

Scott Fenton's Road to BIS

My road to BIS has been a long one, with its fair shares of ups and downs. The sole reason my journey up to this point has been so long is because I never could find a passion that I could find joy in; you know, that spark that drives you towards what makes you happy. At first, I thought I wanted to be something in particular because of a hobby of mine, but it didn't work out for me in the end. It started out ok, but the more time I spent in the program I was in before BIS, the more it dawned at me that it just wasn't right for me.

What I originally wanted to be was a Video Game Designer; hence playing games being my hobby. However, I did not start out in a game designing degree. In 2007, I first enrolled in the fall semester here at Ferris State University in the Graphic Design program. For some odd reason at the time, no one was able to tell me if Ferris even had a game design degree. So I figured that Graphic Design would be the next closest thing. For about a year (or two semesters), I was in that program. I hated it, a lot. I never did bad in my classes though, mainly B's for the most part. It was all the work being done by hand for hours on end, the drawing, shading, cutting, and so on, it just sucked. There is no better way to put it. To anyone who does find joy in that, good for you, because I don't have the artistic skill (for Graphic Design) or patience to do that for a living. Truly, anyone who can do that is admiral; it definitely takes some dedication to be a Graphic Designer.

Around the summer of 2008, I was referred to the Kendall College in Grand Rapids by someone who thought that the game designing degree that I wanted to be in originally would be there. One day, I met with an advisor down there, but he referred me to the Applied Technology Center just up the road. Turns out, it was a building that was an extension by FSU which had a program called "Digital Animation and Game Design." It was what I was looking for, a program to be a game designer. All I had to do was fill out the form to change degrees, but I had to enroll in GRCC for my gen. ed. classes. By the end of the summer, I moved to Grand Rapids for my degree.

For a while, it was alright. I spent the last few years there before this semester. It wasn't until about mid-way through that I realized it wasn't for me. To sum it up, it was Graphic Design with computers. Some classes were cool, like video editing and music making, but the animation and coding was brutal; it literally took hours to make some of the things you would think be simple. I may be exaggerating, but that is what it felt like to me; a lot of long nights were had. It wasn't until earlier this year is when I was told about the BIS degree.

I came back to Ferris here in Big Rapids for the BIS degree for two reasons. One: the flexibility of the program really appealed to me. I like how we can shape this degree to our interests. And two (which is slightly more important): I was able to keep all my credits I've gained going into BIS; I didn't have to start over entirely. Granted, I still have to meet certain requirements for BIS that I didn't gain from my past programs (need 300 classes for example),

but if I planned things out right I should be done by the end of the next fall semester. Now I just have to figure out where I want my road to take me from here.