Syllabus
Game Programming - COMP 475
2:30 – 3:45 TR Science 207
Fall 2009

Instructor: Frank McCown
Contact: 501-279-4826, HU Box 10764, fmccown@harding.edu
Home Page: http://www.harding.edu/fmccown/ classes/comp475-f09/ (Syllabus, useful links)
Office Hours: Science 208: 3 – 5 MW F and 11 – 12, 4 – 5 TR or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of video game design and programming. Concepts include: computer graphics, human computer interaction, networking, artificial intelligence, computer architecture, and databases. Programs will mostly be written using C# and the XNA (X-Box) platform. Prerequisites: COMP 245 and 345.

Optional Textbook : *Learning XNA 3.0: XNA 3.0 Game Development for the PC, Xbox 360, and Zune* by Aaron Reed (ISBN: 0596521952)

Exams

A midterm and final exam will be given covering the first half and second half, respectively, of the material presented in the semester.

Programming Projects

A number of small programming projects will be assigned throughout the semester, and a large project will be due at the end of the semester. All projects will be completed in groups of two. The work may divided between the two group members in any way you choose, but both members should write an equal amount of code. Ideally, you should use pair programming, where both programmers work on the same computer together and time is split evenly between the two "driving" (typing in the code).

Wiki and Class Presentations

The teams of two will create a wiki that demonstrates the coding technique they have learned when completing their project. The wiki should be complete with accurate descriptions, step-by-step instructions for implementing the project, and screenshots where needed. It should point to and web resources that were helpful when implementing the project.

Teams will also give a 15-20 presentation to the class demonstrating their project and showing the rest of the class how it was done, what techniques were used, pitfalls that were overcome, etc.

Extra Credit

 The McChallenge: 1% will be added to your final grade for the completion of a program which will be made available to you later in the semester. The program will be due the Friday before final exams. You can skip the program and still get the 1% added to your final grade if you beat me in a game of basketball, tennis, racquetball, Halo, chess, Trivia Pursuit, or any other sport/game that I know how to play. If you lose, you still may complete the program for 1% extra credit. Only one challenge per semester, and all challenges must be made *before* the final week of class. Come by my office to schedule a time to play.

Grades

Final grades will be computed as follows:

Midterm exam:	15%	
Final Exam:	15%	
Projects:	20%	
Final Project:	20%	
Wiki:	15%	
Presentations:	15%	

Standard letter grades: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89% C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, F = 0-59%

Late work: A maximum of 10% will be taken off *each day* (not each class period) a program or assignment is late, up to 50%. Every day is counted, including weekends. Nothing late more than 1 week will be accepted.

Assessment

Harding University, since its charter in 1924, has been strongly committed to providing the best resources and environment for the teaching-learning process. The board, administration, faculty, and staff are wholeheartedly committed to full compliance with all criteria of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The university values continuous, rigorous assessment at every level for its potential to improve student learning and achievement and for its centrality in fulfilling the stated mission of Harding. Thus, a comprehensive assessment program has been developed that includes both the Academic units and the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units. Specifically, all academic units will be assessed in reference to the following Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose: **The University provides programs that enable students to acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions in their academic disciplines for successful careers, advanced studies, and servant leadership.**

Assessment of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of each student for the purpose of assigning a letter grade at the completion of this course will be based on the projects, presentations, and exams that were described previously in this syllabus. Near the completion of your major in the department of Computer Science, you will be assessed by a comprehensive examination covering core courses in your major, not including this course. This examination will influence your final grade in the senior capstone course.

Expectations

1. It is important that you **check your e-mail regularly (everyday)** because I occasionally give hints or corrections to homework assignments via e-mail. This is also the best way to communicate with the class outside of the classroom. **Do not** IM me unless the expected response is a one-liner (e.g., Are you in your office?). If you need help with a program, IM is especially inefficient… better to come by my office.

2. I expect every one of you to hold to the **highest standard** of personal conduct and **integrity**… that means you will not cheat on tests or programs. Cheating may result in you being dropped from the class with an F.

3. I expect you to adhere to the **dress code** as spelled out in the Student Handbook. This includes (men) removing caps while in class.

4. There is **no food or drink** prohibited in the lab. This is expensive equipment and carpeting that is easily spoiled by an accident.

5. Lab computers may be used during class to **take notes and write programs**. They may not be used for any other purpose including instant messaging, e-mail, surfing the Web, Facebook, games, etc. Students who break this rule will not be allowed to use the lab computers.

6. Silence your cell phones.

If you ever need assistance in this class or anything else, please don't hesitate to come by my office or give me a call.

Students with Disabilities

It is the policy for Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Therefore, any student with a *documented disability* condition (e.g. physical, learning, psychological, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations, must contact the instructor and the Disabilities Office at the *beginning* of each semester. (If the diagnosis of the disability occurs during the academic year, the student must self-identify with the Disabilities Director *as soon as possible* in order to get academic accommodations in place for the remainder of the semester.) The Disabilities Office is located in Room 102 of the Lee Academic Center, telephone, (501) 279-4019.