About DigiPen

DigiPen Institute of Technology is a global leader in game development, engineering, computer science, and fine arts education. As the first school in the world to offer a bachelor’s degree in game development, DigiPen has advanced the game industry for more than two decades by helping students become world-class programmers, engineers, designers, and artists. Located in Redmond, Washington, with branch campuses in Singapore and Bilbao, Spain, DigiPen offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in video game design and development, hardware and software engineering applied to simulation, fine arts and digital art production, and sound design, as well as Summer Workshops for grades K-12 and Continuing Education courses. DigiPen students have won more awards at the Independent Games Festival than those of any other school, and graduates have gone on to create ground-breaking games like Valve Software’s Portal series.

Why DigiPen?

Applied Learning
At DigiPen, education goes beyond mere theory. Students work on semester- to year-long projects where they build game engines, artificial intelligence, hand-drawn animations, and prototype hardware from the ground up. This approach teaches students to become innovators rather than just users of technology.

Collaboration
Just like in the workplace, DigiPen students succeed by learning how to work effectively with others. By collaborating on their yearly projects, students leverage teamwork and communication skills to accomplish things that would be impossible to do alone.

Faculty
DigiPen’s faculty includes both Ph.D. academics and experienced professionals from industry-leading companies like Disney, Microsoft, Nintendo, PopCap Games, Atari, Sucker Punch Studios, Activision, and Pixar. With most of DigiPen’s instructors employed full-time, they are able to facilitate students’ growth over all four years of their education rather than just a semester.

Quick Facts as of September 2013

Size: 1,029 students

Diversity: International students currently make up 11 percent of DigiPen’s student body. Students have come to DigiPen from the following 58 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Vietnam.
 Degrees Offered

» Bachelor of Science in Computer Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation
» Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Game Design
» Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering
» Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Sound Design
» Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Animation
» Bachelor of Arts in Game Design
» Bachelor of Arts in Music and Sound Design
» Master of Science in Computer Science (Full and Part-Time Available)
» Master of Fine Arts in Digital Arts (Full and Part-Time Available)

 History

1988  Mr. Claude Comair starts DigiPen Corp. in Vancouver, Canada.
1990  DigiPen begins its training program in 3D animation. DigiPen begins working with Nintendo of America to establish a video game programming certification program in Canada.
1994  DigiPen accepts the first group of students in its video game programming certification program.
1996  The Washington State Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) authorizes DigiPen to offer its Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation program.
1998  The inaugural class in DigiPen’s Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation begins.
1999  The last cohort of DigiPen’s students in Canada graduates. DigiPen permanently relocates to its Redmond campus.
2002  DigiPen is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC).
2004  DigiPen begins offering two new degree programs: the Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering and the Bachelor of Fine Art in Production Animation.
2006  2006: DigiPen was granted approval for its Master of Science in Computer Science degree program by ACCSC.
2008  DigiPen adds two new degree programs: the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Game Design. DigiPen partners with Singapore’s Economic Development Board to open its first international branch campus.
2010  DigiPen moves to a new campus in Redmond, begins offering a part-time option for the Master of Science program, and renames its Bachelor of Fine Arts in Production Animation program to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Animation. DigiPen announces the opening of its first European campus in Bilbao, Spain.
2011  The first cohort begin their studies at the Bilbao campus.
2012  DigiPen renames its Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation to the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation. DigiPen adds three new degree programs: the Bachelor of Arts in Music and Sound Design, Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Sound Design, and a full-time and part-time Master of Fine Arts in Digital Arts.
2012  DigiPen renames its Bachelor of Science in Game Design to the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Game Design.

 Other Programs

 Continuing Education
For working professionals interested in learning about digital art and animation, game development, or drawing, DigiPen offers 10-week Continuing Education courses throughout the year. DigiPen also offers customized courses for game companies to cross-train staff members or introduce new concepts to employees.

 ProjectFUN
DigiPen ProjectFun youth programs engage students in grades 1-12 in the arts and sciences through hands-on Summer Workshops, online courses, and a Pre-College Program.
DigiPen in the Press

» The Wall Street Journal, Rolling Stone magazine, People magazine, G4TV, USA Today, and The Seattle Times have all acknowledged DigiPen for its pioneering approach to technology education.


» In October 2010, The Asian Correspondent named DigiPen as one of the top 10 schools in the world for game development.

Awards and Recognition

» In 2013, the Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County (EDC) honored DigiPen Institute of Technology Founder and President Claude Comair as one of the region’s Economic Development Champions at its 41st Annual Economic Forecast Conference, crediting DigiPen for its significant contributions to the development of the regional economy.

» DigiPen students have consistently excelled in both national and international game development competitions. At the annual Independent Games Festival (IGF) in San Francisco, California, DigiPen games have been nominated for awards every year for the last 12 consecutive years. Since 2001, the IGF has granted 44 awards to 34 DigiPen student games. In 2007, 2008, and 2009, DigiPen projects also won the coveted Best Student Game award (for Toblo, Synaesthete, and Tag: The Power of Paint, respectively). In the IGF Main Competition, seven DigiPen student games have been nominated for awards in various professional categories, and in 2004 Bontago won the “Innovation in Game Design” award while competing against professional developers.

» In 2011, the Independent Games Festival China (IGF China), part of the annual Game Developers Conference China, selected three DigiPen games for its Student Competition, which honors six of the top student games from the Pan-Pacific area. DigiPen Singapore student game Pixi won the “Excellent Student Winner” award, while DigiPen Singapore student game Void won the “Best Student Game” award, as well as the “Excellence in Technology” award in IGF China’s Main Competition. IGF China selected three DigiPen Singapore games again in 2012.

» In 2010, the student developers of the game GEAR won the $100,000 Grand Prize in the Indie Game Challenge’s non-professional category. In 2012, the student game Nitronic Rush won the Indie Game Challenge’s Gamer’s Choice Award.

» In 2011 and 2012, DigiPen student games Solstice and Douse, respectively, earned spots in the Tokyo Game Show’s annual Sense of Wonder Night.

» Other competition highlights for DigiPen students include five finalist positions at the Slamdance Guerrilla Gamemaker Competition (with two of those games winning their award categories), four placements in the PAX 10 indie showcase, and awards at the Northwest Games Festival, Intel Games Demo, and IndieCade International Festival of Independent Games.

» In 2008, DigiPen Corporation was awarded Boeing’s “2008 Supplier of the Year – Technology Category” for software that DigiPen developed for Boeing. In addition, DigiPen also received Boeing’s “Performance Excellence Award.”

» In 2006, the independent research group enterpriseSeattle named DigiPen as one of the three major contributing factors (alongside Microsoft and Nintendo) to the exponential growth of the game industry from 2002 to 2006.
Student Success Stories

From Narbacular Drop to Valve’s Portal
Seven DigiPen students landed the opportunity of a lifetime when Valve Software hired their entire team to turn their DigiPen senior game, Narbacular Drop, into a professional title. Their game became Portal, and went on to win “Game of the Year” at the 2008 Game Developer’s Conference.

DigiPen Programmer Produces Scribblenauts
Brittany Aubert, a Bachelor of Science in Real-Time Interactive Simulation graduate, was hired on to be a producer at 5th Cell in Bellevue, WA, after an internship at the company the summer before her senior year. During her internship, Aubert wrote a tool that became the primary content pipeline for Scribblenauts and Drawn to Life: The Next Chapter. Scribblenauts was highly regarded by critics, such as IGN.com, which ranked it “Outstanding” with a 9.0 out of 10 rating.

From TAG: The Power of Paint to Portal 2
History repeats itself! After a DigiPen team showed their senior game TAG: The Power of Paint to Valve, the company hired the entire team to work on Portal 2. Many of the ideas seen in their senior project were integrated into Portal 2, which was released in 2011 to rave reviews.

Nitronic Rush Team Goes the Distance
Following the success of their arcade racing game Nitronic Rush—a 2011 student project that has been downloaded over a million times—three of the team’s graduating developers founded the independent Refract Studios in Seattle. In 2012, the team successfully took to Kickstarter to fund their first game Distance, a spiritual successor to Nitronic Rush.

Graduates Help Ship Guild Wars 2
In 2012, Bellevue-based studio ArenaNet launched Guild Wars 2, one of the most ambitious and well-received MMO games of all time. More than 40 graduates had a hand in bringing the game’s sprawling fantasy world to life, including gameplay programmer Habib Loew, who was with the game through its entire five-year development cycle. Other alumni developers included lead engine programmer Chad Taylor and animator Ben Freedman.

International Campuses

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