
Norco College

Game Design

1. *Overview of program being proposed.*

The Game Design Certificate and Associate of Science prepares students for immediate entry or promotion within the simulation and video game industry in a variety of roles such as junior game designer or assistant game designer. This program provides students with the theoretical knowledge and hands on training necessary to function as part of an interdisciplinary team in the creation of interactive games on a variety of different platforms. The Associate of Science (A.S.) Degrees program provides students with the educational foundation necessary for transfer into baccalaureate programs in game design.

The format and sequencing for the certificate is currently in development. Industry advisors are reviewing and commenting on the course content and the certificate structure. Classes marked with an * are not yet developed. The preliminary design for the certificate is as follows:

Game Design

Required: (29 units)

GAM-35	Introduction to Simulation and Game Development	(3 units)
GAM-21	History of Video Games	(3 units)
GAM-22	Game Design Principles	(3 units)
GAM-23	Digital Game Design	(3 units)
GAM-37	Beginning Level Design	(3 units)
GAM-XX *	Advanced Level Design	(3 units)
GAM-XX*	Interactive Storytelling	(3 units)
GAM-44	Portfolio Production	(3 units)
GAM-XX*	Game Production Studio (Capstone)	(5 units)

Electives: (6 units)

GAM-XX*	User Interface Design	(3 units)
CIS-5	Intro to C++ Programming	(3 units)
CIS-38A	Intro to 3D Modeling	(3 units)
CIS-54B	Intro to Flash Scripting	(3 units)
MUC-3	Intro to Pro Tools	(3 units)

35 units

3/29/11

2. *Labor Market information overview.*

America's entertainment software industry creates a wide array of computer and video games to meet the demands and tastes of audiences as diverse as our nation's population. Today's gamers include millions of Americans of all ages and backgrounds. In fact, more than two-thirds of all American households play games. This vast audience is fueling the growth of this multi-billion dollar industry and bringing jobs to communities across the nation.

Entertainment software is one of the fastest growing industries in the U.S. economy. From 2005 to 2009, the entertainment software industry's annual growth rate exceeded 10 percent. Over the same period, the entire U.S. economy grew at a rate of less than two percent.

For the four-year period of 2005-09, direct employment for the industry grew at an annual rate of 8.6 percent. Computer and video game companies directly and indirectly employ more than 120,000 people in 34 states. The average salary for direct employees is \$89,781, resulting in total national compensation of \$2.9 billion. In California (2009 data), interactive entertainment software companies directly employed over 13,000 workers, paying over \$1.25 billion in direct compensation (averaging over \$97,000 per employee). In addition, California is the largest employer of computer and video game personnel in the nation, accounting for approximately 41 percent of total industry employment nationwide

California's computer and video game industry grew by a real annual rate of 11.4 percent from 2005 to 2009, compared to a period of negative growth for the state's overall economy, and added \$2.1 billion to the state economy

While the world-wide economy has been hit hard in several industries in 2009 and 2010, the video game market still was able to record it's best month ever in December 2009 with \$5.53 billion in sales in the US alone. Revenue from video games has now exceeded the movie industry by a solid amount for the past several years.

As recent as March 2010, US software sales in the video game segment grew 10% over the same period in 2009 with 875 million dollars in total sales. By 2018, the Bureau of Labor is estimating that careers in software development will rise by 29%. This bodes well for video game software programmers and the game designers that work alongside them. The artists and multimedia specialists segment is expected to grow nicely as well with a projected growth of 14% between now and 2018.

As for the opportunities themselves, there is a huge spectrum of video game related jobs. With the rise of iPhone/iPad video games alongside the more hardcore gaming experiences found on the PS3, 360, and Wii, there are ample possibilities. From large studios like Bungie or SCEA down to the smaller developer creating portable games on an app store for smart phones and tablet devices, the possibilities are

3/29/11

there for the video game designer. The industry is also experiencing a spike in video game sales with the releases of Sony's Move and Microsoft's Kinect as an answer to the motion controls found on the Wi. Both Microsoft and Sony are expecting some serious growth in casual gaming as Sony Move and Natal are released.

- 3. Are there other similar programs within Region 9 (San Bernardino & Riverside Counties) which may be adversely impacted?*

While other community colleges offer select game design classes, there are none that offer a complete certificate and transfer ready A.S. degree in game design.

- 4. Is there a coordination of pathways with secondary programs in the area?*

None at this time. However, Norco faculty will pursue this link. Norco College shares it's campus with a high school, JFK High School. There are a number of high school students currently enrolled in the Simulation and Game Development classes at Norco College.

- 5. Other information the college wishes to share.*

Norco College is the recent recipient of two major Title V grants totaling over seven million dollars. Game Design is a critical component of both grants. Grant funds have been used for faculty development, training and curriculum development in the field of Game Design. Veteran Game Designers have collaborated with Norco faculty in devising both the structure and sequence of the courses as well as in designing specific course content.

Initial contacts with lead faculty at the USC school of Interactive Media / Game Design regarding creating pathways have been positively received. USC's Game Design program is a nationally recognized program. USC is a leader in both game design research and game development. Princeton Review ranks USC #1 in its list of Top Ten Schools for Game Design, as well as #1 in its list of top ten Graduate school for Video Game Design.