

N331 GAME TESTING AND EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN-CENTERED COMPUTING
INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF INFORMATICS AND COMPUTING, INDIANAPOLIS
FALL 2021

Section No.: 37779 *Credit Hours:* 3
Time: 03:00P-05:40P Mondays
Location: IT255

Instructor: Travis Faas, M.S.
Office Hours: Monday, Noon-3pm

Office: IT 414J

Zoom: <https://iu.zoom.us/my/faaszone>

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students evaluate game quality and usability throughout the development cycle. Topics include sampling and recruiting play testers as well as identifying and adjusting factors to enhance gameplay outcomes, such as playability and enjoyment

This course focuses on the evaluation of the quality of a game in both early and later states. Students will learn usability evaluation techniques and apply them to the evaluation of their own and others games. Recruitment and sampling of the correct, real-world individuals will be required. Additional work will be done to understand the factors that go into making a game playable and enjoyable and how to identify those factors and tweak them to produce better gameplay outcomes.

Upon completion of this class, students will be able to list factors that could impact their game designs and run tests that take these factors into consideration while answering key questions about the efficacy about the game systems in producing the desired aesthetic effects.

Required Text:

The Gamer's Brain: How Neuroscience and UX Can Impact Video Game Design

Celia Hodent

ISBN: 978-1498775502

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, the student will	*RBT	IUPUI+	PLO's	Assessment
<i>1. List factors that influence a user's desire to play a game and the enjoyment gained from gameplay</i>	1,2	P1.1; P1.2;	1,5	<i>Analog Design</i>
<i>2. Identify and recruit adequate play testers for game prototypes based on prototype goals</i>	3,4	P1.3; P4.2;	1	<i>Final Project</i>
<i>3. Correctly select and implement a strategy to test and evaluate a game with a specific focus on game feel or one of the factors of gameplay</i>	3,4	P2.1; P2.3; P3.4;	4,5,8	<i>Digital Design</i>
<i>4. Prepare clear and concise reports to detail findings and recommend next actions</i>	5,6	P1.4; P2.3;	2	<i>Final Presentation</i>
<i>5. Justify design decisions with models of game design and human-computer interaction</i>	4,5	P2.1; P3.1; P3.3;	5	<i>Digital Design</i>
<i>6. Create game prototypes that represent specific design questions to be tested</i>	5,6	P2.1; P3.2;	7	<i>Weekly Playtests</i>

<i>Media Arts and Science B.S. Program-level Learning Outcomes (PLOs)</i>	<i>†Profiles of Learning for Undergraduate Success (PLUS, IUPUI+)</i>
1. Understand digital media and its effective use as a form of communication.	P1.1 Communicator – Evaluates Information
2. Communicate ideas effectively in written, oral, and visual form to a range of audiences.	P1.4 Communicator – Conveys Ideas Effectively P1.2 Communicator – Listen Actively* P3.2 Innovator – Creates/Designs**
3. Work effectively as a member of a team to achieve a common goal.	P2.2 Problem Solver – Collaborates P1.3 Communicator – Builds Relationships*
4. Analyze a problem, identify and evaluate alternatives, and plan an appropriate solution.	P2.1 Problem Solver – Thinks Critically P3.1 Innovator – Investigates*
5. Evaluate media from multiple perspectives using the theories, concepts, and language of digital media with an appreciation for the history, theory, and traditions of digital media.	P2.3 Problem Solver – Analyzes, Synthesizes, and Evaluates
6. Demonstrate mastery of the concepts, techniques, and tools in one or more digital media specialties.	P2.4 Problem Solver – Perseveres P3.2 Innovator – Creates/Designs*
7. Develop professional quality digital media productions by promptly applying knowledge and skills including best practices and standards.	P3.2 Innovator – Creates/Designs P3.3 Innovator – Confronts Challenges*
8. Explain the impact of digital media on individuals, organizations, and society.	P4.4 Community Contributor – Anticipates Consequences P4.1 Community Contributor – Builds Community*

9. Acknowledge diverse opinions regarding professional, ethical, legal, and social issues with a global perspective.	<p>P4.3 Community Contributor – Behaves Ethically</p> <p>P4.2 Community Contributor – Respectfully Engages Own and Other Cultures*</p>
10. Plan for continuing professional development with an appreciation of the need for lifelong learning.	P3.4 Innovator – Makes Decisions

Software used:

Unity3D, downloadable at <https://unity.com/>

OR

Unreal Engine, downloadable at <https://www.unrealengine.com/en-US/>

EXPECTATIONS, GUIDELINES, AND POLICIES

Attendance:

Given that this class is online and interactions may not always happen synchronously, please set aside half an hour early and late in the week for checking forums and interacting with your peers. Monday - Thursday are good days to select or plan around.

Incomplete:

The instructor may assign an Incomplete (I) grade only if at least 75% of the required coursework has been completed at passing quality and holding you to previously established time limits would result in unjust hardship to you. All unfinished work must be completed by the date set by the instructor. Left unchanged, an Incomplete automatically becomes an F after one year. <http://registrar.iupui.edu/incomp.html>

Deliverables:

You are responsible for completing each deliverable (e.g., assignment, quiz) by its deadline and submitting it by the specified method. Deadlines are outlined in the syllabus or in supplementary documents accessible through Canvas. Should you miss a class, you are still responsible for completing the deliverable and for finding out what was covered in class, including any new or modified deliverable.

No work accepted after due date.

Grading Information:

Participation	35%
Labs & Prototypes	40%
Final Project	25%

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading
1	Introduction to the class, prototyping and interaction	http://www.lostgarden.com/2010/08/visualizing-creative-process.html?m=1 http://www.lostgarden.com/2008/12/post-it-note-design-docs.html Hodent: ch 13
2	Prototyping and interaction, dirt cheap playtests, design space exploration	https://gamasutra.com/blogs/JaneFriedhoff/20160219/266144/Finding_the_fun.php http://www.funkydesignspaces.com/publications/2010/lucero10_PL_EX_cards.pdf http://gamesfromwithin.com/prototyping-youre-probably-doing-it-wrong

3	Knowing your players	https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/134842/personality_and_play_styles_a_.php http://xeodesign.com/xeodesign_whyweplaygames.pdf Hodent: ch 5,6
4	Observation and memoing	http://www.dguth.journalism.ku.edu/Ethnography.html https://www.psychsoma.co.za/qualitative_inquiry_growt/2010/03/memos-and-memoing.html Hodent: ch 7
5	Digital Skills primer	Hodent: ch 10,11 https://learn.unrealengine.com/course/2436620 https://learn.unrealengine.com/course/2503277
6	Worked Project Example	https://learn.unrealengine.com/course/2436619 Notes – Shooter
7	Game Instrumentation, Simple visualization and presentation of data	Hodent: ch 12, 14 https://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/193241/intro_to_user_analytics.php https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqDnJE8l3rw https://paldhous.github.io/ucb/2016/dataviz/week2.html
8	Input and response	Swink Ch 6, 7 / Notes
9	Interviewing Project Assigned	https://www.quirkos.com/blog/post/memos-qualitative-data-analysis-research https://managementhelp.org/businessresearch/interviews.htm

		Hodent: ch 15, 16
10	Interpreting data	https://medium.com/disruptive-design/tools-for-systems-thinkers-the-6-fundamental-concepts-of-systems-thinking-379cdac3dc6a
11	Memory	Hodent: ch 3,4 / notes
12	Learning	Hodent ch 8 / notes
13	Speculative design	https://blog.optimalworkshop.com/what-is-speculative-design http://speculative.hr/en/introduction-to-speculative-design-practice
14	Production	
15	Presentation s	

Grading Scale:

A+	100%	Professional level work, showing highest level of achievement
A	93–99%	Extraordinarily high achievement, quality of work; shows command of the subject matter
A–	90–92%	Excellent and thorough knowledge of the subject matter
B+	87–89%	Above average understanding of material and quality of work
B	83–86%	Mastery and fulfillment of all course requirements; good, acceptable work
B–	80–82%	Satisfactory quality of work

C+	77-79%	Modestly acceptable performance and quality of work
C	73-76%	Minimally acceptable performance and quality of work
C-	70-72%	Unacceptable work (Core course must be repeated for credit)
D+	67-69%	Unacceptable work (Course must be repeated for credit)
D	63-66%	Unacceptable work
D-	60-62%	Unacceptable work
F	Below 60	Unacceptable work

No credits toward major, minor, or certificate requirements are granted for a grade below C. No credits toward general education or elective requirements are granted for a grade below C-.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All students should aspire to the highest standards of academic integrity. Using another student's work on an assignment, cheating on a test, not quoting or citing references correctly, or any other form of dishonesty or plagiarism shall result in a grade of zero on the item and possibly an F in the course. Incidences of academic misconduct shall be referred to the Department Chair and repeated violations shall result in dismissal from the program.

All students are responsible for reading, understanding, and applying the *Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct* and in particular the section on academic misconduct. Refer to *The Code > Responsibilities > Academic Misconduct* at <http://www.indiana.edu/~code/>. All students must also successfully complete the Indiana University Department of Education "How to Recognize Plagiarism" Tutorial and Test. <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd> You must document the difference between your writing and that of others. Use quotation marks in addition to a citation, page number, and reference whenever writing someone else's words (e.g., following the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*). To detect plagiarism instructors apply a range of methods, including Turnitin.com. <http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/libinfo/turnitin>

Academic Misconduct:

1. **Cheating:** Cheating is considered to be an attempt to use or provide unauthorized assistance, materials, information, or study aids in any form and in any academic exercise or environment.
 - a. A student must not use external assistance on any “in-class” or “take-home” examination, unless the instructor specifically has authorized external assistance. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, the use of tutors, books, notes, calculators, computers, and wireless communication devices.
 - b. A student must not use another person as a substitute in the taking of an examination or quiz, nor allow other persons to conduct research or to prepare work, without advanced authorization from the instructor to whom the work is being submitted.
 - c. A student must not use materials from a commercial term paper company, files of papers prepared by other persons, or submit documents found on the Internet.
 - d. A student must not collaborate with other persons on a particular project and submit a copy of a written report that is represented explicitly or implicitly as the student’s individual work.
 - e. A student must not use any unauthorized assistance in a laboratory, at a computer terminal, or on fieldwork.
 - f. A student must not steal examinations or other course materials, including but not limited to, physical copies and photographic or electronic images.
 - g. A student must not submit substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors more than once without permission of the instructor or program to whom the work is being submitted.
 - h. A student must not, without authorization, alter a grade or score in any way, nor alter answers on a returned exam or assignment for credit.
2. **Fabrication:** A student must not falsify or invent any information or data in an academic exercise including, but not limited to, records or reports, laboratory results, and citation to the sources of information.
3. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else’s work, including the work of other students, as one’s own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered “common knowledge” may differ from course to course.
 - a. A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.

- b. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:
 1. directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
 2. using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
 3. paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
 4. borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
 5. offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment
4. **Interference:** A student must not steal, change, destroy, or impede another student's work, nor should the student unjustly attempt, through a bribe, a promise of favors or threats, to affect any student's grade or the evaluation of academic performance. Impeding another student's work includes, but is not limited to, the theft, defacement, or mutilation of resources so as to deprive others of the information they contain.
5. **Violation of Course Rules:** A student must not violate course rules established by a department, the course syllabus, verbal or written instructions, or the course materials that are rationally related to the content of the course or to the enhancement of the learning process in the course.
6. **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** A student must not intentionally or knowingly help or attempt to help another student to commit an act of academic misconduct, nor allow another student to use his or her work or resources to commit an act of misconduct.

OTHER POLICIES

1. **Right to revise:** The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as necessary and, in such an event, will notify students of the changes immediately.
2. **Grade freeze:** One week after a grade has been assigned it will not be changed.
3. **24 hours no-questions:** One day before a project is due, no questions will be answered on the material.
4. **IUPUI course policies:** A number of campus policies governing IUPUI courses may be found at the following link:
http://registrar.iupui.edu/course_policies.html

5. **Classroom civility:** To maintain an effective and inclusive learning environment, it is important to be an attentive and respectful participant in lectures, discussions, group work, and other classroom exercises. Thus, unnecessary disruptions should be avoided, such as ringing cell phones engagement in private conversations and other unrelated activities. Cell phones, media players, or any noisy devices should be turned off during a class. Texting, surfing the Internet, and posting to Facebook or Twitter during class are generally not permitted. Laptop use may be permitted if it is used for taking notes or conducting class activities. Students should check with the instructor about permissible devices in class. IUPUI nurtures and promotes “a campus climate that seeks, values, and cultivates diversity in all of its forms and that provides conditions necessary for all campus community members to feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued” (IUPUI Strategic Initiative 9). IUPUI prohibits “discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or [veteran] status” (Office of Equal Opportunity). Profanity or derogatory comments about the instructor, fellow students, invited speakers or other classroom visitors, or any members of the campus community shall not be tolerated. A violation of this rule shall result in a warning and, if the offense continues, possible disciplinary action.
6. **Bringing children to class:** To ensure an effective learning environment, children are not permitted to attend class with their parents, guardians, or childcare providers.
7. **Communication:** The instructor should respond to emails within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, and announce periods of extended absence in advance. The instructor should provide weekly office hours or accept appointments for face-to-face, telephone, or teleconferenced meetings.
8. **Email:** Indiana University uses your IU email account as an official means of communication, and students should check it daily for pertinent information. Although you may have your IU email forwarded to an outside email account, please email faculty and staff from your IU email account.
9. **Disabilities Policy:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), all qualified students enrolled in this course are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of accommodations needed for the course. Students requiring accommodations because of a disability must register with Adaptive Educational Services (AES) and complete the appropriate AES-issued before receiving accommodations. The AES office is located at UC 100, Taylor Hall (Email: aes@iupui.edu, Tel. 317 274-3241).

Visit <http://aes.iupui.edu> for more information.

10. **Administrative Withdrawal:** A basic requirement of this course is that students participate in all class discussions and conscientiously complete all required course activities and/or assignments. If a student is unable to attend, participate in, or complete an assignment on time, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor. If a student misses more than half of the required activities within the first 25% of the course without contacting the instructor, the student may be administratively withdrawn from this course. Administrative withdrawal may have academic, financial, and financial aid implications. Administrative withdrawal will take place after the full refund period, and a student who has been administratively withdrawn from a course is ineligible for a tuition refund. Contact the instructor with questions concerning administrative withdrawal.
11. **Emergency Preparedness:** Safety on campus is everyone's responsibility. Know what to do in an emergency so that you can protect yourself and others. For specific information, visit the emergency management website. <http://protect.iu.edu/emergency>

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of IUPUI is to provide for its constituents excellence in

- Teaching and Learning;
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity; and
- Civic Engagement.

With each of these core activities characterized by

- Collaboration within and across disciplines and with the community;
- A commitment to ensuring diversity; and
- Pursuit of best practices.

IUPUI's mission is derived from and aligned with the principal components—Communities of Learning, Responsibilities of Excellence, Accountability and Best Practices—of Indiana University's Strategic Directions Charter.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

IUPUI values the commitment of students to learning; of faculty to the highest standards of teaching, scholarship, and service; and of staff to the highest standards of service. IUPUI recognizes students as partners in learning. IUPUI values the opportunities afforded by its location in Indiana's capital city and is committed to serving the needs of its community. Thus, IUPUI students, faculty, and staff are involved in the community, both to provide educational programs and patient care and to apply learning to community needs through service. As a leader in fostering collaborative relationships, IUPUI values collegiality, cooperation, creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship as well as honesty, integrity, and support for open inquiry and dissemination of findings. IUPUI is committed to the personal and professional development of its students, faculty, and staff and to continuous improvement of its programs and services.