Who am I?

- Researching Australian videogame industry, job opportunities, skills transferability

- Previously: taught game design at a technical college

- Did a creative writing undergrad major for some reason??

There are more game dev students than game dev jobs

Australia: 1000 **people employed by local games industry,** 5000 **student enrolments** per year

Netherlands: 2185 **people employed by local games industry in development roles**, 1600 **graduates** a year,

UK: 1585 **graduates** in 2008, approximately 130~230 **graduates needed by local industry**

US: **54% graduates** employed in games industry

Jen McLean (IGDA Exec Director): estimates **10,000 game design graduates worldwide every year.**

Sources: https://tinyurl.com/gamesartschool

"… I see students enrolling in **predatory schools** that count 'indie' as alumni career placement to **[defraud] students into bloated programs** they don't need for jobs they won't get…" - John Warner, *GamesIndustry.biz,* 2 October 2018

"In Spain, the ones who are making money in video games are the schools, not the developers. **They're feeding the machine**. I think it's something to worry about." Jordi de Paco quoted by Steven Wright, *Polygon, 28* September 2018

No, but…

"I'm hoping my understanding [of the games industry] is limited because **I don't honestly know of many companies in Australia**."

"What I thought [when I started] was that videogame development was I guess the equivalent of streaming. Sort of like 'you're always having fun'. There's never a day where you're not playing games, right?"

"I mainly came in with the intention of making my own games with…in an indie game studio and then eventually **enter the AAA industry somehow**."

triple-A, QA

triple-A, junior designer

professional indie studios

solo development

web development

VR development

AR development

graphic design

comic illustration

teaching

marketing

education software

dishwashing + art games

Gamification work for clients

Art gallery staff

Exhibition design

Livestreaming

Illustrator

APPENDIX

TABLE A3: Industry of employment reported by respondents in non-video game industries

Current Position	% of Respondents
Advertising	1%
Business and Finance	1%
Construction	1%
Consulting	2%
Customer Service	1%
Education	31%
Energy	1%
Entertainment	4%
Food Industry	6%
Government, Security and Defence	9%
Health Care	3%
Insurance	1%
Leisure	1%
Lounge	1%
Marketing	1%
Media and Entertainment	3%
Non Profit	1%
Sales	1%
Technology	30%
Veterinary	1%

Game developers are entrepreneurs

Game school is art school

'work-ready' game dev students…

Act like they are *already* game developers (because they are)

Make their **own games,** not just complete assignments.

Release these games publicly

Contribute to game dev communities

Don't have naturally good ideas but develop a good process of iteration

Actually *do the work of game development*

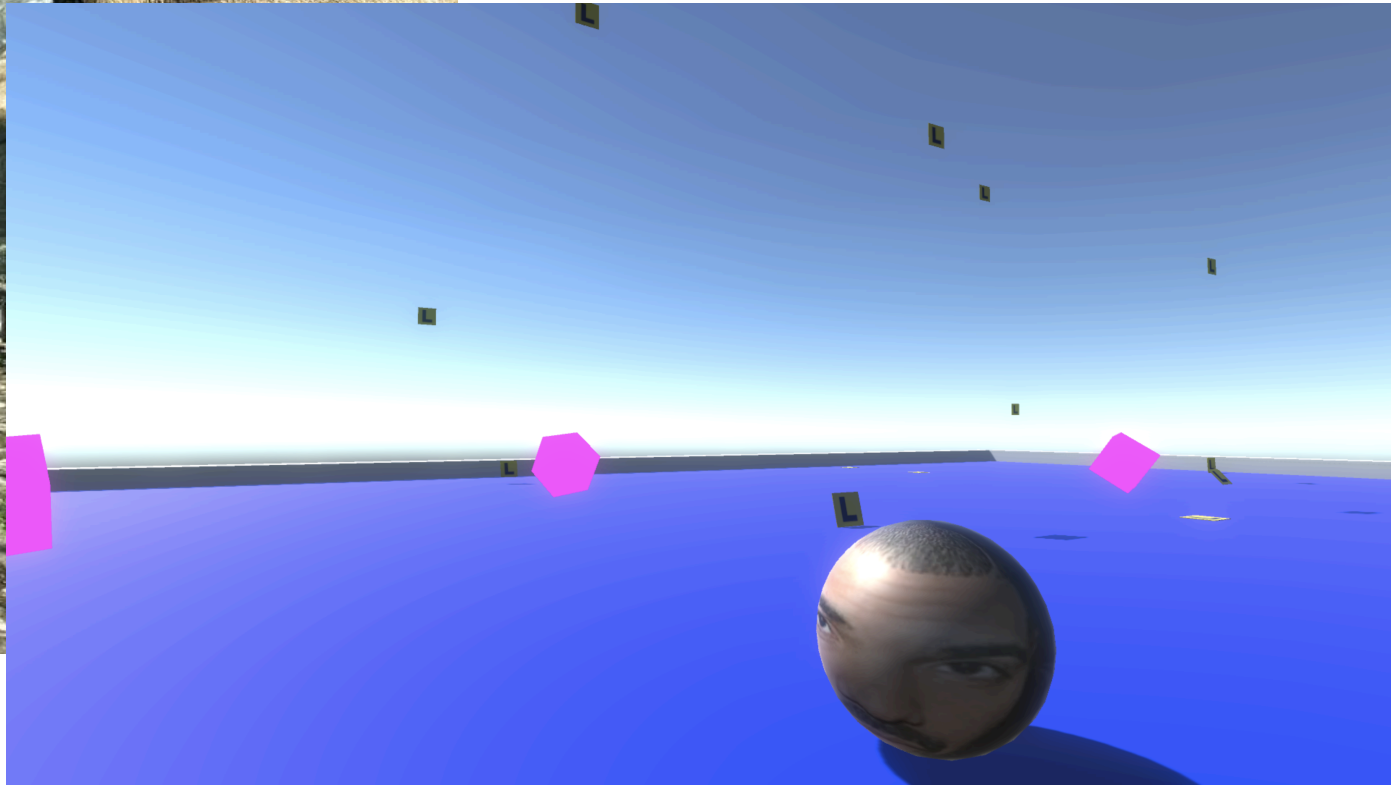# For my students to become work-ready, I need to ensure they understand…

1. What they've actually signed up for. (Ie. a creative degree, not a software degree)

2. That, because it is a creative degree, they can just *start being the thing* right now. (You don't need a degree to be a game developer.)

3. What they can actually do with a game development skillset after they graduate (and what a game development skillset *actually is*!)

Three (interconnected) ways I help my students achieve these understandings…

1. Focus on process over product

2. Change the classroom canon

3. Help students transition from a 'gamer' mindset to a 'game developer' mindset.

Process over product

Process over product

"Videogames aren't refrigerators"

'make-a-thing' activities

Short briefs focused on the expression of an idea, not the technical proficiency of particular software or genres
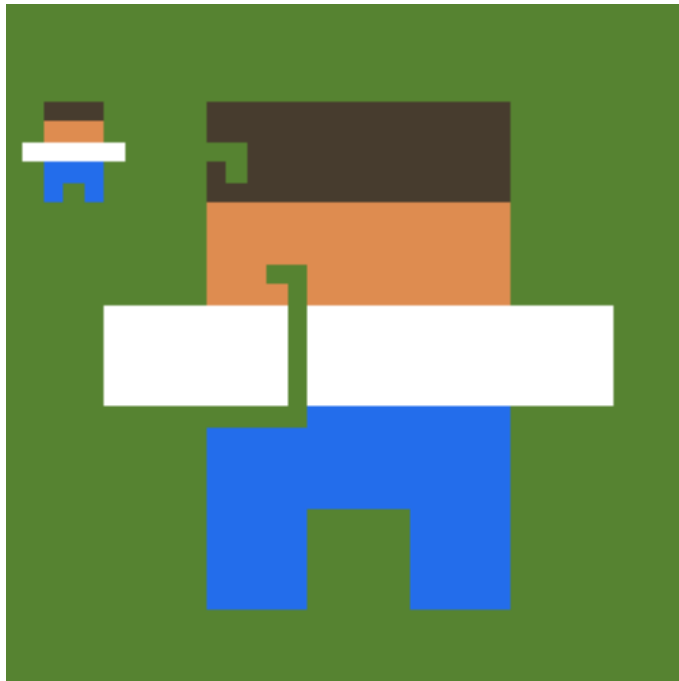
Eg:

- Make a game about 'home'
- Adapt an artwork
- Musicvideogame

A **'videogame about X',** not **'A student version of X'**

Change the classroom canon

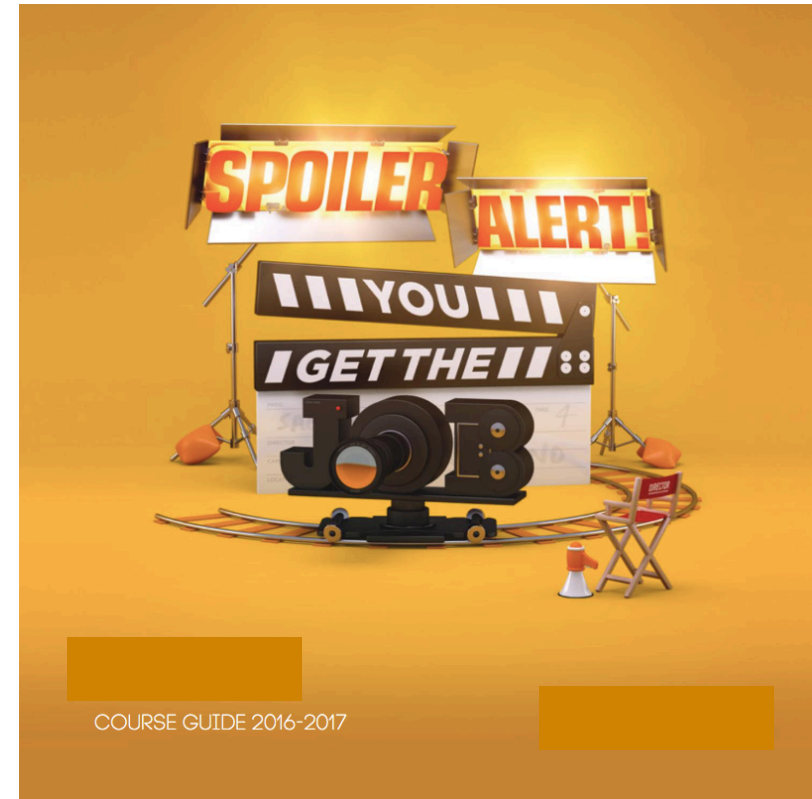# Change the classroom canon

No games on my curriculum that either:
- Cost more than $5
- Took longer than an hour to play
- Couldn't be played on basic PC or smartphone.

Forces students to think **about design**

Introduces students to important 'non-gamer' games without making a big deal of it.

Make game developers seem like humans, not like campus-sized corporations.

Not gamers, game developers

Not gamers, game developers

Talk to students like they **already are game developers**

Highlight the similarities between **what they do** and **what 'real' game developers** do

Talk about industry news with students (that means the Blizzard firings, not the latest announcements at E3)

Talk about the **local** games industry

Insist they release games publicly

Give students opportunities to consider if they really want to **develop** games or if they are just happy **playing** games.

Three (interconnected) ways to help my students become 'work-ready'

1. Focus on process over product

2. Change the classroom canon

3. Help students transition from a 'gamer' mindset to a 'game developer' mindset.

Summary

Regardless of how your program is marketed, ensure your students know what they've really signed up for.

Game development is a creative discipline. The challenges our students face are the same ones faced by musicians, poets, artists, actors (but really probably not quite as dire)

Train your students to be self-driven and collectively-minded, confident, critical, and versatile by focussing on **process over product**, **changing the classroom canon**, and **helping them think of themselves as *already* game developers.**

Make students work-ready, not job-ready