

MRTS 3250 Section 001 Intro to Game Design

Instructor: Cory Haltinner

Teaching Assistant: Cameron Wallace

University Of North Texas

Location:

RTFP room 264

Days: Monday

Time: 11:10pm - 2pm

Professor: Cory Haltinner

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Teaching Assistant: Cameron Wallace

CameronWallace2@my.unt.edu

Office Hours:

Wednesdays 9am-11am

RTFP Room 225. Can meet with me before or after class as needed, or other times virtually by appointment.

Class will be notified via canvas of changes or updates to office hours times, or online office hours.

Course Description:

This course is intended to provide students with a solid practical foundation in game design, focusing on the development of concepts, design composition, and prototyping through the creation of non-digital games. Through the use of physical prototyping, playtesting, and iteration, students will learn how to translate game ideas into game pitches, design documents, and game designs. Additionally, students will analyze and recognize the play that exists in important games, stories, and other media. The course is structured with a combination of lectures and labs. As the content expert, the instructor will provide presentations and examples each week to introduce core concepts with supporting examples. In the lab, students will work individually and/or in groups to put the core concepts into practice.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles of game design, including the essential components of gameplay such as mechanics, rules, and objectives.
- Apply design principles to create and refine game prototypes, utilizing playtesting methods to evaluate and improve the quality of the game design.
- Critically evaluate and analyze existing video games and board games, as well as those created by peers, utilizing thoughtful critique to inform and improve game design concepts.
- Develop professional skills such as time management, public speaking, and collaborative teamwork, as they apply to the practice of game design and game development.

Communication Practices:

Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

Attendance Policy:

Because this course involves collaboration, participation is essential to learning. Our project-based activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late to class, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know prior to your absence.

If you must miss class, please let me know prior to your absence. Attendance will count towards a student's final grade, accounting for 10% of the overall final grade.

Late Work Policy:

Late work may be turned in for most assignments and will be accepted unless otherwise stated, however there will be a penalty assessed as follows. 10% will be deducted for every week that the assignment is late, to a maximum penalty of 30%.

- Please note that late work **will not** be accepted for "Progress Update" turn-ins for projects. Those need to be turned in on time to receive feedback in a timely manner.
- Accommodations will be made in accordance to Title IX, University observed holidays, approved absences, sicknesses, etc. Please communicate with me if and when accommodations are needed.

Examples: an assignment turned in 1-7 days late will be assessed a 10% point deduction

an assignment turned in 8-14 days late will be assessed a 20% point deduction

an assignment turned in 15+ days late will be assessed a maximum 30% point deduction

- This means that an assignment which has been turned in 15+ days late will receive a **maximum** score of 70%.
- I do allow for resubmissions of work that have been turned in on time if the student wishes to address feedback on their projects and resubmit.

Evaluation Methods and Criteria Methods: Presentations, papers, production and public critiques.

Required Texts:

1. Fullerton, T. "Game Design Workshop 5th edition" – AK Peters/CRC Press, 2018. (GDW)

<https://www.amazon.com/Game-Design-Workshop-Playcentric-Innovative/dp/1138098779>

[Links to an external site.](#)

Free online access to book at UNT media library:

<https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b8024151>

[Links to an external site.](#)

2. Ralph Koster "Theory of Fun for Game Design" -- O'reilly Media, 2013.

<https://www.amazon.com/Theory-Game-Design-Raph-Koster/dp/1449363210>

[Links to an external site.](#)

Free online access to book at UNT media library:

<https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b5871858>

[Links to an external site.](#)

Suggested Texts:

1. "The Art of Game Design: A Book of Lenses" by Jesse Schell
https://www.amazon.com/Art-Game-Design-Lenses-Third/dp/1138632058/ref=pd_bxgy_d_sccl_1/133-1456646-4314163?psc=1

2. "Rules of Play" by Eric Zimmerman
<https://www.amazon.com/Rules-Play-Design-Fundamentals-Press/dp/0262240459>

Recommended Software

MS Word, Paint or Photoshop, Powerpoint

Grade Scale:

90+ = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-60 = D

59-0 = F

Assignments:

Class Participation:

Attendance 20%

Weekly Worksheets and Exercises 20%

Reading and Video Responses 20%

Final Projects:

Final Game 20%

Post Mortem & Design Diary Document 20%

Other Relevant and Important Information:

Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of AI:

Generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) are permitted to be used in this course under specific circumstances:

- They can be used to fuel your creative process as sources for potential ideas, approaches, or solutions, however, they CANNOT be used to directly create any portion of the end-product that you turn in for any assignment.
 - For example, you **cannot**:

- Use AI to generate your responses to a Worksheet or discussion board post.
- Use AI to summarize assigned Videos rather than watching them.
- However, you **can**:
 - Use AI as a resource
 - Use AI to ideate and generate possibilities that feed into your personal creative process.
 - Use AI to generate reference images for your Mood Board.

Simply put, you can use AI as part of the process to produce *your own* creations (posts, documentation, concepts), but you cannot use it to replace your own creations or as a substitute for your own final work product.

Additionally, if you use AI tools:

- You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content).
- Any usage of AI tools must be clearly disclosed (along with a note about the scope and purpose of its usage) in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.
- Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways or to generate the final submission for any assignment will result in a penalty on that assignment.
- When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

Inclusion Statement:

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

ADA Statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty

to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>)

[Links to an external site.](#)

). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.