

# THE GAME STUDIO

At Champlain College

## Game Design Challenge 2015

At the heart of a good game is a set of mechanics, the rules the game is played by. These rules and the player's imagination define the majority of the experience. Art, sound, story and characters can be important components, but without good gameplay your game will fail. Nothing demonstrates this better in a simple manner than a good board game. And truly great board games of the past often had very simple rules and game pawns. Think of Chess, Backgammon, or even some of your childhood favorites like Chutes and Ladders and Candy Land. Games like Chess and Backgammon have stood the test of time because of their great mechanics and the emergent play that comes from those mechanics.

To demonstrate your abilities as a game designer, we would like you to design and document a simple board game. Please follow the instructions below carefully, including documentation. You will be submitting your documentation for evaluation, not sending us all the board materials.

### Theme

This year all games will use the theme: Trust. You may incorporate this theme and interpret this word as you see fit for your design, but the use of the theme must be evident and well explained.

### Audience

Your game can be designed for any audience. Young, old, niche, the intended audience is your choice.

### Game Requirements

#### THE BOARD

- Your game must have a game board.
- Your board can be any size or shape, but must fit within one 11"x17" piece of paper.
- You may have only one board.

#### GAME PAWNS

- Your game must use pawns that are played on the board in some meaningful way.
- You can have up to 20 game pawns per player.
- Examples: chess pieces, miniatures, coins, tokens, etc.

**ADDITIONAL, OPTIONAL ELEMENTS** – While not required, you may choose no more than TWO of the following:

- Dice – no more than two per player. You may use any type of dice, including custom designed dice.
- Spinner
- Popper
- Cards – no more than 10 unique cards. You may use duplicates of cards in your gameplay to create a larger deck.
- Score sheet and pencil/pen
- Markers or other drawing implements

### Game Restrictions

Please adhere to the list above. No additional items are allowed. We want to see how creative you can be with limited resources. **Failure to follow the instructions will result in a substantial score penalty.**

## Documenting Your Game

To submit your game you will be documenting your work in a SINGLE, MULTIPAGE file. We suggest you create your document in an application like Microsoft Word and save as a .PDF to ensure the formatting is maintained. Please do not separate the images from the text. We want to see your skills in documenting your process.

Each page of the documentation is defined below:

### TITLE

- Title of Game
- Your Name
- Date

### SUMMARY and TARGET AUDIENCE

- Summary description of your game.
- Give an overview of your game. Include some of the context of the theme to describe it.
- Definition of your target audience. Describe who would like to play your game and why?

### THEME

- Describe your interpretation of the theme, “Trust,” as it relates to your game.
- How has the theme influenced your design, story, context, movement, board design, etc?
- If you have backstory, characters, or world description include it here.

### BOARD

- Show a good picture of just your board.
- Take a picture with a decent camera.
- Or make your board in a digital application and use the image.
- Make sure we can see the details.
- Describe your game board.
- How does the player move around the board?
- How does the game board guide play?
- What are some of the features of the game board that are important to gameplay?

### GAME PAWNS

- Show a good picture of your game pawns.
- Describe your game pawns and what the player does with them.
- How does the player use them on the board?
- What do they represent within the context of the theme and play?

### OTHER GAME MATERIALS

- Show a picture of any of the other elements you decided to use in your gameplay.
- What are they?
- What purpose do they serve in the game?
- How does the player use them?
- Do they also have a context within the theme?

### GAME RULES

- Set Up
  - How many players can play?
  - What must you do before gameplay begins?
  - How do you start the game?
- Player Goals
  - What are the players’ goals that will lead to victory?
- Game Play
  - How does the player play?
  - What are the rules to they must follow?
  - How does the player win or lose?

### **GAME SEQUENCE DEMO**

- Show 3 to 9 images demonstrating states of gameplay. These can be a sequence showing a series of moves, or separate images highlighting play.
- Include at least one picture of people playing your game.
- Add a caption for each image describing what you want the viewer to know about the image and the state of play.

### **GAME REFLECTION**

- Have your friends and family play your game. This is called “play testing.”
- Based on your testing,
  - Tell us what you think works best about your game.
  - Tell us what you think could work better.
  - Tell us what you learned during this exercise about designing a game.

### **Submitting your Project**

To submit your Game Design Challenge document, **save as a .PDF file**. This will ensure that we can open it and none of the formatting or images will be lost. Upload your file to SlideRoom via the Champlain.edu website. Finish the application by answering the last questions about yourself in the online form.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions, email Greg Bemis, the Program Director of Game Design at:

**bemis@champlain.edu**

### **Other Materials**

- If you would like the selection committee to see other materials to support your application, you may also upload them to SlideRoom. Here is a list of suggestions:
- Supporting materials for your submitted design: narrative, art, storyboards, diagrams, etc.
- Previously developed games or mods (digital or not). Document via video, or links to playable prototypes.
- Game narratives and/or character sketches
- Examples of artwork
- Examples of programming

### **What We Are Looking For**

In evaluating your submission we will be using the following criteria:

- Creative use of the limited materials (board, game pieces, etc.)
- Good design with interesting gameplay
- Creative interpretation and meaningful integration of the theme
- Good communication, both visual and written
- Quality and attention to detail