

Call for Proposals for Final Projects

Handed out Thursday, Sep 27. Due **Friday, Oct 12 at 11:59pm** (via ELMS). If you have a team, only *one member* of the team should submit a proposal, but please include *all* the team members' names on the proposal. The final projects will be due late in the semester. The exact due date will be announced later.

Overview: Give a short (roughly one page) high-level synopsis of your proposed game.

Team Members: List all the members of the team. (Working alone is fine. There is an advantage to small teams, say 2–3 people, since it is easiest to balance the workload and avoid coordination issues. If you have 4 or more people, please *check with me first*.)

Game Title: Proposed title, which you may change later. No, “TBD” is not a valid game name. ;-)

General Description: The game’s general structure (e.g., FPS, puzzle, RPG, single/multi-player) and the game’s general “look and feel” (3-d interactive, 3-d isometric, 2-d scrolling, turn-based, etc.). What (if any) concrete games inspired your game? Please feel free to include illustrations or images.

It is not necessary to provide details at this point. We are more interested in your vision of what the game will look like. You are free to make changes in the future. (If the changes are significant, please keep me informed.)

Platform and Resources: On what system do you plan to implement/execute your game? What software tools (e.g., game engine, graphics, geometric modeling, physics, audio) will you use? Will you need any special hardware (e.g., controllers, head-mounted display, or gesture recognition)?

Coordination: (For group projects.) How will you and your teammates coordinate your work? How often do you plan to meet? Where will the source files be maintained? Do you plan to use some form of shared file storage (e.g., GitHub) and/or a revision control system (SVN or CVS)?

Common questions and tips:

How do I find teammates? Feel free to post requests for teammates over Piazza.

Can I extend an earlier project? Yes, but your grade will be based on what you add to the project this semester. If you plan to do this, set up a meeting with me to discuss the current project and what your plans are for extensions.

Can I use external assets? Yes, but as always, you will need to give credit to all external resources.

Can I use copyrighted music? Frankly, I don’t care, but because I will upload the game videos to YouTube, it is important to avoid music that violates YouTube’s music policies:

https://www.youtube.com/music_policies

(Click the “Learn More” link there to access the catalog of copyrighted music.)

Keep it simple/Design in Layers: It is easy to dream up a project that you will not have sufficient time to finish. The greatest tragedy is failing to implement a overly ambitious game, and ending the semester with nothing to show for your efforts. (This has happened!) Start with a basic implementation so that you are confident you can successfully develop. Then, grow the project by adding features, extensions, and complexity.

Be sure it is “Demoable”: You are free to propose any general structure you like. The only pragmatic constraint is that it must be possible for you to present a short (say 5-minute) demonstration of the game to the class at the end of the semester, and you will need to provide progress reports to me and/or the teaching assistants a couple of times during the semester.

This can be an issue for turned-based games that take a long time to play. Also, if there is any special hardware needed, you will need to haul it onto campus and get it set up. The game that runs well on the high-end desktop in your dorm room may not run well on your laptop.

Do at least one thing well: Face the fact that it is not possible to produce a AAA game in one semester. Rather than doing a so-so job on many different elements, focus instead a single concept that will make your game stand out. (This might be something internal, such as a novel technical feature. If so, part of your final demo will involve an explanation of how you implemented this feature.)

Coordinate with the team: Check that all team members are able to install and run the software and file-sharing systems, otherwise you may need to start over from scratch.

Do the hard thing first: It is important to identify as early as possible in the development process any implementation issue that might hold up your progress. Try to determine such issues early and design a prototype to be sure that you achieve your minimum goals. Later, you can add the “bells and whistles.”

Previous projects: To get an idea of what is “doable,” check out the videos of last semester’s projects

<http://www.cs.umd.edu/class/spring2018/cmsc425/final-projects.shtml>

(Of course, don’t be influenced too strongly. A part of your grade is based on how innovative your project is.)

Nothing is binding (yet): You can make changes, even radical ones, throughout the semester. If you do, please keep me informed.