used in the digital game design industry
 2. Learn the skills, tools, and technologies used to create games on digital platforms
 3. Be able to analyze and consider current market trends and industry drivers
 4. Work together in a team environment toward a common goal
 5. Specialize in and contribute to a particular aspect of game development
 6. Build and publish a fully functional digital game
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Course Requirements

Students will be expected to:

1. Manage tasks and adhere to a project schedule with milestone goals
 2. Perform regular playtesting sessions and iterate based on feedback
 3. Meet regularly with the instructor to discuss team and individual progress
 4. Meet regularly as a team both in and outside of class
 5. Maintain project materials through [GitHub](#)
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Course Materials

1. [Canvas](#) — Resources such as the course syllabus and other materials will be posted in the [Files](#) section. Certain assignments should be uploaded via the [Assignments](#) section. The [Announcements](#) section will be used to post notifications on weather-related scheduling changes or any other relevant news. Any announcements made will also be copied as a class-wide email.
2. [GitHub](#) — Teams will use GitHub as a code/file repository and version control system for their game projects.
3. [GanttLab](#) — Teams will use GanttLab as a project management tool to organize their project schedule, tasks, deliverables, and milestones.

4. **External Storage** — Highly recommended for storing and transferring files. Each student's Rider Google account includes 15 GB of cloud storage. A physical storage device is also recommended. A 1 TB drive can be a good personal investment for storing files beyond the scope of this course.
5. **Additional Costs and Expectations** — As the goal of the class is to produce, release, and market a product, there may be some minor additional expenses dependent on the method of project release. Examples may include production of marketing items or commercial web space.

There is no textbook for this course

Evaluation and Grading

Individual students' grades will be determined by the following categories:

- **20% Individual Milestone Assessments (2 at 10% each)** — At two milestones during the semester, students will complete a [self assessment](#) and [peer assessment](#) form and meet individually with the instructor (in Fine Arts 214) to discuss both individual and team progress (**students are expected to sign up for a meeting time slot in advance**). Students will assign themselves a tentative grade for the milestone based on their self-evaluation of their performance, supported with documentation of individual contributions for the milestone. This grade will be formalized following discussion with the instructor, who reserves the right to alter this grade based on the student's documented contributions. **Students who fail to meet with the instructor will receive a grade of 0 for that milestone.** *Peer assessment feedback will not count toward either your grade or the grades of your team members, but is merely intended as a way to elicit helpful, honest feedback.*
- **20% Group Milestone Progress (2 at 10% each)** — At two milestones during the semester, teams will showcase their in-progress games for playtesting during class (in Fine Arts 249). Team members will share a grade based on how well their game meets the specifications set for it by this point in the project schedule. *Teams are also strongly encouraged to playtest informally in and out of class throughout the semester.*
- **20% Personal Portfolio** — By the end of the semester, there is an expectation that each individual will have a published portfolio appropriate to their area of expertise and expected path after college. As this element will be different for each individual, goals for this element will be set by the student at the beginning of the semester. The grade will be a measure of how well the final portfolio meets the stated goals.
- **10% Final Product** — Team members will share a grade based on how well their finished game meets the specifications set for it in the project schedule.
- **10% Project Postmortem** — At the end of the semester, each team will give a 10-minute presentation looking back on the project's development, including lessons learned and what could have been done differently to achieve a better result. Each individual should contribute to this, and the team will share a grade.
- **10% Attendance and Participation** — Students are expected to regularly attend class meetings. During production, each team will meet with the instructor for 30 minutes once per week, with two teams meeting on Mondays and the other two teams meeting on Wednesdays. Most Fridays will be optional; come if you need help with anything. **1 point will be deducted from individual students' grades for each unexcused absence or extreme tardiness.**
- **5% Revised Role Summary** — At the start of the semester, each individual will revise their 1-2 page summary of their job and perceived tasks and goals within the development of the project. Summary description

should include goals, relationship to other team members, tools used, and potential pitfalls. Tasks should be included as a bullet-point list in the document with start-date estimates.

- **5% Revised Project Plan** — At the start of the semester, each team will reevaluate their project goals and schedule, documented through [GanttLab](#).
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Grading Scale

A	93.50-100%
A-	89.50-93.49%
B+	86.50-89.49%
B	83.50-86.59%
B-	79.50-83.49%
C+	76.50-79.49%
C	73.50-76.49%
C-	69.50-73.49%
D	59.50-69.49%
F	0-59.49%

Students must earn a **D or higher to pass the course** and receive credit; however, students are strongly encouraged to earn a C or higher in each of their courses in order to maintain the necessary Grade Point Average of 2.0 or higher to remain in good academic standing.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 01 — Course Overview / Project Status Check-in

- Mon. January 22 — Course Expectations, Winter Progress Summaries / Project Status Update (Fine Arts 263)
- Wed. January 24 — Project Schedule/Team Roles Reassessment (Fine Arts 263)
 - In class, each team will [choose a time slot for in-class meetings with the instructor](#), which will be ongoing throughout the semester. Two teams will meet on Mondays, two on Wednesdays. Each meeting will be roughly 30 minutes.
- Fri. January 26 — Scrum and Agile Development (Fine Arts 263)

For Next Week — do the following by February 2:

- Individually, complete the [Revised Role Summary \(Individual\)](#)
 - As teams, complete the [Revised Project Plan \(Group\)](#)
 - [Sign up for a 1-on-1 portfolio meeting time slot](#)
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Week 02 — Milestone 1 Start / 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings

- Mon. January 29 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Wed. January 31 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Fri. February 2 — 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
 - [Revised Role Summary](#), [Revised Project Plan](#) **DUE**
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Week 03 — Milestone 1 Production / 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings

- Mon. February 5 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Wed. February 7 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Fri. February 9 — 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
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Week 04 — Milestone 1 Production / 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings

- Mon. February 12 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Wed. February 14 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
 - Fri. February 16 — 1-on-1 Portfolio Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
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Week 05 — Milestone 1 Production

- Mon. February 19 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
- Wed. February 21 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 263)
- Fri. February 23 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings

Week 06 — Milestone 1 Playtests

Please note: All teams must attend playtests in FA 249

- Mon. February 26 — Playtests: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. February 28 — Playtests: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. March 1 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings (Fine Arts 249)

For Next Week (Milestone 1 Assessment) — do the following by March 4:

- Complete the Milestone [Self Assessment](#) and [Peer Assessment](#) Forms
- [Upload documentation of your project contributions to Canvas](#)
- [Sign up for an Individual Milestone Assessment Meeting](#)

Week 07 — Milestone 1 Assessment Meetings

- Mon. March 4 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
- Wed. March 6 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
- Fri. March 8 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)

No Class March 11-15 (Spring Break)

Week 08 — Milestone 2 Start

- Mon. March 18 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. March 20 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. March 22 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings (Fine Arts 249)

Week 09 — Milestone 2 Production

- Mon. March 25 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. March 27 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. March 29 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings (Fine Arts 249)

Week 10 — Milestone 2 Production

- Mon. April 1 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. April 3 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. April 5 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings (Fine Arts 249)

Week 11 — Milestone 2 Production

- Mon. April 8 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. April 10 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. April 12 — OPTIONAL: Open Meetings (Fine Arts 249) [Course Evaluations open at 10 AM]

For Next Week — Complete your [Personal Portfolio](#) by April 19

Week 12 — Milestone 2 Playtests / Personal Portfolio Reviews

- Mon. April 15 — Team Meetings: ToBeDetermined at 11:30, Meat Market at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Wed. April 17 — Team Meetings: Puppie Pause at 11:30, Tunnel Terror at 12:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Thu. April 18 — Playtests for All Teams from 11:30-1:00 (Fine Arts 249)
- Fri. April 19 — Personal Portfolio Reviews ([Personal Portfolio DUE](#)) — *all must attend* (Fine Arts 249)

For Next Week (Milestone 2 Assessment) — do the following by April 22:

- Complete the Milestone [Self Assessment](#) and [Peer Assessment](#) Forms
- [Upload documentation of your project contributions to Canvas](#)
- [Sign up for an Individual Milestone Assessment Meeting](#)

Week 13 — Milestone 2 Assessment Meetings

- Mon. April 22 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
- Wed. April 24 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)
- Fri. April 26 — Individual Milestone Assessment Meetings (Fine Arts 214)

For Finals — do the following by April 29:

- Publish your game on itch.io and have at least one team member [post a link to the published game on Canvas](#)

Course Evaluation by Apr. 26 — if the class reaches an 80% response rate, I will give everyone 1% extra credit

Note: If you wish to request a grade of [Incomplete](#) for this course, you must do so by this date

Final Exam Period (Apr. 29) — Final Product Showcase

Please note that this class meeting will take place Monday, Apr. 29 from 10:30 AM-12:30 PM (Fine Arts 263)

- Finished Game DUE — publish on itch.io and [post a link to Canvas](#) by class time
- Project Postmortem DUE — [submit slideshow to Canvas](#) by class time
- Each team will have 30 minutes to showcase their finished game and present their postmortem

Academic Policies

Policy on Academic Integrity and Cases of Academic Dishonesty

This class will follow the policies of Rider University regarding Academic Integrity, as well as the procedures in addressing cases of Academic Dishonesty. The College's policies on such matters can be found in their entirety at: <http://catalog.rider.edu/policies/code-academic-integrity/>. Academic Dishonesty refers to a misrepresentation of the source or permissions related to the submission of written and creative works. In the area of digital design, this includes visual work, audio work, and written work. If in doubt, feel free to discuss sources with me before submission of work.

Academic Success Center

Students needing supplemental help beyond the scope of this class are encouraged to contact the [Academic Success Center](#) in Suite 237 of the Bart Luedeke Center. The center's services include a writing studio, success coaching and the potential for tutoring services. Email academicsuccesscenter@rider.edu.

Academic Disability Policy

Rider University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all students with disabilities. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of Sample Syllabus Statements-Disabilities April 2021 1973, you are required to register with [Student Accessibility and Support Services](#) office (SASS) at the Bart Luedeke Center, Suite 201. SASS can be contacted by email at accessibility@rider.edu or by phone at 609-895-5492, To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper accommodation form from SASS and meet with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss your accommodations.

Class Absence Notice

It is the student's responsibility to inform instructors of the nature and extent of an actual or anticipated absence. If that is impossible, or if the absence is or will be more than three (3) consecutive class sessions (seven (7) calendar days), the student should contact the Office of the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@rider.edu or 609-896-5101. Then the dean's office will notify the appropriate faculty member. More information about the procedure for notifying the dean's office of absences can be found at <https://www.rider.edu/about/offices-services/student-affairs/dean-of-students/info-for-students/class-absence-notice>

Incomplete Grades

Students who, as a result of extenuating circumstances, are unable to complete the required work of a course within the term, may request an extension of time from a faculty member. Such extensions of time can be granted only in cases in which illness or another serious emergency has prevented the student from completing the course requirements or from taking a final examination. The request for extension of time must be made prior to the last scheduled class meeting, except in those unusual situations in which prior notification is impossible.

The faculty member shall determine whether to grant the request for a time extension and the type of verification (if any) required to support the request. The faculty member shall specify the time, up to four weeks from the last day of the term, as specified in the academic calendar, by which work must be completed by the student. If the faculty member does agree to the request, the notation “I” (Incomplete) shall be submitted on the grade roll. In those situations where the faculty member has not received a request for an extension of time, the notation “I” (Incomplete) may be submitted on the grade roll by the faculty member when, in his or her judgment, such a determination appears justified. Upon submission of completed required work the faculty member shall submit a Change of Grade form to the Registrar.

Students who, as a result of extenuating circumstances, are unable to submit the completed required work at the end of the four-week period may request an extension of the incomplete grade. The request for an extension of the incomplete must be made prior to the expiration of the four-week period. If the faculty member agrees to the request for an extension of the incomplete, the faculty member shall specify the time, up to a maximum of two weeks from the date of expiration of the four-week period (i.e., six weeks from the last day of the term) by which work must be completed by the student and shall submit an Extension of Incomplete form to the Registrar.

Upon submission of completed required work, the faculty member shall submit a Change of Grade form to the Registrar and assign the course grade. Failure of the Registrar to receive from the faculty member a Change of Grade form or an Extension of Incomplete form at the end of the four-week period, or a Change of Grade form at the end of the six-week period shall result in the automatic assignment of the grade “F,” “Z,” or “U” by the Registrar.

Students who receive an incomplete in a course that is part of a course sequence must obtain permission from the department chairperson to remain enrolled in the next course in the sequence or they will be removed from that next course.

More information on grade reports can be found here:

<http://catalog.rider.edu/policies/undergraduate/grades/>

Courses — Adding, Dropping, Withdrawing, Auditing, Repeating

Students may add courses through the first week of the regular semester at their own discretion provided the course is still open for registration. Students may drop courses through the second week of the regular semester at their own discretion. In such cases, the courses are deleted from the student’s record. After the second week of the semester, a withdrawal from the course is necessary and a ‘W’ is recorded on the transcript.

Students may withdraw from courses and receive a grade of ‘W’ during the third through tenth weeks of the semester. The student’s academic advisor and financial aid counselor will be notified of class withdrawals by email.

View the course drop/withdrawal policy:

<https://www.rider.edu/tuition-aid/financial-aid/payment-billing/drop-withdrawal-policy>

Spring 2024 withdrawal dates can be found here:

<http://catalog.rider.edu/academic-calendar/#Spring%20semester>

More information on course processes can be found here:

<http://catalog.rider.edu/policies/undergraduate/courses-add-drop/>

Registrar forms can be found here:

<https://www.rider.edu/academics/academic-support/registrar/forms>



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