Data Analysis for Game Development

Administrative

IMGD 2905
Outline

• Background
• Admin Stuff
• Motivation
• Objectives
Professor Background
(Who am I?)

• Mark Claypool (professor, “Mark”)
  – Professor, Computer Science
  – Director, Interactive Media and Game Development

• Research interests
  – Multimedia performance
  – Congestion control (protocols, AQM)
  – Wireless networking
  – Network games

• Currently playing
Student Background
(Who are you?)

1. Year?
2. Major?
   a. IMGD Art or Tech
   b. Other
3. Background?
   a. Statistics
   b. Probability
4. Tools?
   a. Python
   b. Excel
5. Platform of Choice?
   a. Windows
   b. Linux
   c. Mac
Online Classes

• Will meet during our regular time slot
  – Zoom
• Ask questions, provide updates, ...
• Lectures, but in small chunks
  – May pre-record and ask you to watch
• Group work (Zoom breakout rooms)
• ...
• Let’s be flexible! We’ll see how this goes, what’s going well, what is not and adjust!
Syllabus Stuff

• http://www.cs.wpi.edu/~imgd2905/d20
  – Linked from Canvas Web page

• Class: M, T, Th, F 10-10:50am
  – https://wpi.zoom.us/j/542948614

• Office hours (Zoom): M, T, W, Th 4-5pm
  – https://wpi.zoom.us/j/460051336
  – Or by appointment

• Email
  – claypool@cs.wpi.edu (me)
D.M. Levine and D.F. Stephan
“Even You Can Learn Statistics and Analytics”

• Unfortunate name, but good content → depth to provide foundation for analytics
• Good examples, but not game-centric
Class Topics

- Data analysis tools and pipeline
- Statistics
- Visualizing and presenting data
- Probability
- Hypothesis testing
- Regression

- Apply topics to game data!
  - Commercial and custom
  - New and old
Course Structure

• Prerequisites
  – College algebra
  – No {programming, stats, probability} expected
  – No game analytics experience required

• Grading
  – Projects (60%)
  – Homework (30%)
  – Participation (10%)
  – On the Canvas Website: https://canvas.wpi.edu/courses/18262
    • Authenticate with WPI login and password
Projects

• 4 projects, 60% of grade total
  – Last project slightly larger
• Do game analysis on actual game data!
• Use game analytics pipeline
  – Typical flow for game (and other) analytics
  – Common tools used for analytics
• Multiple instances of analysis
  – Apply, become skilled with methods of synthesis, interpretation, dissemination
• Project 1 – today!
Homework

• Written problem set
• From the book, Web, made up
• Solve with pencil and paper
• Or calculators
• Or Excel
Participation

• Showing up to class matters
  – Come to class!

• Being engaged in class matters
  – Don’t multi-task!

• Ask questions, answer questions

• Weekly “survey” → get your feedback on how the class is going!

• 10% of your grade
  – But much bigger indirect effect!
Slides

• On the class Web page
• **PowerPoint** and **PDF**
• Caution! Don’t rely upon slides alone! Use them as supplementary material
  – (come to class)
Timeline

• Tentative timeline for dates for exams and projects
  – In order to help you plan

http://www.cs.wpi.edu/~imgd2905/d20/timeline.html

• Will notify if update
Why This Class?
Why This Class?

Goals
• Gain proficiency using modern tools for data acquisition and analysis
• Understand basic probability and statistics as it applies to data analysis
• Develop skills for presenting game data analysis both orally and in written form

Objectives
• Use spreadsheet to analyze and visualize game data
• Use scripting language to extract and clean data recorded from game
• Apply summary statistics to game data
• Compute probability distributions for game data
• Write reports with graphs and tables illustrating analysis of game data
• Present game dataset report using appropriate visual aids
Why This Class? – Other

- WPI IMGD requirements
  - Gotta take Math/Quantitative Science
- **Statistics** and **Probability** useful for game design and development
- **Game Analytics** similar to other forms of analytics (e.g., Data Science)
- **Fun**!
- Game analysis increasingly important (jobs!)
Jobs

Game Play Data Analyst, Sony Interactive Entertainment

• Duties
  – Advise, define implement gameplay data to ensure understanding of player experience
  – Provide insights that impact game design and improve quality
  – Create and maintain player segmentation that allows understanding of engagement and spending
  – Mine data sets and develop dashboard for live service teams, game developers
  – Devise and implement A/B experiments to test acquisition, engagement
  – Present finding and provide recommendations

• Requirements
  – BS/BA degree Stats, Math, Econ, CS or related
  – Experience with SQL
  – Experience with data visualization packages
  – Experience with statistical software
  – Experience with Amazon cloud services
  – Have created and presented visualizations and insights to various business groups
  – Passion for video games preferred
Jobs

Duties

• Aggregate and analyze petabytes of game data from various sources
• Prep data for deeper analysis and/or reporting
• Organize collected data into reliable intel that informs Rioters to improve player experience
• Work with decision-makers to understand goals, identify opportunities, and inform decisions across company
• Create awesome

Requirements

• BS/BA degree Stats, Math, Econ, CS or related
  • Graduate degree preferred
• Business savvy
• Technically adept
  • SQL, Python
  • Excel, PowerPoint
• Communicator
  • Reports clear, and concise
  • Presentations to variety of audiences