

## The "Nintendo Generation"

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My generation has been called the "Nintendo Generation." We were raised with video games and Nintendo games in particular. Like my generation, a new generation of gamers has come of age and is attending college classes.

For some gamers, class time is the necessary work time that must be covered before play time can begin again. However, more and more gamers are learning to combine their love of games with their work. In fact, excellent games like "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations" all came out of two classes at the University of Florida taught by Douglas Dankel and David Small. Not only were these games planned and designed in a single semester, the games are also ready for new players.

"C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations" all pull nostalgically and humorously from classic gaming. Named with a pun on classic computing, "C:\DOS Run" combines an online-gaming look with early Nintendo-style game play. New and seasoned players will enjoy the great game play and seamless collection of existing game elements in "C:\DOS Run." Like "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip" combines elements from early Nintendo-era games with favorite characters like Mario, Luigi, Kirby and others even dropping in for appearances. The game box art for "Wil's Trip" aptly sums it up as "All your favorites in one game".

"Legacy" and "Public Relations" similarly draw on existing games, choosing elements more often found in strategy and role-playing games over the classic platforming elements found in "C:\DOS Run" and "Wil's Trip." Whatever style players prefer, "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations" were all clearly designed with gaming history and current playability in mind.

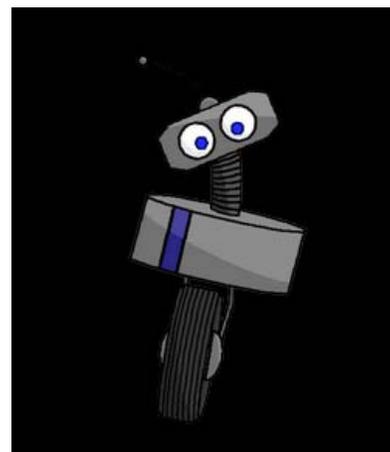
These games were all made within a single semester with only a handful of team members on each game. This is a far cry from the multiple years and hundreds of workers often needed for mainstream blockbuster games. While the games were all made quickly, they're fun games to play.

Designing games within a single semester and with only a few team members has been possible before now, given the right tools and the right team. Further, many classes already teach game design and programming. However, classes like Dankel's computer engineering course on artificial intelligence and Small's course on the theory and practice of multimedia production are still new in their use of games to teach other skills.

In the "Third Annual Computer Game Day" on April 21, Dankel and Small's held an open house with students from both of their classes to showcase the students' games, but the Game Day also showcased their classes' innovative use of game design as a tool for learning computing processes. Dankel's course examines the use of artificial intelligence in computer games, including path finding, movement, strategy, learning, dialogue and emotions. Dankel's class embraces games as both a means and a method for teaching, with students doing in-class presentations and learning by working together and testing their ideas.

Gaming and the Nintendo Generation, like the older gaming generations before it, came of age several years ago. The newest turn for gamers and gaming is the movement to see beyond games and see them as tools and metaphors for other areas. Classes like Dankel's and Small's and games like "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations" show how well games can benefit from more holistic and contextual approaches to gaming and computer design in general.

With summer breaks here or coming quickly for so many people, now is a great time to play and explore new games like "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations." Each of the games is not only entertaining, but each also speaks to the many new possibilities that are just now opening for what game design can do next. Classes like Dankel's and Small's also illuminate a path for those wanting to be game



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The new online game, "C:\DOS Run," features a main character that combines an online-gaming look with early Nintendo-style game play.

developers and those with other projects that could be best developed through games. "C:\DOS Run," "Wil's Trip," "Legacy" and "Public Relations" are not only new games to play, they also represent new ways to think about gaming and play.

### Online Resources

Download and play "Wil's Trip," "C:\DOS Run," "Legacy" or "Public Relations" from:  
[www.cise.ufl.edu/~ddd/AIFor](http://www.cise.ufl.edu/~ddd/AIFor)

### Gaming

Read more about Douglas Dankel's class on his Web site: [www.cise.ufl.edu/~ddd/](http://www.cise.ufl.edu/~ddd/)

Read more about David Small's class on his Web site: [www.cise.ufl.edu/~dts/](http://www.cise.ufl.edu/~dts/)

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