

**Minutes of the Game Development Program
Advisory Committee Meeting: Spring 2026**

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Date: May 1, 2026
Time: 10:00am (Pacific time)
Place: Online conference via Zoom; Zoom Meeting ID is: 698 266 936;
<https://santarosa-edu.zoom.us/j/698266936>; telephone dial-in: +1 669 900 6833.

Members in Attendance:

- Robert Cogburn
- Kris Davis
- Shawn Nelson
- Eric Vogel
- Morgan Wren
- Ellen Lanzone (proxy for Tim Lynch)

Members Absent:

- Tim Lynch

Faculty, Staff, and Administrators in Attendance:

- Michael McKeever

Was there a quorum?

- Yes

Agenda Items Discussed:

- Impact of AI tools on field
- Recommendations for incorporation of AI tools in curriculum
- Implementation of new mirrored non-credit certificate: Virtual Production Fundamentals
- Proposal for curriculum modification to Game Development Certificate and Degree

Action Items and Outcomes:

- Vote on curriculum modification to Game Development Certificate and Degree: Modify core course list to break out option group for GD 90 and FMA 11 in place of GD 90 alone, retain CS 40, CS 41, and CS 42 as required core courses.
 - Outcome: approved

Transcript Summary:

This meeting transcript summary covers the **Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) Game Development Program Industry Advisory Group** session for the 2025-2026 academic year. The discussion focused on industry updates, the impact of AI on game development, and curriculum revisions for the game development program.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was led by **Ethan Wilde**, with participants representing various sectors of the game and tech industries:

- **Morgan Wren:** NVIDIA (formerly Supergiant Games and 2K).
- **Kris Davis:** Chief Business Officer at Azure Games.
- **Shawn Nelson:** SRJC Instructor and games industry veteran.
- **Eric Vogel:** Professor of Psychology at California North State University and board game designer (Vainglorious Games).
- **Robert Cogburn:** Senior Design Director at Insomniac Games.
- **Ellen Lanzone:** Proxy for Tim Lynch
- **Michael McKeever:** SRJC Computer Studies Department Chair.

Procedural Note: The minutes from the Spring 2025 meeting were approved via a motion by Morgan Wren and a second by Eric Vogel.

2. Program and Regional Announcements

Ethan Wilde shared several updates regarding SRJC initiatives:

- **Speaker Series:** The "Game Views" series featured speakers like Alessandro Briglia and a program alumnus who transferred to USC.
- **Virtual Production Academy:** A collaborative five-campus research phase is underway to develop California's first collaborative bachelor's degree in virtual production.
- **Regional Esports Initiative:** SRJC is exploring a partnership spearheaded by Ohlone College to bring a regional esports program to the campus.
- **Study Abroad:** A summer program in Japan (Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka) was approved for July 2027, focusing on the "History of Games" and "Applied Social Media".

3. Industry Perspectives on AI

The panel discussed the evolving role of AI in game development and education:

- **Experience vs. Simulation:** Eric Vogel noted that AI produces "aesthetic simulations" rather than actual experiences, which is problematic for playtesting and education, where students are becoming overly reliant on AI tools.



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- **Production Workflows:** Shawn Nelson described using AI (like Meshy) to generate NPC models quickly, though he emphasized that human intervention is still required to fix technical issues like "spiraling quads".
- **Market Divergence:** Kris Davis observed that while mobile and PC investors are "bullish" on AI, console giants like PlayStation and Xbox remain "violently opposed" to it due to customer expectations for hand-developed content.
- **Industrial AI:** Morgan Wren highlighted NVIDIA's shift toward "physical AI" and digital twins for robotics, noting that AI is currently stronger at analysis than at simulating human experience.
- **Creative Collaboration:** Robert Cogburn shared how Insomniac is exploring internal agents to serve as "brainstorm partners" for remote designers, helping them reference studio literature and past projects.

4. Curriculum Revision: FMA 11

The committee discussed and voted on a major update to the core curriculum:

- **The Proposal:** To allow students to choose between the existing **Graphic Design 90** (User Experience) and a new course, **Film and Media Arts (FMA) 11: Communication Through Game Design**.
- **Rationale:** FMA 11, developed by Lex Poulos, focuses on non-digital game design, cultural theory, and semiotics. This provides a "lifeline" to students who found GD 90 less relevant to their specific game development goals.
- **Collaboration:** Shawn Nelson and Ethan Wilde noted that FMA 11 could serve as a concepting phase, with students later building those concepts in more advanced development classes.

Vote Result: The motion to add FMA 11 as a core option passed unanimously (Motion: Eric Vogel; Second: Morgan Wren).

5. Institutional Challenges and Future Planning

- **Budget Deficit:** Michael McKeever and Ethan Wilde addressed a \$10 million institutional deficit, which may lead to departmental "optimization" and reduced resources for new pathways.
- **AI Access:** Ethan Wilde expressed concern over the rising costs of AI tools (e.g., Anthropic's Claude Code changes) and the lack of state funding for student subscriptions.
- **Local Infrastructure:** Morgan Wren suggested SRJC explore running open-source models (like Llama) on local servers. McKeever and Wilde agreed to pursue grant funding or potential hardware donations from companies like NVIDIA to support this.
- **Advanced Pathway:** A proposal for an "Advanced Game Studies" certificate/degree tier is currently in development to support students seeking deeper career preparation.