

# CSC404: Video Game Design

Course topics include: game history & genres, “ludology” (theory of fun, story creation, optimal experience), character and level design, industry tools & processes, graphics & animation, modeling techniques, collision detection, visual effects, scripting (passive & active), HCI & interface design, verification & playtesting, business of gaming. Material & projects based on real-world processes.

## Instructor Information

Name	Video	Email
Steve Engels	<a href="https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/5546086241">https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/5546086241</a> Passcode: 112358	<a href="mailto:sengels@cs.toronto.edu">sengels@cs.toronto.edu</a> (please put “404” in subject heading)
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## Course Schedule

Lecture (Tu 1pm-3pm)	Tutorial (Th 1pm-2pm)	Deliverables
Jan 10 @ 1pm ⇒ Course Intro, Ludology	Jan 12 @ 10am ⇒ Idea Creation	Game Jam Assignment 1 – Jan 14
Jan 17 @ 1pm ⇒ Ludology, part 2	Jan 19 @ 10am ⇒ Game Pitch Prep	Game Brainstorming – Jan 16 Game Jam Assignment 2 – Jan 21
Jan 24 @ 1pm ⇒ Game Pitch Presentations	Jan 26 @ 10am ⇒ Character Design	Creative Brief – Jan 27
Jan 31 @ 1pm ⇒ Level Design	Feb 2 @ 10am ⇒ Design Doc Prep	Tech Proof-of-Concept – Feb 3
Feb 7 @ 1pm ⇒ Design Presentation	Feb 8 @ 10am ⇒ Game Design Research 1	Design Document – Feb 9
Feb 14 @ 1pm ⇒ UI/UX Design	Feb 15 @ 10am ⇒ Project Management	Level Prototype – Feb 16
<b>Reading Week</b>		
Feb 28 @ 1pm ⇒ Alpha Demo Presentation	Mar 1 @ 10am ⇒ Prototyping & Playtesting	Playable Prototype – Mar 1
Mar 7 @ 1pm ⇒ Ludology, part 3	Mar 8 @ 10am ⇒ Playtesting Report	
Mar 14 @ 1pm ⇒ Post-Playtest Demo	Mar 15 @ 10am ⇒ Beta Presentation Prep	Post-Playtesting Demo Ubisoft Playtest Session – Mar 15?
Mar 22 @ 1pm ⇒ Beta Presentation	Mar 22 @ 10am ⇒ Game Design Research 2	Beta Release & Playtest Report – Mar 23
Mar 28 @ 1pm ⇒ AI for Games	Mar 29 @ 10am ⇒ Monetization & Metrics	
Apr 4 @ 1pm ⇒ TBD	Apr 5 @ 10am ⇒ TBD	Final Build & Deliverables – Apr 6 Uken/Gameloft Demo – Apr 6?
		Final Game Submission – Apr 19

## Course Materials

- **Web Page:** Quercus (itch.io for milestone submissions)
- **Discord:** <https://discord.gg/cQ6BqvAMJs>
- **TA Contact:** [404ta@cs.utoronto.ca](mailto:404ta@cs.utoronto.ca)
- **Suggested Text:** Rabin, Steve. *Introduction to Game Development*, Charles River Media.

## Course Deliverables

**Note:** For milestone presentations, half of the groups present in the OCADU lecture (Fri 8:30-11:30).

<b>Game Jam Assignments</b>	<b>5% each (10% total)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One-day hackathon events (one at UofT, one at OCADU).</li></ul>	
<b>Game Ideas</b>	<b>3%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submitting ideas for potential games for the project.</li></ul>	
<b>Milestone #1: Game Pitch &amp; Creative Brief</b>	<b>5% &amp; 3%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present main game idea and how it targets the theme and the audience.</li><li>• Describe game mechanics, secret ingredients, and what a completed final product will look like.</li><li>• <b>Submit:</b> Creative brief document</li></ul>	
<b>Milestone #2: Design Presentation &amp; Design Document</b>	<b>5% &amp; 10%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present all pre-coding design details of the final game, including mock-ups, storyboards, mood boards, sketches, data models, etc. Also includes tech proof-of-concept (presentation), and task breakdown (document)</li><li>• <b>Submit:</b> Design document</li></ul>	
<b>Milestone #3: Game Alpha</b>	<b>10%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-class demo of playable prototype.</li><li>• Describe plans for upcoming sprints and goals for final product.</li><li>• <b>Submit:</b> Game demo on itch page</li></ul>	
<b>Milestone #4: Beta Release &amp; Playtesting Report</b>	<b>10% &amp; 5%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-class demo of completed product, and playtesting results.</li><li>• <b>Submit:</b> Playtesting report</li></ul>	
<b>Milestone #5: Playtesting Demo &amp; Final Items</b>	<b>10% &amp; 5%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Testing &amp; evaluation at Uken/Gameloft/Zynga playtest event</li><li>• <b>Submit:</b> Final game, video trailer, peer evaluation</li></ul>	
<b>Tech Demo, Tutorial Level, Updated Game Demos</b>	<b>3% each (9% total)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress checks to demonstrate current state of game.</li></ul>	
<b>Itch.io page</b>	<b>5%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A development journal, outlining your group's weekly progress, challenges and setbacks.</li></ul>	
<b>Participation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participating in class, presentation feedback, playtesting sessions, Ludology seminar, etc.</li></ul>	

## ***Peer Evaluations***

This course uses peer evaluations to inform adjustments to your final project mark. As a result, the mark that you receive for your project is contingent on your active and equal contribution to the milestones and your group. The peer evaluations are a measure of the quantity and quality of your contributions, and inform us to potential adjustments that might be necessary.

At the end of the course, we ask everyone in the class to provide peer evaluations of their group members (including themselves). If a group member performs above expectations, a multiplier is applied that can increase their project mark by up to 15%. If a group member's contribution is negative or absent, the multiplier will reduce their project mark (by no more than 15%, except in extreme cases).

Serious negative evaluations will involve a follow-up discussion with the course instructor.

## ***Lecture Recordings Policy***

Recorded lectures for this course are hosted on the course YouTube channel:

- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNb2ynmgQVX2FEqdI4i9m3ExC0F4o9bxL>

Online lectures & tutorials for this course (including your participation) may be recorded on video and be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials from this semester and previous semesters belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright.

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