IMPROVING CRITIQUE OF GAME PROJECTS WITH EXPERT AND PEER FEEDBACK

MARTIN PICHLMAIR, ITU COPENHAGEN
JESSICA HAMMER, CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY
WHY IS CRITIQUE VALUABLE IN DESIGN AND DESIGN EDUCATION?
CRITICISE TO INSPIRE

- Introduce to new and fresh perspectives
- Force the student outside the comfort zone
- Inform about the context students are working in
CRITICISE TO SUPPORT

- Aid in making design decisions
- Help with **scoping**, **framing** and keeping direction
- **Motivate** the student
CRITICISE TO REFLECT

● Support student awareness in that design processes are often **messy** and that that’s normal
● Demonstrate the student how to work as as critical **reflective practitioner** in a creative discipline
● Support students’ **communication** abilities
CRITICAL STRATEGIES
Formats for critique

- Peer critique
- Plenary critique
- Supervision
- Grading
ROLE OVER TIME

- Beginning: support opening the design space
- During development: support focusing
- After the project: support reflection on process
CHALLENGES IN EXPERT FEEDBACK
AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM
CHALLENGE 1
HAVING THE SAME GOALS
Students who have not done anything or feel* bad at what they are supposed to be doing

Students who want to only find out what you want from them — who minimax or maximin their grade

Students who have not done anything or feel* bad at what they are supposed to be doing

Students who are not receptive to what you tell them.
Students who have not done anything or feel bad at what they are supposed to be doing.

Students who are not receptive to what you tell them.

Students who want to only find out what you want from them — who minimax or maximin their grade.

Ask questions to make the students critics of themselves.

Students who have not done anything or feel bad at what they are supposed to be doing.
Students who are not receptive to what you tell them. Students who **have not done anything** or feel* bad at what they are supposed to be doing

**Ask questions** to make the students critics of themselves.

Feedback on work should **match the stage of development** that the work is in.

Students who are **not receptive** to what you tell them.
Students who have not done anything or feel* bad at what they are supposed to be doing

Students who want to only find out what you want from them — who minimax or maximin their grade

Students who are not receptive to what you tell them.

Ask questions to make the students critics of themselves.

Feedback on work should match the stage of development that the work is in.

Ask them what their core question or design goal is.
CHALLENGE 2
COMMUNICATION
| Students who are **easily offended** | Students who are bad at **articulating** what they have done | Students who are **easily demotivated** |
Students who are easily offended

Students who are bad at articulating what they have done

Students who are easily demotivated

Separate between critique of the **product**, the **process**, and the **designer**.
Students who are easily offended

Students who are bad at articulating what they have done

Students who are easily demotivated

Separate between critique of the product, the process, and the designer.

Deliver positive and negative comments directly and on equal footing.
Students who are easily offended

Students who are bad at articulating what they have done

Students who are easily demotivated

Separate between critique of the **product**, the **process**, and the **designer**.

Deliver positive and negative comments **directly and on equal footing**.

Start with identifying **good points**, before critique to not discourage.
CHALLENGE 3
THE PROCESS
How concrete should suggestions be?  How can the student move forward with feedback?  Should all feedback be based on models and guidelines revealed to students in advance?
How concrete should suggestions be?

How can the student move forward with feedback?

Should all feedback be based on models and guidelines revealed to students in advance?

Use concrete words, established reference points and industry terminology.
Should all feedback be based on models and guidelines revealed to students in advance?

How concrete should suggestions be?

How can the student move forward with feedback?

Use concrete words, established reference points and industry terminology.

Try to align goals with the student explicitly.
How concrete should suggestions be?

How can the student move forward with feedback?

Should all feedback be based on models and guidelines revealed to students in advance?

Use concrete words, established reference points and industry terminology.

Try to align goals with the student explicitly.

Not necessarily but the process should be clearly communicated, if not.
CHALLENGE 4
YOU
What if I am getting **too involved** in or attached to the project? **Impostor syndrome:** who am I to tell them what to do? **Your question**
What if I am getting **too involved** in or attached to the project?

**Impostor syndrome**: who am I to tell them what to do?

Your question

Give the students enough **freedom** to be responsible for their own works.
What if I am getting too involved in or attached to the project?

**Impostor syndrome**: who am I to tell them what to do?

Give the students enough **freedom** to be responsible for their own works.
What if I am getting **too involved** in or attached to the project?

**Impostor syndrome:** who am I to tell them what to do?

*Your question*

Give the students enough **freedom** to be responsible for their own works.

*My answer*
MY HOBBY:
SITTING DOWN WITH GRAD STUDENTS AND TIMING
HOW LONG IT TAKES THEM TO FIGURE OUT THAT
I'M NOT ACTUALLY AN EXPERT IN THEIR FIELD.

ENGINEERING:
OUR BIG PROBLEM IS HEAT DISSIPATION
HAVE YOU TRIED LOGARITHMS?
48 SECONDS

LINGUISTICS:
AH, SO DOES THIS FINNO-UGRIC FAMILY INCLUDE,
SAY, KLINGON?
63 SECONDS

SOCIOMETRY:
YEAH, MY LATEST WORK IS ON RANKING PEOPLE
FROM BEST TO WORST.
4 MINUTES

LITERARY CRITICISM:
YOU SEE, THE DECONSTRUCTION
IS INEXTRICABLE FROM NOT ONLY
THE TEXT, BUT ALSO THE SELF.

EIGHT PAPERS AND TWO BOOKS AND THEY
HAVEN'T CAUGHT ON.
Formats for critique

- Peer critique
- Plenary critique
- Supervision
- Grading

Supervisor
Student
PEER FEEDBACK
Jessica Hammer
Formats for critique

- Peer critique
- Plenary critique
- Supervision
- Grading
Why is peer feedback valuable?

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<th>Role</th>
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<td>Instructor</td>
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<td>Expose student reasoning and skills</td>
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<td>Can scale to larger classrooms</td>
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Challenges of peer feedback

Engagement

Quality

Reflection
Challenges of peer feedback

Engagement
Quality
Reflection
Challenges of peer feedback

Engagement
Quality
Reflection

Created by Rashida Luqman Kheriwala from Noun Project
Challenges of peer feedback

Engagement
Quality
Reflection

Created by Ralf Schmitzer from Noun Project
IMPROVING PEER FEEDBACK
IMPROVING PEER FEEDBACK AS AN END-TO-END PROCESS
Formats for critique

Peer critique

Plenary critique
## Formats for critique

<table>
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<th>Preparing for critique</th>
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<td><strong>Peer critique</strong></td>
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- **Preparation for critique**
  - Peer critique
  - Plenary critique

- **Reacting to critique**
  - Supervisor
  - Student
The EOTA Method

The PeerPresents System
The EOTA Method
The EOTA Method

- **Playtesters** (Peers)
- **Observers** (Peers)
- **Designers** (Silent)
- **Faculty**
- **Supervisor**
The EOTA Method

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**Before feedback:**
- All participants get norm-setting
  - Reduce fear of failure
  - Demonstrate high- and low-quality feedback

**During feedback:**
- Providers use EOTA
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<tr>
<th><strong>Experiences</strong></th>
<th>Only playtesters</th>
<th>Describe experiences during play</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td>Playtesters &amp; peers</td>
<td>Describe concrete and specific observations of others during play</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Theories</strong></td>
<td>Playtesters &amp; peers</td>
<td>Develop theories to link experiences and observations</td>
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<td>Offer suggestions</td>
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<td>During feedback:</td>
<td>Diversify participation and</td>
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<td>Provide many levels of data for teams to use</td>
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<td>After feedback:</td>
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<td>Select feedback to respond to</td>
<td>Requires reflection on feedback use</td>
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The PeerPresents System

A comment from hammerj: Aug 16 at 11:18
slide 22 looks like you are going to set up a comparison because points are so far apart - I was waiting to see other data appear in the gaps

A comment from aato: Aug 16 at 11:17
slide 21 again you can make use of the slide title rhetorically, give the finding in a snippier way in the title
The PeerPresents System

Amy Cook, CMU

Steven Dow, UCSD
The PeerPresents System

- Peers (Using PeerPresents)
- Faculty
- Designers (Presenting)
- Supervisor
- Student
The PeerPresents System

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WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT MORE? WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT LESS?

WAS ANY PART OF THE PRESENTATION CONFUSING OR UNCLEAR?

PLEASE ADD YOUR GENERAL THOUGHTS, CRITIQUES, AND COMMENTS ABOUT THE PRESENTATION IN THE BOX BELOW.
## The PeerPresents System

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<tr>
<td>Providers comment &amp;</td>
<td></td>
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WAS ANY PART OF THE PRESENTATION CONFUSING OR UNCLEAR?

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<tr>
<td>After feedback: Receiver reflection process</td>
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**Before feedback:** Receivers write questions

**Ownership of feedback**

**Quality of feedback**

**Elicit higher-quality feedback**

**Reflection:**

Reflect on desired feedback

**During feedback:** Providers comment & vote

**Multiple levels of engagement**

**Capture all data, available to instructor**

**After feedback:** Receiver reflection process

**Receiver reflection process**
The PeerPresents System
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<td>Structured reflection process</td>
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<td>Evaluate feedback quality</td>
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### Engagement | Quality | Reflection
--- | --- | ---
Before feedback: How are peers prepared? |  |  
During feedback: How do peers participate? |  |  
After feedback: How do peers reflect? |  |  
Formats for critique

- Peer critique
- Plenary critique
- Supervision
- Grading

- Supervisor
- Student
References (Expert Critique)


References (Peer Feedback)


Let’s talk!

Want to have a longer conversation about expert critique? Martin Pichlmair
mpic@itu.dk

Want to talk peer feedback strategies for your classroom? Jessica Hammer
hammerj@andrew.cmu.edu

Want to try PeerPresents? Amy Cook
amyshann@andrew.cmu.edu