"Intermediate RPG Design: From Alpha to Beta to Published Work"

Time: TR 6:00-8:00 pm EST
Duration: Jan 17-Feb 23, 2023

Industry Expert: Eloy Lasanta, Owner of Third-Eye Games, Co-Owner of New Agenda Publishing
Academic Expert: Andrew D. Devenney, Associate Director of CLGS, Co-owner and Publisher of Superhero Necromancer Press

Do you already know the fundamentals of RPG design and want to dive deeper? Is your RPG nearly there, but missing something? Already taken "The Art of Gamecrafting: For Your Classroom, Board Room, or Game Night"? Then this six-week synchronous online course will give you what you need to broaden your game and bring it to the masses. Using a combination of discussions with our Industry Expert, Eloy Lasanta, and hands-on activities, you will break down every aspect of your game and piece it back together bigger and better than before! We hope you'll join us and get your game over the finish line!

Course Schedule

Week One

Tues, Jan 17: Intermediate Design
- Introduction to Course & Gather Platform
- What Do YOU Need Out of the Class?
- Review Game Design Checklist
- Discussion: Alphas vs. Betas

Thurs, Jan 19: Mechanics Part 1
- Discussion: Task Resolution
- Often Ignored Mechanics: Time, Money, Relationships, Travel
- **Challenge 1**: Beta Rules for Task Resolution and Scene Construction

Week Two

Tues, Jan 24: Mechanics Part 2
- Challenge 1 Debrief
- Discussion: Combat Mechanics
  - Physical vs. Mental vs. Social Combat
  - Battle Map vs. Theater of the Mind vs. Zones

Thurs, Jan 26: Mechanics Part 3
- Discussion: Equipment and Magic Mechanics
  - Simple Bonuses vs. Unique Mechanics
  - Rote vs Flexible Rules
- **Challenge 2**: Beta Rules for Combat and Equipment Mechanics

Week Three

Tues, Jan 31: Character Design Part 1
- Challenge 2 Debrief
- Why Character Creation Can Make or Break a Game
- Splats: What are they and how to use them
- Splat Design: Role-based, Cultural-based, Opposite-based
- The Importance of Advancement Mechanics
- **Challenge 3**: Mechanics and Splats

Thurs, Feb 2: Character Design Part 2
- Challenge 3 Debrief
- Character Generation Class Activity
- **Challenge 4**: Making Playtest Characters

Week Four

Tues, Feb 7 & Thurs, Feb 9: Beta Tests Part 1 & 2
- Student-run Games with Characters Made in Previous Class

Week Five

Tues, Feb 14: Beta Tests Part 3
- Student-run Games Debrief
- Discussion: Blind Playtesting
  - How to Get Playtesters
  - Necessity of an NDA
  - How to ask for feedback, and how to take it
- **Challenge 5**: Playtest Questionnaire

Thurs, Feb 16: Planning Your Release
- Discussion: What is a Core Book?
- Outline: Concepts vs. Page Count vs. Word Count
- What Book Dimensions Say About Your Game
- The Importance of Art and Graphic Design
- Character Sheet Design Activity

Week Six

Tues, Feb 21: Business
- Discussion: Freelancers & Project Management
  - Learning Your Tools
  - What Freelancers Do You Need?
  - Time vs. Money

Thur, Feb 23: Endgame
- Class Debrief
- Where Do You Go From Here?

Assessment
In order to certify your completion of this course, you must finish each of the five core Challenge activities listed below before the end of the course:
- Beta Rules for Task Resolution and Scene Construction

- Beta Rules for Combat and Equipment Mechanics
- Mechanics and Splats
- Making Playtest Characters
- Playtest Questionnaire

Finishing the Challenges requires submitting a 1-2 page summary of your creative activities for each Challenge by the appropriate class period deadline. Instructors will provide feedback on your submissions, either in class or in writing or both (depending on the nature of the Challenge assignment).