INTRODUCTION

From the first blip that ‘pong’-ed its way across the screen in the 1970’s to the immersive 3-D gaming worlds of today, video games have provided inspiration for more than a generation. We love to play them. However have you ever asked the question, “Where do they come from?” The Faculty of Engineering would not only like to help you answer that question, but also live it.

The Video Game Design Challenge (VGDC) is the second in the Design Engineering Challenge (DEC) series hosted by the Design Engineering Office (DEO) and the first to be open to all UVic undergraduate students.

During the 2008 spring reading week you and your assigned student design team will design and create the most playable, best looking, addictively fun video game that you can! Using the supplied game making platform allows this challenge to be tackled by anyone even if you have no programming experience. More important are creativity and a keen mind for design. For those interested in an innovative interface for their game designs, motion sensing hardware and technical support will be made available for participants.

No participant will go away empty handed as all who have a functional game on display at the VGDC Exhibition will receive a cool VGDC 2008 T-shirt and a commercial video game. The biggest and best prizes are reserved for the team that impresses our panel of industry video game designers, faculty, guests and their student peers. Each member of the willing team will win an Xbox 360 console!

Even if you don’t compete you are invited to join us at the VGDC Exhibition being held on February 29th between 1:30 and 4:30 pm in the Engineering Laboratory Wing Lobby. The students’ video games will be on display, ready to play, and there will be a keynote speaker from the video game industry.

ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

REGISTRATION

Any current University of Victoria undergraduate student, from any faculty, from any year of study, is invited to register. Space is limited to 60 participants so register early. The final participant list will be determined by the Challenge Coordinator. You can register by dropping off a completed registration form at the Faculty of Engineering Dean’s Office (Engineering Office Wing 248). No registrations will be accepted before February 1st. There is a $10 non-refundable registration fee per participant that is used entirely to help fund this event. When all participant spots are filled an announcement will be made on the VGDC website. After registration is complete you will be contacted with the names and contact information of your assigned teammates. Teams will consist of three people. We will try to accommodate requests for specific team mates as detailed on the registration form, however this cannot be guaranteed.
CONTEST RULES

All entries are to be made using the GameMaker platform which is available online. GameMaker Lite (freeware) is the standard on which the VGDC will be run. If you choose you may also use GameMaker Pro, however the VGDC is unable to support that platform in the labs. This platform is only available for the Windows operating system. See the GameMaker website for full system requirements.

All games must comply with the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) “Everyone 10+” rating detailed below. If there are any concerns regarding the suitability of a video game consult with the Challenge Coordinator. Games deemed by the Challenge Coordinator to be non-compliant will not be allowed to compete for prizes and will not be displayed at the VGDC exhibition. Registration fees will not be refunded.

*Everyone 10+: Content that may be suitable for ages 10 and older. Titles in this category may contain cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language and/or minimal suggestive themes.*

All work must be done solely by the members of the design team with the exception of graphics and audio files that are in the public domain (non-copyrighted). Copyrighted material may not be used without permission of the copyright holder.

By Sunday February 23rd at 12:00 am your final game executable and GameMaker files must sent the challenge coordinator (design@engr.uvic.ca). Note that as per the university policy all intellectual property developed by student remains the property of the students.

After all games have been put onto the challenge website each participant who submitted a game will be asked to evaluate three of their peers’ video games and submit the results to the Challenge Coordinator.

TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri-Feb-01</td>
<td></td>
<td>Registration forms and fees accepted until capacity reached.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri-Feb-15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teams generated by Challenge Coordinator.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intro to Video Game Design, User Testing and an explanation of the VGDC rules</td>
<td>ECS660</td>
<td>Dr. B. Gooch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat-Feb-16</td>
<td>11 am – 12 pm</td>
<td>GameMaker demonstration and tutorial. Resource discussion.</td>
<td>ELW B220</td>
<td>Dr. B. Gooch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon-Feb-18</td>
<td>6 – 8 pm</td>
<td>Drop in help sessions “Time Spent” updates to be submitted on Mon, Wed, and Fri</td>
<td>ELW B220</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant and Derek Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun-Feb-24</td>
<td>Midnight</td>
<td>Final game to be submitted</td>
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**Table 1 - Video Game Design Challenge Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon-Feb-25</td>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Video games on VGDC website</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peer judging assignments distributed via email</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed-Feb-27</td>
<td>12 am</td>
<td>Peer evaluation forms submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri-Feb-29</td>
<td>1:30 – 2:30 pm</td>
<td>Video games on display, Panel judging</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2:30 – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>Industry video game designer keynote speaker, Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:30 – 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Video games on display</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESOURCES**

The majority of the work will be done on your own time using your own or a team member’s computer. There are a number of resources that will be made available to you.

Dr. B. Gooch, researcher in the area of computer graphics and an avid gamer, will deliver two key lectures that will help you in your design. The first is an hour-long lecture on video game design and user testing. The second is a tutorial in the use of the chosen software platform, GameMaker.

GameMaker Lite is the platform used to simplify the programming aspect of video game design in order to focus on the design aspect. GameMaker Lite is freeware available online.

Attendance at this lecture and tutorial is not required, but is strongly recommended.

**JUDGING & PRIZES**

Challenge winners will be determined by two judging bodies. Prior to the VGDC Exhibition, each participant will evaluate three of their peers’ video game designs. For each evaluation they will complete a rubric and submit it to the Challenge Coordinator. Secondly a panel of industry video game designers, software design faculty members, and guest judges will review the games during the VGDC Exhibition. Using the same rubric the panel members will evaluate all entries. Based on all of these evaluations the first place prizes will be awarded.

Ben Haigh, a teaching assistant proficient with GameMaker will be available both online for quick questions, and at multiple help desk-style sessions for those questions that need some hands on support. The job of the teaching assistant is to help you with the logistics of your video game, not the design.

Derek Church and the Software Engineering program will be making available Wii Remote hardware for those interested in incorporating a motion sensing interface into their games. This hardware will be available in the drop in help sessions and at the demonstration day. Quantities of Wii Remote hardware are limited and it may be required for teams interested to wait to access the hardware.
Every participant who has a functional video game on display at the VGDC Exhibition will receive a VGDC 2008 T-Shirt and a commercial video game. Each member of the winning team will be awarded an Xbox 360 console!

CONCLUSION

The VGDC is going to be fun! You will have the opportunity to get a taste of the video game design industry. You will work in interdisciplinary design teams broadening your knowledge base. You will get first hand instruction in one of the fastest growing industries on the west coast, and of course have a chance to win some great prizes.

As the challenge approaches this document will evolve, so keep a close eye on the VGDC website where news of any changes will be posted.

LINKS

Spring 2008 Video Game Design Challenge Webpage
http://design.engr.uvic.ca/student-projects/dec/vgdc/vgdc2008/

GameMaker Webpage
http://www.yoyogames.com/gamemaker/

CONTACTS

Jason Bazylak
Challenge Coordinator
design@engr.uvic.ca
250-853-3135

Ben Haigh
Teaching Assistant
bhaigh@csc.uvic.ca

SPONSORS

This challenge is only made possible through the generous sponsorship of the following groups:

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