CMPUT 299 Course Outline

Winter 2006

http://games.cs.ualebrta.ca/299/

1   Course Description

CMPUT 299 is a new course focusing on games as interactive entertainment, the roles they play in society, and the process by which they are made. Students will work in interdisciplinary teams to apply the concepts learned in this class to the creation of a short narrative-based game using the NeverWinter Nights™game engine.

1.1   Required Textbooks

Students are not required to purchase a textbook for this course. Selected readings will be handed out in class.

1.2   Instructors

The lectures for CMPUT 299 will be taught by a variety of lecturers including:

Sean Gouglas (History)	sean.gouglas@ualberta.ca	
Jim Hoover (CS)	jhoover@cs.ualberta.ca	
Jonathan Schaeffer (CS)	jonathan@cs.ualberta.ca	
Finnegan Southey (CS)	finnegan@cs.ualberta.ca	
Nathan Sturtevant (CS)	nathanst@cs.ualberta.ca	Head Instructor
	Office: 2-45 CSC	
	Office Hours: M 4:00-5:00, Th 3:30-4:30pm, or by appointment	

1.3   TAs

Matthew Bouchard	bouchard@cs.ualberta.ca
Hector Perez	hectorp@cs.ualberta.ca
Office Hours: TBA	

1.4   Class Times and Location

	Lecture	Lab
Time	TTh 9:30-10:50am	TBA
Location	CSC B-10	CSC 1-21

Lab hours will be flexible and determined on the first day of class.

For non-computing science students to get access to the lab, you must sign a Conditions of Use form and choose a password. Computing Science students will not have to sign a Conditions of Use, they will just need to choose a password for lab access. This can be done between 9 and 5 any weekday in CSC 1-43. You are encouraged to do this before your first lab. You will need your Onecard and should mention that you are taking CMPUT 299.

1.5   Course Marking

55% Project
    1. Teams Formation, Due January 24 (1 mark)
    2. Setting, Due January 31, (4 marks)
    3. Plot and Design Document, Due February 9, (5 marks)
    4. Prototype/Walkthrough, Due in lab week of February 27, (10 marks)
    5. Design Issue Presentation, Early March (10 marks)
    6. Pitch, March 28, (10 marks)
    7. Peer evaluation (10 marks)
    8. Check-off/final product, Due November 30, (50 marks)
The project score will be modified by a multiplier between .5 and 1.5 based on the evaluations of group members in the project. If group members recognize that a particular student went far above what was required for the project, their relative score will be increased, while if a student does not carry their load, their project score will be decreased relative to other students on the team.

15% Lab Exam, week of February 13 (In lab, closed book)
10% Lab Assignments
20% Midterm, March 30 (Short-answer, closed book)
Up to 10% bonus marks for exceptional performance in any aspect of the course, including completion coursework, class participation, helping other students, etc.)

Late assignments will be accepted with a 10% deduction from the final assignment mark for each day (24-hour period) which an assignment is late. So, if an assignment is due at 9:30am Tuesday, but it is turned in any time after 9:30am, but before 9:30am Wednesday, it will be subject to a 10% deduction. After 9:30am Wednesday it will be subject to a 20% deduction, and so on. Any disputes over the marking of an assignment must be brought up with a TA or the Head Instructor within two weeks of when the assignment is returned.

1.6   Course Resources

There are a variety of resources available if you are experiencing difficulties in the course. Course announcements will be made on the course web page and on the course newsgroup. Newsgroups can be accessed from:

    http://webnews.srv.ualberta.ca/

If you are having trouble with computers in the lab between 9 and 5 you can go to the CS helpdesk (CSC 1-43). Please bring hardware issues directly to the helpdesk instead of trying to fix them yourself. Please take note of your group and personal quotas; exceeding your quota can result in data corruption. Be sure to save all files on your network drive. Saving too many files on the Desktop or elsewhere on the lab machines can lead to the corruption of your account.

If you are having trouble with any other aspect of the course, please talk to one of the instructors. We want this course to be a valuable learning experience, but we can't remedy problems we don't know about.

2 Academic Integrity

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

In the project for this course you will be permitted to use material or ideas from other courses and/or from web resources. But if you do so, you must properly reference where you got the material and whether it was created specifically for this class. Software used in this course as well as material created or used for the course project may be subject to copyright restrictions. Please see:

http://www.library.ualberta.ca/copyright/index.cfm

for more information on University copyright policies.

3 Course Topics

Game Development Cycle	Project Management
Narrative in Games	Game Genres
Programming and Scripting	Game Design
History of Graphic Technologies	Art and Graphics
Music and Sound	Artificial Intelligence
Industry Case Studies	Cultural Aspects of Games

As time permits: Game interfaces, psychology, physics, research uses of games