A Technical Game

Project 4

Due dates:

Game Idea Friday, March 16th

Game Plan Friday, March 23rd

Web Page Sunday, April 9th

First Playable Wednesday, April 18th

Final Game Wednesday, April 25th

Introduction

- Build a working game
- With focus on one or more technical components
- Does not necessarily have to look good or even have innovative game design
- But should be playable

- You will work in groups of 3 for this project

Details

- Series of milestones
- Idea
- Plan
- Web Page
- First Playable
- Final Playable
- Game Fest
- (More next)

Game Idea

- Brief document with overall game idea
- **The Development Team**
  - Names and email address of team members
- **Working Game Name**
  - Can change before the final game
- **Overview**
  - Details relevant to the high-concept of the game
    - the concept, the genre, list of novel features
    - One-sentence description describing your game
- **Technical focus**
  - The concentration of the development efforts
  - At least one and no more than two areas of technical focus
  - Examples include: Artificial Intelligence, Networking, Physics, and Graphics
    - Sub-areas and refinement in next section
- Due Friday!
- Expect to write about 1 page

Game Plan

- Details on the how the game will be built
- The **Game Name** and the **Development Team** (as before)
- **Game summary**
  - Attention-grabbing paragraph describing game,
  - Provides high-level view of the game play, game genre, and novel features
  - Highlight the technical focus
- **Implementation**
  - Programming languages and platforms
  - Frameworks, libraries or game engines to be used
  - Previous work or downloaded code to be used
  - Art (art, music, story, sound) assets, created or copied (credits given)
  - Most important: *technical focus*
- **Roles**
  - **Leader** - calls meetings, checks and adjust schedule
  - **Scribe** - takes notes during meetings, maintains Web pages docs (all write), todo list
  - The roles should switch at least once during term!
- **Schedule**
  - Include milestones with dates
  - Distribution of tasks to team
  - Refer to schedule during meetings!
- Expect to write 2-3 pages
- Will be updated and turned in with final game

Web Page

- A Web page for you game designed to show it off
- A front-end to the game, suitable for a portfolio.
- Included aspects will likely include:
  - Picture(s), including custom artwork or screenshots (or both)
  - Text with game description information.
  - About information (names, contact, version info, etc.)
- Download info (with appropriate install or run instructions)
- Can have multiple sections or multiple pages
  - Home, Development Credits, Instructions, Download.
- Can have links internally (timeline, etc.). These should be removed for the final project.

First Playable

- Allow a player to interact with the game
  - Experience core gameplay.
- Completed the technical focus
  - Minus final testing (ie- there still may be some modest bugs)
- Will be shown to the class in a presentation
  - Practice presentations for interviews, etc.

Final Playable

- (Similar to "Alpha" release of a game with one level)
- All of the required features implemented
- Tested to eliminate any *critical* gameplay flaws and bugs
  - May still contain a certain amount of placeholder assets.
  - May exhibit minor bugs
- Should have at least one level designed and tested
- Updated version of Game Plan
  - What you actually did do.
- Shown to class in a presentation
- Played by class members during game fest

Notes

- Your choice:
  - Language (C, C++, Java...)
  - Graphics libraries (OpenGL, DirectX, Ogre, Lightweight Java Game Library...)
  - Engines (Torque, C4, Game Maker, Golden T Game Engine, ...)
- Consider language you are familiar with
  - Don't want to spend too much effort fighting with the language
- Consider using a engine/libraries that take care of technical parts of the game not focus of your implementation
- Previous code you developed is allowed, but need documentation
- Focus on technical, so don't spend too much time on art
  - Encouraged to borrow art assets (music, sound effects, models, textures, sprites, tiles)
  - Freely available sources (if want to use for portfolio)

Grading

- Guidelines on Web page
- Idea   10%
- Plan   20%
- Web Page   10%
- First Playable   20%
- Final Playable   40%

Hints

- *Early buy in to idea by all*
  - More motivated if all like idea
- *Time management*
  - Need to balance group project with individual projects
  - All members do individual, so can plan accordingly
- *Keep regular group meetings*
  - Stick to roles, provides focus
  - Work effectively as a group (see Links)
- *Revision control*
  - CVS, Sourceforge
- *Use as opportunity*
  - Learn something new
- *Have fun!*

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