Terrifying Angry Gods (TAG): A Look Into Traditional Game Development

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Definitions

Balancing- changing numeric values and card text in order to make different elements of a game weaker or stronger.

Deck Builder- This is a game type where there is a pool of cards that players can pick up each round in order to make a deck during the game. This allows players to customize their hands and play a deck differently each game.

PvP- Player vs. Player means you are up against other humans rather than a computer or the game itself.

Hidden Role- This is where you win by trying to complete an objective only known to the player and usually everyone has a different objective.

Play Testing- This is the process of playing the game you made in order to pick out flaws and test the mechanics created.

Introduction

- Card and board games have been a great pass time dating all the way back to the first know board game Senet in 3500 B.C.
- The Technology and Gaming club has had the goal of showcasing a wide variety of card and board games to the UF student body.
- During the course of the fall 2020 semester, we decided that we wanted to try our hand at creating our own game to better understand the thought and development processes that occur when designing a game.

So what do we want to make?

- Our first step was to determine what kind of game the group wanted to design.
- Traditional games range from several different formats including, but not limited to:
  - Competitive versus cooperative
  - Hidden Role
  - Deck-building
  - King of the hill
  - Etc.
- In order to do this, we decided to poll the group of everyone's top favorite games and the pros and cons to these game formats as well
- Our choices can be seen in the following slides.

Our Favorite Games!

Munchkin

RISK

MTG

PANDEMIC

Euchre

UNICORNS

ETHNOS ||

AEONS END ||

MARVEL/DC ||

WALKING DEAD

COSMIC ENCOUNTER

Smash UP
DARK SOULS

BANG!

VILLIANOUS |||

CARDS AGAINST

COVER YOUR ASSETS

CLUE |||

BLOCKUS

BETRAYAL |||

ASCENSION

CHURCHIL SOLITAIRE

ONE NIGHT WEREWOLF

HOGWART'S BATTLE

CODENAMES

CO-OP

AEON'S END

HOGWARTS BATTLE

PANDEMIC

MARVEL

BETRAYAL ?

DARK SOULS

DICE

RISK

PVP

Villainous

CLUE

COSMIC ENCOUNTER

BLOCKUS

MTG

HIDEN ROLE

BETRAYAL

BANG

ONE NIGHT WEREWOLF

Organizing Games Into Categories

- Our next step was to group our favorite games into what we felt that game fell under in terms of genre.
- This allowed us not only to see what games were were all interested in, but also allowed us to figure out what genre of games our group enjoyed playing the most.

Games Organized into Genres

CARD GAME

Eucher
UNICORNS
MUNCHKIN
VILLANOUS
CARDS AGAINST
COVER YOUR ASSETS
MTG
SMASH UP
BANG!
ETHNOS

DECK BUILDER

Aeon's End
MARVEL/DC
ASCENSION
HOGWART'S BATTLE

KING OF HILL
COSMIC ENC.
RISK
CLUE?
MUNCHKIN
ETHNOS
UNICORNS

PARTY GAMES

CODE NAMES

1 NIGHT WEREWOLF

CARDS AGAINST HUMANITY

What Genre of game do we want to make?

- After determining all of the genres that our group found most popular we started voting on which ones we wanted to base our game around.
- Keep in mind, this is not an exhaustive list of board/card game genres but rather the ones our group liked the most.
- We also decided that it would be interesting to combine multiple genres into our game for complexity

Settling on a Genre

- We settled on a competitive deck-builder that relies heavily on strategy over luck
- We also made other important decisions:
  - Simple vs. Complex
  - Strategy vs. Luck
  - How does a player win?
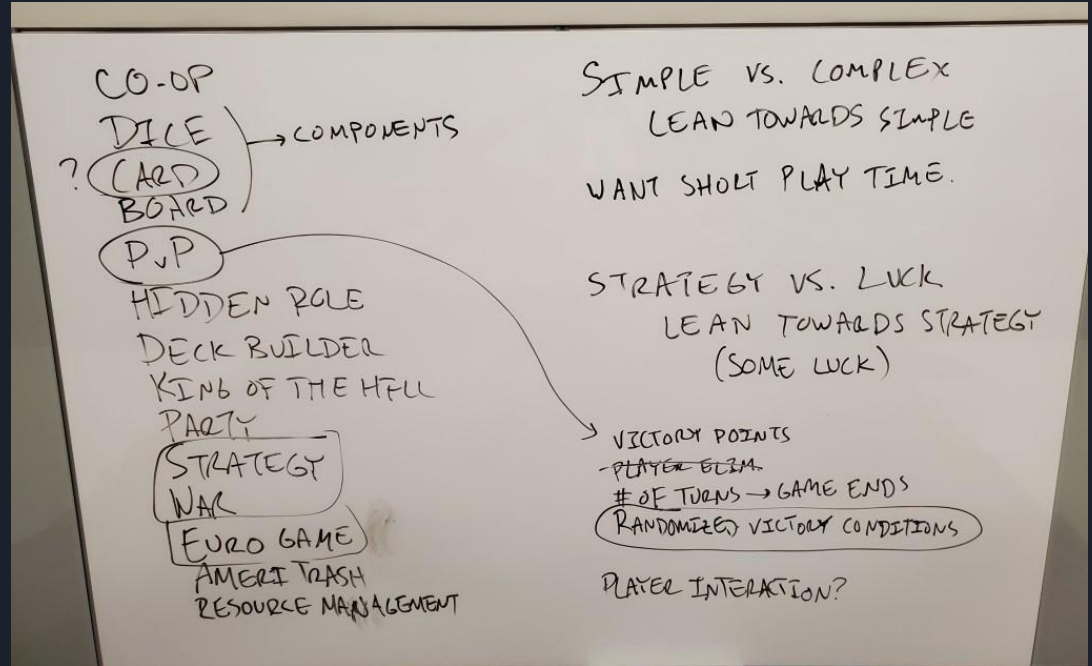
What is our Game Theme?

- The majority of us were partial to fantasy type themes like magic and supernatural beings.
- In the end we voted on making the game gods-themed.
- This later became an interesting project because we wanted to potentially create our own gods, rather than basing them off of preexisting egyptian or roman gods.
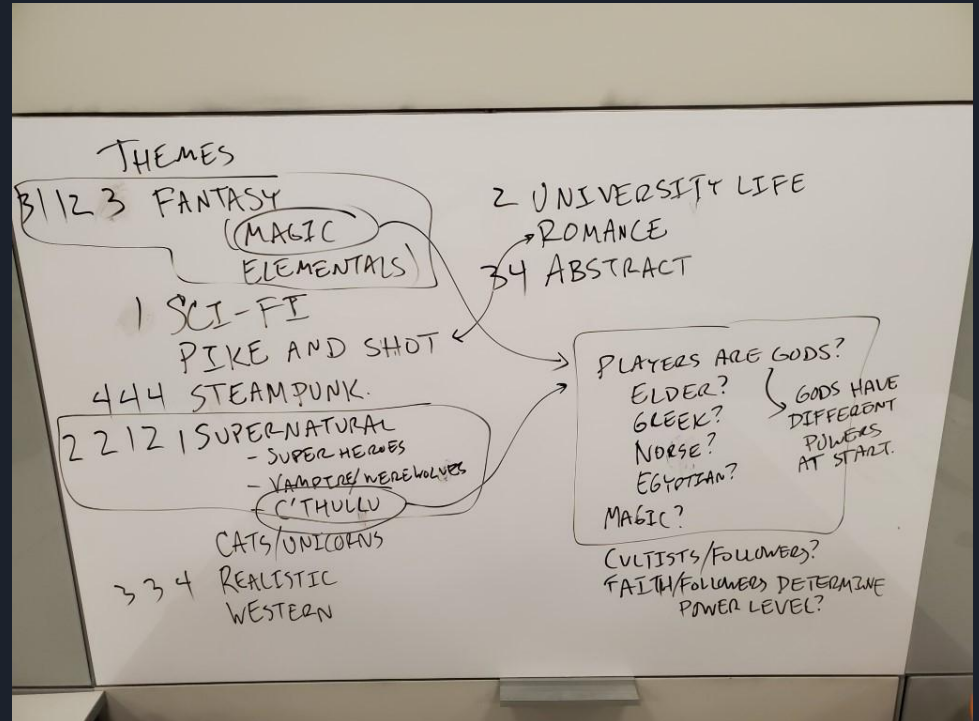
Defining Rules and Game Aspects

- Everyone starts with a starting deck of 8 cards that are all the same for each player
  - 1 attack card, 2 defense cards, 4 follower cards, and 1 faith card
  - Players win by achieving a certain number of faith otherwise known as victory points
  - Players attack each other by depleting faith, or followers and can utilize defense cards to protect themselves
- Each player will be able to draw from a main deck based on their god each turn to build their deck the way they want
- Decks will have types based on the God you have chosen.
  - Each God has special "passive" abilities linked to each card type drawn from the main deck
- A copy of the tentative rules is listed below
  - [Game Rules](#)

Defining Rules
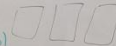
Designing our Cards:

- We designed our cards with the general layout that is pictured to the right. Each card has a cost which is listed at the top.
  - This can be followers(top left) or faith (top right)

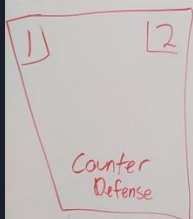- The ability of that card and explanation is located at the bottom.
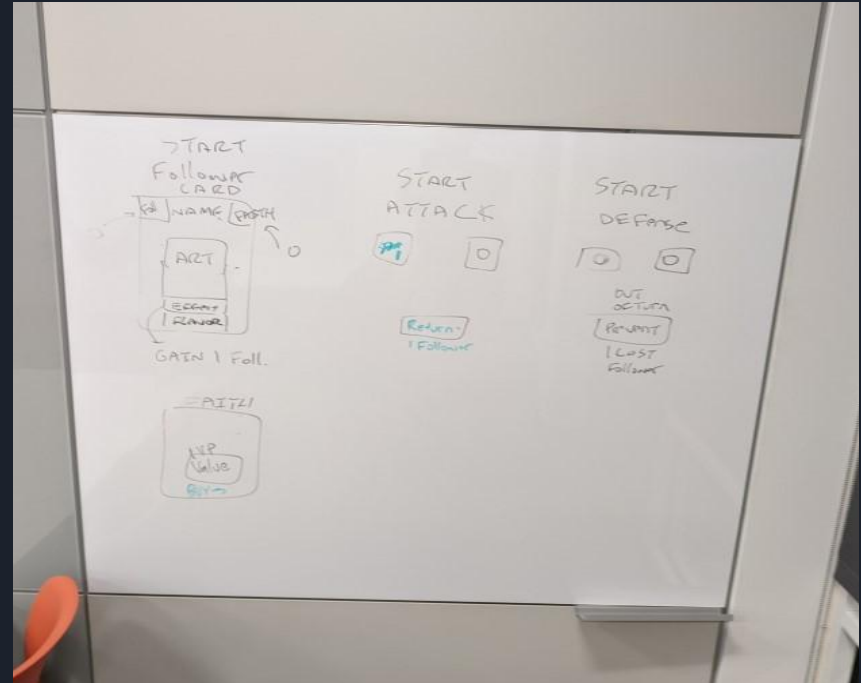
More Game Aspects Defined

- This next step was the hardest to figure out, and really it came down to a trial and error type of testing.
- We had to decide the following:
  - Card Costs
  - Card Effect Amounts
  - Hand Limits
  - Actions Per Turn Limits
- All of these are impossible to calculate and balance in the moment and most be carefully analyzed and tested over multiple games.
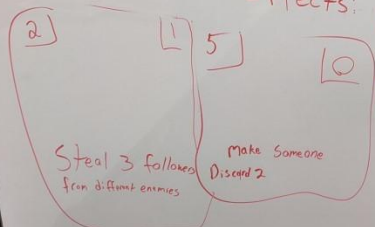
More Game Aspects Defined
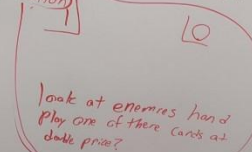
Original God Themes

Initially, we decided to make 4 decks with general themes that we named:

- Attack: This deck would focus on taking faith from other players and would have very little ability to protect itself from attacks.
- Defense: This deck would focus on strictly defense and would achieve faith by intentionally having others attack them.
- Speed: This deck specializes in being able to draw cards faster and look at other players hands so that they can get the time advantage on their opponents.
- Stun: This deck is loaded with special passives which slow down the opponents from gaining faith, as well as drawing cards and building their decks

Passive Card Abilities Defined and Organized

| Att Dec.	Def. Dec.	Spad Dec.	Stun Dec.
G, H, J, K, Q, U	F, A, M, X, Y, Z	B, P, O, r, V, e	C, S, n, T, B2, L

⛤ Special Cards ⛤

- A — Def. If Someone Att. they must take Someone else's followers
- B — look at the top 2 cards pick one
- X — look at another player's hand
- D — Att. force Someone to discard from their hand.
- e — Pick 1 card from discard put back in hand
- F — Def. Mirror their attack at them
- G — Att. take Someone's V points
- H — Att. Discard 2 cards Steal __ of followers
- i — Sec Att. play face down. Activates when Someone gains V-point. They put it back
- J — Att. everyone discard there hand.
- K — Att. everyone at once, steal 2 followers ea.
- L — Att. prevent X Player from joining followers for X turns
- M — Def. Nulify attack completelyly until next turn
- n — Def Stun the enemy for the rest of X turns
- O — Att. for X turns force Someone to reveal there hand to everyone
- P — Discard! Faith Cost 3 less!

⛤ Special Cards pt. 2 ⛤

- Q — Att Destroy 2 face down cards
- r — Shuffle your hand back into yo deck pick as many as you Shuffled
- s — Att Shuffle "bomb" into Someone's deck "When drawn lose X followers"
  - S2 → "when drawn tak X followers"
  - S3 → "when drawn gain X V-points"
- T — Att. Force Someone to spend X followers to play cards this round
- U — Spe Def. Once 3 people Att. you gain X V-points
- V — Att. Can't be Countered take X followers
- w — Att. Steal a face down card
- X — Def If no one Att you gain X followers
- Y — Def Stop Someone from taking ≤5 followers
- Z — Att. Pasion — for ea. turn this is in Someones hand Cost 1 follower. Have to Att. to get rid off
- A2 — Att. look at Someone elses top 2 cards.
- B2 — Faith Cost 2 more

Assigning Values to Deck Specific Passives

- This is just an example of how we randomly assigned values to the different passive abilities of the cards.
- Once again this was mostly just a guessing game.
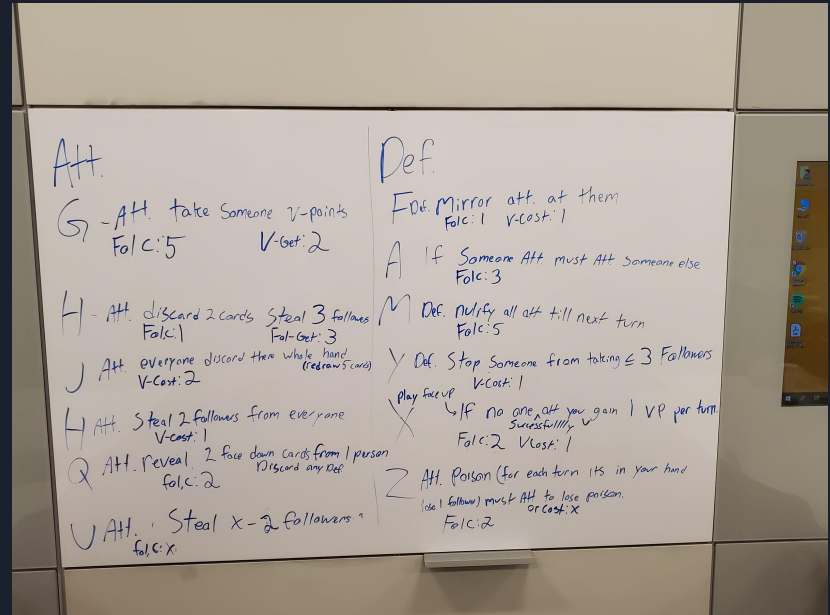
Early Concept Art
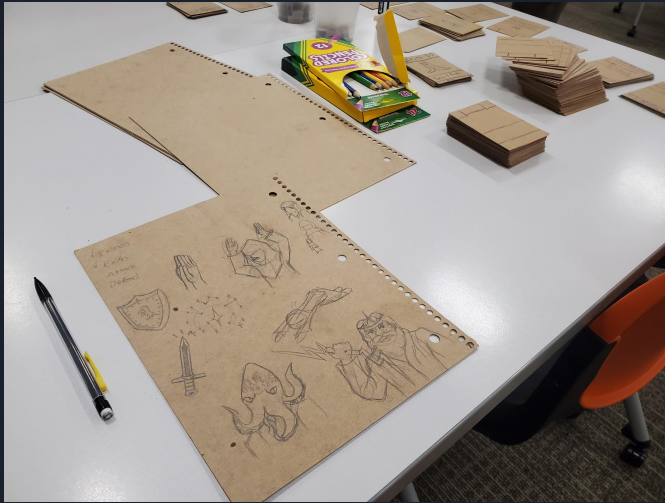
Play Testing

- Play testing is a vital aspect of game design.
- During our first play test, numerous issues arose, such as unbalanced decks, unclear wording, card types that did not work in practicality, and incomplete rules and mechanics.

Revising the Game

- After the playtest a number of revision were made.
  - Drafting cards from a central deck instead of multiple premade decks
  - More cards were added
  - Rebalanced card costs
  - Balancing the different abilities of each "god"
  - Card passives were added
  - A change in the way followers were gained and utilized
  - A more detail set of rules were created

Card Description	Follower Cost	Faith Cost	Unique Passive	Flavor	Thoughts and concerns
Reverse order of turns	4	0		Uno? Never heard of her.	
Swap two players total amount of followers	0	3			The player who playes the card can not sawp their own followers
Force all other players to loses 3 Followers	3	0			
Choose one player. When playing an action on their next turn they must pay you one follower	2	0			
The attacker discards the rest of their hand. They gain a follower for each card discarded.	0	1			
When another player gains Followers, gain that many Followers too.	0	0			is this a one time when the player gains followers? **A: Yes, it is a trap. You play it off turn, the effect triggers, then it is discarded. I wasn't sure if we would be making other trap style cards or not. Maybe we stick with the mechanics we currently have and put this on hold?**

Plans for the Future

- As of this presentation being made, we are still in production of the card game.

- We are still working on adding additional cards into the game and balancing.them to provide a fair experience to all players.

- While the final product has not been made yet, the group has made incredible strides over the past 2 months, even while being forced to hold meetings online to due concerns with COVID-19.

Questions?
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