



ITP 485 Programming Game Engines

Units: 4

Spring 2021—MW—10:00 – 11:50am:

Location: KAP 107

Instructor: Matt Whiting

Office: TBD

Office Hours:

M 9-10 am

T 1-3 pm

W 9-10 am

Contact Info:

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Teaching Assistant: Yaorong Xie

Office: TBD

Office Hours:

TBD

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Course Description

This course provides students with an in-depth exploration of 3D game engine architecture.

Students will learn state-of-the-art software architecture principles in the context of game engine design, investigate subsystems typically found in a real game engine, survey engine architectures from actual shipped games, and explore how the differences between game genres can affect engine design.

Students will participate in individual hands-on lab exercises to reinforce these concepts.

Learning Objectives

Engine subsystems including rendering, audio, collision, physics, and game world models. Large-scale C++ software architecture in a games context. Tools pipelines for modern games.

Prerequisite(s): ITP-380

Co-Requisite(s):

Concurrent Enrollment:

Recommended Preparation:

Course Notes

Throughout the semester, students will work by themselves to build features in a simplified game engine. These assignments must be completed *individually*.

Each assignment builds upon the previous one, and late assignments cannot be accepted.

From time to time during the semester, we'll have in-class assignments. Each in-class assignment is to be completed individually during the time allotted during that class period and is "open-book". Any and all reference material is allowed, but collaboration is not. This is a chance to practice finding and using reference material.

There are two exams which are comprehensive of all topics covered. The exams are "closed-book".

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

The course is taught exclusively in C++ using Windows DirectX 11 and Visual Studio.

Due to the nature of programming with the DirectX API, students should have access to a machine with Windows. If you are on a Mac, you can download Windows from [USC Viterbi Dreamspark](#), and install it on your Mac via Bootcamp. Because we are using DirectX 11, Parallels or VMWare fusion do not work. You have to boot via bootcamp.

Students will have access to usable machines in the classroom, and acceptable laptops can be checked out from either the CS or ITP departments.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required:

Game Engine Architecture, Third Edition. Jason Gregory. ISBN-13: 978-1138035454.

Optional:

Real-Time Collision Detection. Christer Ericson. ISBN-13: 978-1-55860-732-3.
Effective C++ (3rd Edition). Scott Meyers. ISBN-13: 978-0321334879.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

There are 11 lab assignments. These are programs to be written individually. Some in-class time will be devoted to labs, but it is expected that students will spend about 8 hours per week working on these outside of class.

Each lab assignment will be given one of 4 grades:

- (Z)ero 0%
- (R)evision Needed 60%
- (M)eets expectations 80%
- (E)xemplary 100%

Labs will be graded by the TAs. First, they will check that the lab functions correctly. Labs that are not turned in on time or do not function will be given a grade of Z. Labs that partially function will be given a grade of R. If your lab functions reasonably well, the TAs will perform a “code review” where they inspect your source code for efficiency and readability. Based on this review, they may assign a grade of R, M, or E. In the case of an R or an M, the grader will provide specific notes for revisions to be made for a regrade.

You will have up to 1 week past the original due date to submit revisions for a regrade, and the final revision will be the grade awarded.

Late labs can be submitted up to the 1-week deadline for regrade, but will incur a 20% late submission penalty.

In addition, there are several “In-Class” assignments intended to be performed during the class session.

There are also several “At-Home” assignments in the form of blackboard quizzes.

Grading Breakdown

% of Grade	
10	
40	
20	
30	
100	

Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Half percentage points will be rounded up to the next whole percentage. So for instance, 89.50% is an A-, but 89.49% is a B+.

Assignment Submission Policy

Lab assignments are to be pushed into our github classroom.

In-class assignments and exams are generally conducted on either gradescope or blackboard and will be turned in at the end of the course period.

Grading Timeline

All assignments are expected to be graded within 1 week of the due date.

Additional Policies

There is generally no curving. Students will receive the grade they earn.

Some assignments and exams will get a “do-over” as a take-home assignment. When offered, “do-over” assignments are weighted equally with the original assignment.

Extra credit is generally not offered.

Make-up policy for exams: To make up for a missed exam, the student must provide a satisfactory reason (as determined by the instructor) along with proper documentation. Make-up exams are only allowed under extraordinary and emergency circumstances.

Late Lab Assignments: There will be a 20% reduction for any lab assignments that did not get turned in on time, and no labs will be accepted for regrade more than 2 weeks past the original due date.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Assignment Due	Read it Before Next Class
Class 1 8/23	Introduction	In-Class 01 (git repo)	§3.4, §4.10
Class 2 8/25	Assembly & SIMD	In-Class 02	§5.1 – §5.5 03_MathReview.pdf
Class 3 8/30	Math Review Lab01_MathLibrary	At-Home 03 Due @ 10am In-Class 03	§2.2
Class 4 9/1	The C++ Compiler	In-Class 04	§7.2
No Class 9/6	Labor Day No Class		
Class 5 9/8	Cache	In-Class 05	§11.1.0 – §11.1.2.4 06_Rendering1.pdf
Class 6 9/13	Rendering 1 Lab02_Triangle	Lab 01 Due @ 10am At-Home 06 Due @10am	§6.2
Class 7 9/15	Custom Memory Allocators	In-Class 7	§11.2.2, §11.2.4 08_Rendering2.pdf
Class 8 9/20	Rendering 2 Lab03_Cube	Lab 02 Due @ 10am At-Home 08 Due @10am	
Class 9 9/22	TBD		§11.2.5 10_Texture.pdf
Class 10 9/27	Texture Mapping Lab04_Texture	Lab 03 Due @ 10am At-Home 10 Due @ 10am	§16.8-§16.9; §14.1-§14.4
Class 11 9/29	Scripting & Audio		§11.1.3 12_Lighting.pdf
Class 12 10/4	Lighting Lab05_Lighting	Lab 04 Due @ 10am At-Home 12 Due @ 10am	§7.2
Class 13 10/6	Serialization		§16.1 – §16.4 14_GameObjects.pdf
Class 14 10/11	Game Object Models Lab06_Models	Lab 05 Due @ 10am At-Home 14 Due @ 10am	
Class 15 10/13	Midterm Review		
Class 16 10/18	Midterm Exam		§12.1 – §12.3
Class 17 10/20	Animation 1		§12.4 – §12.6 18_Animation2.pdf
Class 18 10/25	Animation 2 Lab07_Animation	Lab 06 Due @ 10am At-Home 18 Due @ 10am	§3.3, §5.4, §5.7

Class 19 10/27	Hardware & 3D Math	In-Class 19	§13.3; §13.5 20_Collisions.pdf
Class 20 11/1	Collision Detection Lab08_Collision	Lab 07 Due @ 10am At-Home 20 Due @ 10am	§4.5-§4.9; §16.6-§16.7
Class 21 11/3	Multithreading	In-Class 21	§2.3, §10.8 22_Profiling.pdf
Class 22 11/8	Profiling Lab09_Jobs	Lab 08 Due @ 10am At-Home 22 Due @ 10am	§13.3.5.5
Class 23 11/10	GJK	In-Class 23	§11.3.1 24_NormalMap.pdf
Class 24 11/15	Normal Maps Lab10_NormalMap	Lab 09 Due @ 10am At-Home 24 Due @ 10am	
Class 25 11/17	Multiplayer		§11.2.7; §11.3.2-§11.3.4 23_PostEffects.pdf
Class 26 11/22	Post Effects Lab11_Bloom	Lab 10 Due @ 10am At-Home 26 Due @ 10am	
No Class 11/24	Thanksgiving Break No Class		
Class 27 11/29	Instances & Compute	Lab 11 Due @ 10am In-Class 27	
Class 28 12/1	Final Review		
	Final Exam	Date: For the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at www.usc.edu/soc .	Monday May 10 8am

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>