Computer Game Development - Course Outline
COMP 313: 2013 Trimester 1

This document sets out the workload and assessment requirements for COMP 313. It also provides contact information for staff involved in the course. If the contents of this document are altered during the course, you will be advised of the change by an announcement in lectures and/or on the course web site. A printed copy of this document is held in the School Office.

The course is co-taught with MDDN 343.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the range of design skills and activities required to develop computer games, and be able to interact knowledgably with experts with skills complementary to their own. (BSc graduate attributes 2, 5)
2. Understand and be able to apply a variety of programming and software engineering techniques to the design and implementation of computer games. (BSc graduate attribute 1)
3. Be able to use integrated game development tools to build interactive computer games. (BE graduate attributes 1)
4. Be able to work in a team with designers from other disciplines to design, develop, and evaluate an interactive computer game. (BE graduate attribute 5)

Lectures, Tutorials, Laboratories, and Practical work

A schedule of lecture topics, readings, and assignment due dates will be available online. The first seven weeks will cover a range of important topics in game development that will be needed for your group project. The final seven weeks will address a variety of topics in game development.

Lectures and group discussions for COMP 313 are: Tuesday, 14:00 - 15:00 in HMLT001, and Thursday 11:30-14:20 in WG401.

Note that WG401 is at the School of Architecture and Design, Wigan Street (main entrance on Vivian Street).

Texts and Readings

There are no assigned texts for the course. There will be a list of readings and other resources that you may find helpful, and some Game Development books will be placed on closed reserve in the library.

Assignments and Projects

There will be four assignments and projects for COMP313.

- An individual project to give you practice in the skills of using Unity (or Blender) to create, animate, and control characters in a 3D game world. It addresses the first three objectives of the course.
- A proposal for a game. The class, together with the staff, will select the five best proposals for groups to work on in the second project. The game proposal will not contribute to the assessment for COMP313 students, and is not mandatory. It will have no impact on any aegrotat calculations if an aegrotat is applied for.
- A group project to design a 3D game and implement a "Proof of Concept". Each group will typically consist of three COMP students and three MDDN students. It addresses all the objectives of the course. The project will require a group presentation, group submission of a game, and individual reports on the project.
- An essay based on your reading. It addresses the first two objectives of the course.

The details of the assignments and projects will be available at Assignments, along with intermediate deadlines for components of the projects.

The final deadlines for the assignments and projects are:

- Game proposal: Thursday, 14 March (not mandatory for COMP313 students)
- Project 1: Thursday, 11 April.
- Essay: Monday, 20 May.
- Group Project presentation: TBA (during the exam period, scheduled as an exam)
- Group Project submission and individual reports: TBA (shortly after the presentation).

Workload

In order to maintain satisfactory progress in COMP 313, you should plan to spend a minimum of 10 hours per week on this course; A plausible and approximate breakdown for these hours would be:

- Lectures and tutorials: 5 hours in each of the first 4 weeks; 3 hours per week for rest of the course.
- Independent and group work on assignments: 5 hours in each of the first 4 weeks; 7 hours per week for the remaining teaching weeks, 10 hours per week for the non-teaching weeks of the course.

School of Engineering and Computer Science

The School office is located on level three of the Cotton Building (Cotton 358).

Staff

The course organiser for COMP 313 is Stuart Marshall. Kah Chan will be organising and lecturing MDDN343. Their contact details are:

- Stuart Marshall
- Cotton 261
- +64 4 463 6730
- Stuart.Marshall@ecs.vuw.ac.nz

- Kah Chan
- Room 4.05 Wigan St
- +64 4 463 6403
- Kah.Chan@vuw.ac.nz

Several staff at Sidhe Interactive - and associates - will also be contributing to the course.

Announcements and Communication

The main means of communication outside of lectures will be the COMP 313 web area at http://ecs.victoria.ac.nz/Courses/COMP313_2013T1/. There you will find, among other things, this document, the lecture schedule and assignment handouts, and the COMP 313 Forum. The forum is a web-based bulletin board system. Questions, answers, and comments can be posted to the forum, and staff will read these posts and frequently respond to them.

Practical Work

The practical work for the individual and group projects will be done using Unity (or Blender if requested), which runs on windows and OSX. You will be using OSX labs at the School of Design. You may also use your own computers, or the other computers in the ECS labs where possible. There is a free version of Unity available at http://www.unity3d.com, and Blender is also available for free and can be downloaded from http://www.blender.org.

Assessment

Late submission will incur a penalty of 20% per day on that assessment item, unless previously negotiated.

Your grade for COMP 313 will be determined based on the following assessment weightings:

Item	Weight
Project 1	25%
Essay	25%
Group Project: group mark	15%
Group Project: individual report	35%

Tests and Exams

There are no tests or examinations for this course, but the group presentations for for your group project will be scheduled during the examination period as if they were an exam.

Plagiarism

Working Together and Plagiarism

We encourage you to discuss the principles of the course and assignments with other students, and to help and seek help with the development tools. The group project will involve substantial collaboration. However, any work you present as your own individual work must be accomplished by you; any work presented as the work of the group must be accomplished by members of the group. It is essential that you give appropriate credit to part of the work that came from any other sources (whether other students in the course or outside).

The School policy on Plagiarism (claiming other people's work as your own) is available from the course home page. Please read it. We will penalise anyone we find plagiarising, whether from students currently doing the course, or from other sources. If you have had help from someone else (other than a tutor), it is always safe to state the help that you got.

Mandatory Requirements

1. Submit project 1.
2. Contribute effectively to the group project. Students who do not participate in or contribute to their group project will fail the course.

Passing COMP 313

To pass COMP 313, a student must satisfy mandatory requirements and gain at least a **C** grade overall.

Withdrawal

The last date for withdrawal from COMP 313 with entitlement to a refund of tuition fees is Friday 15 March 2013. The last date for withdrawal without being regarded as having failed the course is Friday 17 May 2013 -- though later withdrawals may be approved by the Dean in special circumstances.

Rules & Policies

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study.

Find out about academic progress and restricted enrolment at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress.

The University's statutes and policies are available at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the Calendar webpage at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar (See Section C).

Further information about the University's academic processes can be found on the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic

All students are expected to be familiar with the following regulations and policies, which are available from the school web site:

Grievances
Student and Staff Conduct
Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities
Student Support
Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Dates and Deadlines including Withdrawal dates
School Laboratory Hours and Rules
Printing Allocations
Expectations of Students in ECS courses

The School of Engineering and Computer Science strives to anticipate all problems associated with its courses, laboratories and equipment. We hope you will find that your courses meet your expectations of a quality learning experience.

If you think we have overlooked something or would like to make a suggestion feel free to talk to your course organiser or lecturer.

Course Outline as PDF