

# GDD 175: Games for All

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## COURSE INFO

GDD 175  
Fall 2022  
Tuesday - Thursday, 9:30 am - 10:15 am  
Tator Hall, Room 129  
<http://mywebspace.quinnipiac.edu/jbwarren/175>

## INSTRUCTOR INFO

Jonah Warren  
[jonah.warren@quinnipiac.edu](mailto:jonah.warren@quinnipiac.edu)  
203.582.7921  
CAS 1316

## OFFICE HOURS

My office hours are:  
Tuesday, 11 AM - 1 PM

All other times by appointment. I'm available via email during the week (Monday-Friday) and will try to respond to emails within 48 hours. Emails received on the weekend will be responded to by the beginning of the following week.

## DESCRIPTION

There is a common misconception that making digital games requires complex software, large teams, and advanced technical skills. While this may be true for creating large-scale console games, there is a growing community of game makers using small, freely available tools to create short, impactful experiences. These tools use constraints to simplify the game development process, requiring creators to consider game making from a specific point-of-view (e.g., storytelling, world-building, problem solving). This class uses these tools as entry points for students to explore and discuss different perspectives on game creation, enabling a natural marriage of theory to practice.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students in GDD 175 will:

- Learn how to create small games from several different perspectives (e.g., narrative, world building, problem solving);
- Explore the possibility space and essential characteristics associated with each perspective;
- Explore how each perspective affects the design process;
- Learn several different prototyping tools.

## STRUCTURE

The course will be focused around the completion of four to five small game projects aimed at strengthening a set of skills. Each project will be created with a different, freely available, constrained game-making tool that will help students focus their attention on a given aspect of game creation. Each project will entail a combination of the following: reading theory, research, prototyping, playtesting, and critique. A final project will involve selecting one of these assignments and taking it further.

## WEBSITES

Our class website is:

<http://mywebspacespace.quinnipiac.edu/jbwarren/175>

A shortcut to the site is: <http://bit.ly/gdd-175>.

#### SOFTWARE

Each design challenge will specify the technology to be used. Some challenges may require you to use certain technologies, while others may be more open. All required software should be freely available to download. You may also complete coursework working in the lab. Each workstation in the GDD Lab has all the software needed to complete required assignments.

#### GDD STORAGE

GDD is a program in which you will be generating a great deal of digital content. Safe storage of this material is essential to your success in the GDD program. We recommend using One Drive, accessible through your Outlook email account, but it is essential that you also have your own external drive in which you keep current and backup files for all of your work. Do not leave materials on the hard drives of the machines in the lab as these machines can crash or have the drives wiped unpredictably. As professionals in this field we expect you to understand that lost or damaged files are not an excuse for missing or late work. Backup your work and archive it regularly.

#### STUDENT WORK

GDD keeps an archive of student work which may be displayed on the program website and used to publicize and promote our students and our program. At the end of each semester, you are responsible for turning in your completed projects with all associated code and media, to your professor. For your final project, you should also turn in a video of gameplay. Make sure all media is accurately credited. You should also have a website that GDD will link to from the student page of the GDD site that provides links to your bio and completed projects.

#### LAB RULES

Masks on at all times. No eating in the lab. No cellphone use during class time. No working on projects, browsing the web or watching YouTube while other students are making presentations or during class discussions. This is extremely disrespectful towards your classmates and will negatively impact your grade.

#### SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 – Intros, Course Structure  
WEEK 2 – Atmosphere Project (Vertex Meadow)  
WEEK 3 – Atmosphere Project (Vertex Meadow)  
WEEK 4 – World Building Project (Bitsy) \*  
WEEK 5 – World Building Project (Bitsy) \*  
WEEK 6 – World Building Project (Bitsy) \*  
WEEK 7 – Problem Solving Project (Puzzlescript) \*  
WEEK 8 – Problem Solving Project (Puzzlescript) \*  
WEEK 9 – Problem Solving Project (Puzzlescript) \*  
WEEK 10 – Story Project (Twine) \*  
WEEK 11 – Story Project (Twine) \*  
WEEK 12 – Story Project (Twine) \*  
WEEK 13 – Final Project: Playtest and Iterate  
WEEK 14 – Final Project: Playtest and Iterate  
FINAL EXAM – Final Project Presentations

*\*The order of these projects may change.*

**FINAL**

We will meet during the scheduled exam period for final project presentations. Attendance is required, so make your travel plans accordingly.

**GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Your total grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

- 150 Project 1: Atmosphere\*
- 150 Project 2: World Building\*
- 150 Project 3: Solving Problems\*
- 150 Project 4: Exploring Stories\*
- 150 Final Project
- 100 Professionalism

*\*It is possible that the order or titles of these challenges may change.*

If there is a change in this breakdown during the course of the semester, I will notify the class and repost an updated syllabus.

**GRADING RUBRICS**

Each grade you get will be broken down into categories. Each of those categories will be evaluated using the following metrics: Exceeds Expectations (100%), Meets Expectations (85%), Approaches Expectations (65%), Does Not Meet Expectations (40%), or Not Attempted (0%). The rubric for each assignment can be found on Blackboard. Here's an example rubric:

	Does Not Meet Expectations (40%)	Approaches Expectations (65%)	Meets Expectations (85%)	Exceeds Expectations (100%)
Creativity (20%)	Feels like a copy of an existing game.	Close to an existing game. Potentially entails small alterations that aren't meaningfully significant.	Combining existing ideas effectively. Feels like its own experience.	Unique and different. Combining ideas in new and interesting ways, resulting in unanticipated opportunities.
Experience (20%)	A repetitive, tedious, or unintentionally confusing experience.	Has moments which keep the player's attention, but fails to do so for an extended period of time. Possible usability, level design, feedback, and/or progression issues.	A nicely designed, engaging experience. The player is incentivized to continue playing. Good in-game player feedback.	Provides a very engaging experience through thoughtful, well-designed gameplay and feedback. Keeps the player's attention by progressively providing increasingly interesting challenges and/or choices.
World (20%)	A ill-considered, confusing, and potentially inconsistent space that's challenging to navigate.	Although some of the space has been planned, the decision-making involved seems, at times, haphazard. Potentially feels unfinished or incomplete.	A cohesive, complete, consistent world. There is consideration of leading the player through the space.	A very well-designed, easy to navigate, cohesive world. Effective use of affordances to guide the player through the space. Every piece of the world is considered. Engages the players imagination and/or sense of mystery.

Process (40%)	Missing process related assignments and/or very poorly done.	Poor research, incomplete prototypes, and/or playtest builds that aren't far enough along to get meaningful feedback.	Thoughtful research, completed prototypes, playtest builds that effectively test your concept.	Exceptional process. Very thorough research, extra prototyping, and multiple iterations demonstrated.
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Here is an example grade, worth 160pts:

Creativity (20%)	×	Meets Expectations (85%)	×	150 = 25.5pts
Experience (20%)	×	Approaches Expectations (65%)	×	150 = 19.5pts
World (20%)	×	Meets Expectations (85%)	×	150 = 25.5pts
Process (40%)	×	Approaches Expectations (65%)	×	150 = 39pts

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109.5pts (73%)

**\*Professionalism Grades:**

Your professionalism grade will use the Quinnipiac Grading Scale below and be based on your conduct in class, participation, general engagement, respect for the learning environment and respect for your classmates and your teammates. If do not contribute, watch YouTube videos during critique, or are regularly disrespectful of your teammates do not expect a passing grade. You will lose two points from this grade if you have your phone out during class discussion.

**CHECKING GRADES**

It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades throughout the semester. Grades will be posted on Blackboard and may be checked at any time. If you are not doing as well as you would like to be, you can meet with me to discuss extra credit projects BEFORE the semester ends. If you feel that I have made a mistake recording a grade or failed to enter a grade that you earned correctly, please email me so that I can correct it. Do not contact me just because you want a higher grade on a graded assignment.

**GRADING SCALE**

Your final letter grade is based on the Quinnipiac Grading Scale as follows:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	B- 80-82	C 73-76	D 60-69
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C+ 77-79	C- 70-72	F 0-59

NOTE: A grade of C- or better is required in all game design and development courses and prerequisites. Students with a GPA of less than 2.0 will be put on probation. After two semesters on probation, students will be advised to change majors.

**PLAGIARISM**

All the work you do for class must be your own unless you cite it. Clearly provide links to any code, art, music, or sound you use to complete assignments. This is especially important regarding the use of tutorials and using other people's code. If you use a tutorial from the web that includes code, I expect you to be able to explain how each line of code works, notify me that you are using a tutorial, and provide a link to that tutorial. If you fail to cite your sources, it will be assumed that you are trying to pass off the work as your own and it will be considered plagiarism. This will result in a zero on the assignment, notifying the Academic Integrity Board and a permanent record in your file. See below for more information about Quinnipiac's Academic Integrity policy.

<b>ACADEMIC INTEGRITY</b>	<p>QU is committed to integrity and honesty in the educational process. As a member of the campus community and a student enrolled in this course, you agree to know and observe the university's Academic Integrity (AI) Policy. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, facilitation, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration and plagiarism. You must produce original work and know what constitutes plagiarism. You must also know what constitutes cheating. If you are not certain what sources you can rely on when completing an assignment or exam, including any online assessment, you should contact me for clarification. All assignments you submit in this class must be original work completed by you for this specific course. A failure to abide by the AI Policy could lead to a grade penalty on the assessment, failure in the course, an "FAI" notation on your transcript, AI probation, suspension or any other sanction outlined in the university's AI Policy. If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact the course instructor or the Office of Academic Integrity.</p>
<b>STUDENT HANDBOOK</b>	<p>The Quinnipiac University Student Handbook is intended to serve as a source of information on the many services, activities and policies of Quinnipiac. The handbook can be found at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.quinnipiac.edu/student-experience/health-and-safety/student-handbook/">http://www.quinnipiac.edu/student-experience/health-and-safety/student-handbook/</a></p>
<b>VPA ABSENCE POLICY</b>	<p>You are expected to be in class ready to work at the beginning of the scheduled class time. <b>PROMPT ARRIVAL TO CLASS IS EXPECTED.</b> Three late arrivals to class will equal one absence. <b>PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU HAVE 6 OR MORE ABSENCES YOU MAY BE ASKED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE COURSE. 7 ABSENCES DURING THE SEMESTER WILL RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE.</b> Attendance for the last class meeting scheduled during Finals Week is required. In the case of extenuating circumstances, such as an ongoing illness or the death of a loved one, the professor should be consulted as soon as possible, and documentation from the Student Affairs office may be required. In such circumstances the faculty and student can negotiate the possibility of granting an "Incomplete." In the rare cases where a student is allowed to take an "Incomplete" as the result of extenuating circumstances, the student must follow the guidelines and timelines stipulated in the University catalog.</p>
<b>LATE WORK POLICY</b>	<p>The assignments for this class must be turned in complete and on-time. If you have a medical or family emergency which will prevent you from getting your work done, it is your obligation to notify the professor of this fact and provide him/her with the appropriate documentation <b>BEFORE</b> the due date of the assignment.</p>
<b>INCLUSION STATEMENT</b>	<p>GDD is committed to maintaining an environment in which all members are treated equitably, feel fairly represented, and are comfortable discussing topics, particularly controversial ones, with civility and open-mindedness. We are working to build a community of diverse individuals who can celebrate our differences while building on what we have in common. Game design is a creative practice, so we encourage wide-ranging explorations of what is possible while respecting practices that work toward the greater good. We ask all members of the community to think about the work they are producing and ask themselves if they are consciously or unconsciously reproducing or reinforcing stereotypes,</p>

bias, or other elements that reinforce systemic racism, sexism, bigotry or other inequalities. Games can change the world; let's make sure we are changing it in a positive way.

**POLICY ON DISABILITIES** Quinnipiac University is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me.

If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you may also want to meet with the Office of Student Accessibility, to begin this conversation or to request reasonable accommodations. Quinnipiac University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Please contact the Office of Student Accessibility by emailing [access@qu.edu](mailto:access@qu.edu), or by calling (203) 582 – 7600. If you have already been approved for accommodations through the Office of Student Accessibility, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

**LEARNING COMMONS** The Learning Commons is a place for students to go when they want to achieve a level of performance they can't reach on their own. In a setting of practice and growth, student resources are provided through Peer Educator programs, the Office of Student Accessibility, and Academic Development & Outreach professional staff. The Learning Commons can be found at the Mount Carmel Campus in the North wing of the Arnold Bernhard Library; and at the North Haven Campus on the third floor of the Law School (SLE-340). Students are encouraged to visit The Learning Commons for support with class content, to improve study skills, to consult on academic success strategies, and for general developmental advising needs.

Phone: 203-582-8628

Email: [LearningCommons@Quinnipiac.edu](mailto:LearningCommons@Quinnipiac.edu)

Website: <https://www.qu.edu/student-resources/academic-support.html>