

Indiana University, Bloomington
Department of Telecommunications

T366: Multiplayer Game Design

Section 13353
Spring 2010
MW 11:15-12:30pm
Room 226 RTV Building

Instructor: Lee Sheldon
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Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor

Description

Focus is on massively-multiplayer online games and virtual worlds. Students will be introduced to the design elements and production requirements necessary to create and maintain online games. We will study various existing worlds from major commercial worlds like *World of Warcraft* to free web-based games.

Format

This class is designed as a multiplayer game.

Class time will be divided between fighting monsters (Quizzes, Exams etc.), completing quests (Presentations of Games, Research etc.) and crafting (Personal Game Premises, Game Analysis Papers, Video Game Concept Document etc.).

At the beginning of the semester everyone in the class will choose and name their avatars. The first task is to craft the premise of a multiplayer game you would like to design. Guilds to craft these games will be chosen, balanced as closely as possible by I33t skillz and interests. Guilds will choose their names. There will be six guilds of six-seven members each depending upon final class size.

Grading Procedure

You will begin on the first day of class as a Level One avatar. Level Twelve is the highest level you can achieve:

| Level | XP* | Letter Grade |
|--------------|------|--------------|
| Level Twelve | 1860 | A |
| Level Eleven | 1800 | A- |
| Level Ten | 1740 | B+ |
| Level Nine | 1660 | B |
| Level Eight | 1600 | B- |
| Level Seven | 1540 | C+ |
| Level Six | 1460 | C |

| | | |
|-------------|------|----|
| Level Five | 1400 | C- |
| Level Four | 1340 | D+ |
| Level Three | 1260 | D |
| Level Two | 1200 | D- |
| Level One | 0 | F |

*Your level will be determined by experience points (XP) on a 2000 XP scale. You gain XP by defeating mobs, completing quests and crafting.

- Solo: Craft your own game proposal. (Written, 50 pts.)
- Solo: Present your game proposal to the class. (25 pts.)
- Solo: Sell your game proposal to the class. (**Extra credit.** 25 pts.)
- Raid: Guild reading presentation (75 pts. each person, 1 of these per guild)

- Pick-Up Group: 2-Player reading presentation (150 pts. each person, cannot team with fellow guild member) **OR**
- Solo: 1-Player reading presentation (150 pts. but easier than above)

- Solo: Craft 3 page report on MMO article (Written, 75 pts.)
- Solo: Craft 3 page analysis of MMO-based research topic (Written, 100 pts.)
- Solo: Craft 5 page analysis on MMO of your choice (Written, 125 pts.)
- Solo: Defeat Five Random Mobs (5 written reading quizzes, 250 pts. total, 1 **extra credit** question per quiz)
- Solo: Defeat Level Boss (Midterm Exam, 400 pts.)
- Guild: Paper Prototype Presentation (50 pts. each)
- Guild: Craft Final Project: Video Game Concept (Written, 400 pts.)
- Solo: Class attendance (300 skill pts. total, 10 to start. 290 additional pts. at 10 pts. per day of attendance)
- **Extra credit** for early completion of final proposal (10 pts./Monday; 5 pts./Tuesday; see calendar)
- Solo Camping: Text editing (**Extra credit.** 1 pt. per mistake. 50 pt. cap per player. First come first served. Each mob only spawns once.)
- Group: Peer Review Secret Ballot (**Extra credit.** 0-100 possible XP as follows:
 1. Guild Leader 100 pts.
 2. Raid Leader 75 pts.
 3. Solid Guild Crafter 50 pts.
 4. Needs Rez 25 pts.
 5. Leroy Jenkins 0 pts.

Grading is rigorous. Spelling, grammar and punctuation must be proofed. Points will be deducted otherwise.

Attendance and Conduct

You are expected to attend every class. Assignments are due at the *beginning* of every class. Late assignments will subtract from the grade for that assignment, one half letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

Plagiarism, submitting assignments written by others, and other forms of academic misconduct are governed by university policy. In a word: DON'T.

Classroom conduct: Participate with civility and an abiding appreciation for the power of words. Respect others, even those who hold opposing views.

Required Text

Designing Virtual Worlds. Richard Bartle.

Character Development and Storytelling for Games. Lee Sheldon.

Suggested Reading

Developing Online Games. Mulligan and Petrovsky.

Massively Multiplayer Game Development. Thor Alexander et al.

Synthetic Worlds. Edward Castronova.

Community Building on the Web. Amy Jo Kim

My Tiny Life: Crime and Passion in a Virtual World. Julian Dibbell

A Theory of Fun. Raph Koster

Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.