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## **MAS-n436/n585 MAS Game Production**

### **Creating a Professional & Fun Game Experience for Public Consumption**

Indiana University School of Informatics & Computing at IUPUI

MAS Program – HCC Dept. Sections 27960, Spring 2017

Primary Meeting Space/Time - Mondays – 3:00 pm - 5:40 pm, IT 355, 3 credits

### **Instructors: Lecturers Mathew A. Powers & Todd Shelton**

Email: SLACK [matapowe@iupui.edu](mailto:matapowe@iupui.edu), [trshelto@iupui.edu](mailto:trshelto@iupui.edu),

Offices: IT#455/IT#467 & MARLA. Office Hours: By Appointment

First Come – First Serve!

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### **IUPUI Mission:**

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

- Teaching and Learning
- Research,
- Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- 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.

### **Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL):**

- Oral presentation • Writing skills
- Critical thinking • Application of knowledge
- Intellectual depth, breadth, and adaptive-ness
- Understanding of society and culture
- Values and ethics

### **University Expectations/Guidelines/Policies:**

University Regulations state: “Students are expected to be present for every meeting of the classes in which they are enrolled.” Only the instructor can excuse a student from classes or course responsibilities. There are always legitimate reasons for missing class. Personal illness, accident, a death or serious illness in the immediate family, athletic trips, scheduled interviews, plant visits, and field trips, or other circumstances may make your class attendance impossible. Each of these situations will be evaluated on an individual basis. Students should make direct contact with his/her instructor preferably before a class. If the instructor cannot be reached in person, by e-mail, or by telephone, the student should leave a message in the instructor’s department mailbox. Students can only make up work from an authorized absence and permission from the instructor.

### **Administrative Withdrawal:**

Administrative Withdrawal: A basic requirement of this course is that you will participate in class and conscientiously complete writing and reading assignments. **Keep in touch with me if you are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time. If you miss more than half our class meetings within the first four weeks of the semester without contacting me, you will be administratively withdrawn from this section. Our class meets once per week; thus if you miss more than two classes in the first four weeks, you will be withdrawn.** Administrative withdrawal may have academic, financial, and financial aid implications. Administrative withdrawal will take place after the full refund period, and if you are administratively withdrawn from the course you will not be eligible for a tuition refund. If you have questions about the administrative withdrawal policy at any point during the semester, please contact me.

### **Incompletes:**

The IUPUI Campus Bulletin presents the campus policy on incompletes, noting that a grade of incomplete may be assigned by an instructor when exceptional circumstances, such as illness, prevent students from finishing all works required in a course. The grade of I will be awarded only if the work is mostly complete, generally 75 to 80 percent, and of passing quality. The key decision in deciding whether or not to give an incomplete involves assessing whether or not the student has completed, at a passing level, enough of the course and whether "exceptional circumstances" apply. Exceptional circumstances can include the serious illness of the student, spouse or partner, child, or parent; or a fire or accident that interrupts the end of the semester. Note that an incomplete is never warranted as a remedy for procrastination.

**Academic Honesty:** All students in New Media should aspire to high standards of academic honesty. This class encourages cooperation and the exchange of ideas. However, students are expected to do their own work.

**Plagiarism: (adapted from the definition by the School of Liberal Arts)**

Plagiarism is the use of the work of others without properly crediting the actual source of the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, entire articles, music or pictures. Using other students' work (with or without their permission) is still plagiarism if you don't indicate who initially did the work. Plagiarism, a form of cheating, is a serious offense and will be severely punished. When an instructor suspects plagiarism, he/she will inform the student of the charge; the student has the right to respond to the allegations. Students whose work appears to be plagiarized may be asked to produce earlier drafts of the work. Students should, for this reason and as a protection in cases of lost papers, diskettes, retain rough drafts, notes and other work products for 2 or 3 weeks after the end of each semester. The penalties for plagiarism include reprimands, being failed for a particular exam, paper, project or the entire course, disciplinary probation, or dismissal. Faculty, after consulting with their chair and/or the dean must notify students in writing of their decision. Students have the right to appeal such decisions by the submitting a petition. All students are responsible for reading the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

**Liability Warning:** Your student ID and password are private! Under no circumstance are you to give them out to anyone. If another person uses your ID or password you will be held personally responsible for any and all activity on your computer account. If plagiarism is involved you run the risk of being dismissed from the school. If a computer or software is damaged you are responsible for repair and replacement. Loaning out your ID or password involves too much risk. "A student must not violate course rules as contained in a course syllabus, which are rationally related to the content of the course or to the enhancement of the learning process in the course." [Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, page 29]

**Attendance and Participation:**

**IUPUI policy holds that class attendance is mandatory. Attendance is taken at the start each class by the professors. Any student missing more than TWO classes without an approved excuse will be given a warning based on, and in keeping with, the warning-disciplinary system. Any student missing more than THREE days will be asked to LEAVE the project. Lateness is assessed 15min after class begins. Every two "lates" equals one absence that in turn counts towards warnings and removal from the class. Student Group Leaders are also responsible for keeping track of their teams' attendance and work completion during in class and out class meetings.** If you are unable to attend, please send me a notice through email before class. Absences may be excused with valid doctor's documentation or other extenuating circumstances. More than four absences without a "legitimate" the reason, will result in a lowered semester grade. Students are expected to actively participate in class by asking questions and sharing any relevant experiences.

## Welcome to Game Production

The School of Informatics and Computing is proud to continue this experimental, real-world, game-creation class that is known as the MAS Game Production Class (formerly the GenCon and Return of Aethera Game Project Class). This class aims to create a fun and engaging game for public display in 2017 through an environment that shadows the real-world industry experience over that of a classroom experience.

Each class will consist of an overall project meeting to discuss the current progress of the project and what areas need to be worked on. Individual teams will then discuss specific issues with their assigned professor. Group crossovers, collaborations, and partnerships will also be conducted during this main meeting team. All teams are expected to create their own check-in points with their Team Professor throughout the week and to stay in communication outside of the main Monday meeting.

In this class you will be expected to work very, very hard, explore new topics needed to accomplish the game creation goals, but most of all have fun with the subject matter and the tools required to create it. This is a chance to really show what we can do as a school, team, and what you can create individually. Most of all, you should be motivated and open to new ideas and practices and be able to create, craft, and finish a truly fun gaming experience for anyone to play!

### Classroom Behavior, Respect, Edicts, & Policies:

**Respect for your Fellow Gamer:** Cell phones, pagers (really?), blackberries, iPods, Zunes (does anyone actually have one of these?) and all other personal devices are to be turned off and not used during class times. I mean it. They. Are. Annoying! They may be used only during breaks or at the consent of the instructor. Anyone using these devices in a disruptive manner will be asked to leave the class.

“Social sites” such as Facebook.com, MySpace.com, their illegitimate child MyFace.com, Friendster.com (again, is anyone on this?), Twitter, or Instant Messenger are not allowed during class. These sites are disruptive and a distraction. And for God’s sake you get to be on them 21 hours a day outside of class so give yourself a break. No one cares how your cousin’s status on how she is moving into her new place and that Tweet from your best friend’s brother about the roller-derby is going to be there when class gets out. Anyone caught using these will be asked to cease and if not will then be asked to leave the class. Students are expected to be respectful of the instructor and each other during lectures and presentations. Unless asked a question, talking should not interfere with whoever is speaking at the time.

**Respect Triangle – Prof > Student, Student < Prof, Student >< Student**  
(from my regional-district-manager, who thinks-outside-the-box)

Do to a complete abuse of the class time provided in previous semesters, no student is allowed to leave early without permission of the instructor. Family emergencies, religious activities, personal extreme sickness will be allowed and excused if told to the professor in a timely manner.

**Any student(s) found leaving early will be marked late for that day. Remember, two ‘lates’ will count as one absent. Also, any students who disappear during break just randomly will be treated in the same manner.**

**No Phone or Computer Zone:**

Due to the growing plague of individuals obsessed with and hypnotized by their own personal communication devices, (combined with the fact that this entire team will only meet for two hours and forty minutes once a week), the leaders of this project kindly ask that all members on the project refrain from using their phones during class/meetings times. Much work and communication must be created, analyzed, debated, and worked on during these brief windows and, unless it is a family emergency or is in some way related to the project, we ask you to stay off your phones and your computers (unless work related). Repeated offenses will result in your being asked to leave the team.

**Facebook:** Due to past problems with the use of Facebook and other social media, the professors, management, student-leaders, and others WILL NOT address problems, concerns, or critiques over social media. Any of these issues will be ignored and expected to addressed through established project channels or face-2-face during class time and/or scheduled office hour/appointment times.

**Communications:**

All communication will be made through **SLACK**. A Slack account will be set up and shown in class and all class/team members are expected to communicate through this platform.

**Lateness:      **There are NO Late Assignments!****

No project aspects will be accepted after the due date expressed in the syllabus or the class schedule below, unless there is a death in the family, a religious holiday, or a grave personal matter that you can show worthy proof of. Any work turned in late will warrant a warning from the warning system. Multiple warnings will result in dismissal from the project.

**Professional Courtesy:**

One of the more important meta aspects of working on a team project, and indeed working for any large company/school project, is the practice of professional courtesy. This set of manners goes a long way in keeping the gears of any endeavor greased and moving with efficiently. It also helps minimize hurt feelings and encourages pride in one's own work and the work of the overall project. Everyone working on this project is expected to maintain and practice professional courtesy. It is a simple formula and consists simply of; Thank-You, Please, and Sorry. These four simple words should be used during interactions within the group and over email. If it is brought to management's attention that project individuals are being rude, hurtful, or forgetting these aspects a conversation about correct behavior will be initiated between the supervisors and the individual in question. This is practice for the real-world where these behaviors are expected and reflect on one's station, advancement, and ability to connect with others. Please make sure to practice them and maintain an air of professionalism at all times.

**Other:** Also, you will want to be in constant communication with your team professor. Make sure that everyone is in the loop with your progress and any trouble you are having. Basically, there just does not need to be any panic of any kind. The greatest words ever spoken were:

**DON'T PANIC!** Please remember them.

**Everyone's Roles:** Everyone on this project has a dedicated role to maintain. Your roles will be further explained in class and assigned. Everyone is to commit and abide by the role they have applied for and been assigned to. If you have problems with your role, please see your immediate supervisor to work out any concerns. All concerns will be addressed and focused on but only after correct procedures have been followed.

### **Dismissal:**

This project and class is unlike anything else currently being offered in the School of Informatics and Computing. It seeks to give students the “experience before the job” that is needed for so many positions in the creative arts industries. Many of the students from this project have gone on to real-world jobs, independent project, and freelance opportunities because of the enhancement to their work ethic and personal portfolios from working on previous projects.

One major aspect of this experience is the potential to be “fired” or asked to leave the project. This is not a traditional class where a student can wait until the last minute to turn in an assignment. The work in this class must be done every week and turned in on time so it can be reviewed, critiqued, and redone if needed.

This project is not just about you. You are part of a greater whole and entire teams may not be able to work and are actually waiting to produce work but cannot until you complete your section of the project. Anyone who is not able to meet this demand should either drop out of the class at its onset or be willing to face the consequences during the rest of the semester. If you are working hard, being a respectful member to everyone else, and turning your work in on time you will be just fine. Yet, if you are constantly late, rude or disrespectful, or failing to meet the standards of the project you will be “fired”. Additionally, it should be noted that offensive and insensitive language and behavior is also grounds for dismissal.

Being fired means that you will be given an F for the project and asked to drop the course. Only Professors Powers and Shelton are capable and in position to fire anyone off of the project. No one is being forced to work on this project and everyone applied for it. If you are fired from this class you are not only failing the project but you are failing yourself. If there is a death in the family, a major illness, or other real-world common sense problem that interferes with your work then this will be of course taken into account. But this aspect can only be taken into account if you are forthright and openly communicate that you are having a problem.

We want everyone to succeed on this project and will be willing to work with those members who are struggling personally or find themselves in a struggling situation. We are very serious when we say that if you do not keep up your end of the work you will be asked to leave. By applying to this class, reading this syllabus, and from the information presented in class you accept these terms and are fully cognizant of all consequences and expectations.

## **Drama-Llamas: THERE WILL BE NO DRAMA-LLAMAS!**

(further explained in class)

### **Course Description:**

This class is the first of its kind within the current incarnation of the MAS program. It is an experiment to see what can be created when a real-world client asks for a professional level game to be created by the students and professors of the school. The course aims to give students first-hand experience working with a client and a large team to achieve a creation that has not been completed before.

### **Course Outcomes & Core Competencies:**

This course will give students a fundamental grasp of: Game narratives and world creation/development, basic game-related design solutions both digital and analog, character, creature, and environmental design choices, playability/playtesting skills, an understanding of game design, and a comprehensive working knowledge of how to craft a large scale public game. Additionally, this work is aimed to bolster the working portfolios of everyone present so that jobs within the gaming and technological industries might be easier to attain. These skill sets will endorse students' knowledge of the professional gaming industry and allow them to have a working knowledge of games and their production. Other goals that the class will produce in students include the following:

- Express personal ideas to others effectively in a variety of formats
- Comprehend, interpret, and analyze games, animations, programming, video, and 2D/3D imagery
- Communicate orally in group settings
- Discuss game related problems and solutions
- Solve complex digital and programming problems
- Start and Finish a complex interactive public game

By the end of the semester students should have knowledge pertaining to the above information. This will be delivered through readings, discussions, and activities. Students will learn about new and emerging technologies and begin to develop to creative practices to incorporate them as possible towards the purpose of game engagement and its results on society.

### **Class Goals and Expected Outcomes:**

For students to have a deep knowledge, comprehension, and appreciation of:

- The experience it takes to craft a large-scale public game/project.
- The possibilities games/simulations present to modern Industry/society and how they can be engaged on a public level.
- How games/simulations apply to learning and comprehension.
- The varied professional positions open to students from the video game, simulation, gaming, and eLearning industries.
- The ability to analyze and discuss the merits of multiple types of games.
- Understanding of the varying differences between traditional, casual, and serious gaming within a professional setting.
- Completion of a working and fun public game.

### **Core Communication and Quantitative Skills learned in this class:**

- Express personal ideas and facts to others effectively in a variety of formats.
- Comprehend, interpret, and analyze texts, games, animations, and imagery.
- Communicate orally in one-on-one and group settings.
- Solve game-related creation, implementation, and playtesting problems.
- Make efficient use of information resources and technology for personal and professional needs.

By the end of the semester the student should have knowledge pertaining to the above information. This will be delivered through readings, discussions, hands on activities and other methods of learning. Students will learn how to adapt current, new and emerging technologies and best practices to incorporate as many human senses as possible for the purposes of engagement.

### **Grading Scale:**

A+ = 98 – 100%, A = 94 - 97%, A- = 90 – 93%

B+ = 87 – 89%, B = 84 86%, B- = 80 – 83%

C+ = 77 – 79%, C = 74 - 76%, C- = 70 – 73%

D+ = 67 – 69%, D = 64 - 66%, D- = 60 – 63%

F = below 59%. **Super F = under 9%**

**(Yes, this has actually been given out, multiple times! Current record = -9%)**

A = Excellent (Wow!), B = Good (HmMMM, Not bad, shows potential)

C = Average (Meh, it'll pass but...), D = Below Average (Really?)

F = Fail (Why are you here???), **Super F = Epic Fail (nuff said.)**

In the case of borderline grades, factors such as respect, attendance, tardiness, attitude, and class participation will be considered.

### **Extra Credit:**

There is no extra credit.

### **Grading Information, Assignments, & Goals:**

(Assignments will be further explained on sheets given out during class)

1. Complete goals set by Team Professors.
2. Have a complete game by the end of the semester. For everyone in the class to pass the game must be already published or in the act of publishing at semester's end.

## **Calendar and Schedule:**

### **January:**

Week 1. Jan. 09<sup>th</sup>: Project Initial Kick-Off Meeting, Slack, Setting up Teams, Roles.

**Week 2. Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>: Martin Luther King Day – No Class**

Week 3. Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

Week 4. Jan 30<sup>th</sup>: **MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT & UPDATE**

### **February:**

Week 5. Feb. 06<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

Week 6. Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

Week 7. Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

Week 8. Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>: **MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT & UPDATE**

### **March:**

**Week 9. Mar. 06<sup>th</sup>:** Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

**Week 10. Mar. 13<sup>th</sup>: No Class - SPRINGGGGGGG BREAKKKKKKKK!!!!!! Finally!**

Week 11. Mar. 20<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Team Project Updates.

Week 12. Mar. 27<sup>th</sup>: **MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT & UPDATE**

### **April:**

**Week 13. Apr. 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Monday Meeting – Fixing/Finishing Prototype.

Week 14. Apr. 10<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Fixing/Finishing Prototype.

Week 15. Apr. 17<sup>th</sup>: Monday Meeting – Fixing/Finishing Prototype.

Week 16. Apr. 24<sup>th</sup>: **MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT & UPDATE**

### **May:**

**Week 17. May 1<sup>st</sup>: FINAL GAME DEMONSTRATION**

## **Nasty Weather, Junky Car Breakdown, Prof. Sick - Cancellation Policy:**

If for some other reason I or another professor cannot make it to class an email will be sent out to the group stating the situation. Make sure to check your email and Slack at least once a day.

## **Right of Revision Statement**

The instructors in this course reserve the right to change the sequence of material and/or dates as outlined in this course syllabus.



Mathew A. Powers & Todd Shelton  
1/9/2017  
Game Production

## **First Assignments**

The following assignments are due Monday January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. Further explained in class.

### **1. Programmers:**

Meet with Team Professor - Todd. Discuss programming and development capabilities. Programming assignment will be given out.

### **2. Artists:**

Meet with Team Professor - Mathew. Compare artistic styles and begin art trials to match styles for a unified approach. Two art tests are given: Room Scene and Ancient Rune.

### **3. Sound:**

Meet with Team Professor - Todd. Compare musical styles. Begin to create series of game related sounds for sound library.

### **4. PR & Video:**

Meet with Team Professor – Mathew. Discuss Social Media and Advertisement strategies and how best to create a filmed narrative of the project. Discuss publication times and schedule and investigate checking out equipment and what platforms to work with.