Course Instructor Feedback for Dawn of Time

- Cool story
- Nice breakdown with respect to formal elements
- Nice big-idea concepts
- I like the construction / destruction conflict, and the idea of bringing cooperation and competition together
- The game play mechanic centered around building atoms and then using them to build larger structures sounds hard to pull off
- I think you'll need a lot of consideration about how the building mechanic will work, so that it's fast and fun rather than tedious and boring
- How about using the structural analysis to assist in construction, so that you part of the structure is selected automatically, rather than placing each piece individually
- The last paragraph in the "Why you should play section" is cool... the challenge is really making these concepts work!

- it wasn't quite clear to me how the defense structures will be
built. Having players manually assemble walls out of 30+ particles
could be very tedious, especially
if they are held together by physical forces. Could the particles just
collapse, in which case players might have to start all over? This
process
(which could certainly be fun) would be tedious, and it may not fit
well with the rest of the game (stealing electrons from others and
getting ready for wave after wave
of antimatter).

- very cool story. I like the originality, but the game play is a bit worrying. The complexity of choosing from 10 different elements, each requiring different ingredients and possessing different traits doesn't immediately sound like a fast paced action game, but more of a slower board game format (Settlers of Catan comes to mind). This seems to be a bit contradictory to the stress of dealing with the Dark Architect constantly destroying things. But the timing of all this could possibly be tweaked to run smoothly, with enough careful thought and design. The building phase, once particles are obtained also seems like it could become too tedious, without the right game structure. Perhaps you should limit building to wall like structures, and not the unlimited forms you mentioned in the proposal (Eiffel tower). Think about whether you want this to be a fast paced game, or a slower building game, and tailor the game play elements accordingly.

Game Designer Feedback for Dawn of Time

superficially - nice art, cut intro by half at least - too wordy, although I
did like it.

concept - could be said about a lot of these games - use game description
not science description. rather than "There is a shared nucleon source and
each player individually owns an electron source" say something like "there
is one shared resource in the game (representing nucleons) and one
additional resource for each player (representing electrons)" - or something
like that. Simple but easier to read from a GDD point of view (it cuts to
the point - gameplay)

really like the idea of shared resources and switching between having to ally / turn against each other. I think the two stage format could get old fast - why not have the waves target things more randomly?

I would also think a little more about how the players rely on each other, and how the game will eventually make it so they have to turn on each other. The ability to predict this wrongly and turn too early / late / with the wrong players being tied to losing is key - and this prediction being tied to skill with the game would be equally key to making this great. (although reading on it seems this has been thought about) (would look at board games with similar mechanics for inspiration)

having said all this it all needs to work in a VERY SIMPLE WAY!! in danger of being too complicated.

the idea that the buildings are based on a physics framework is really cool if it can be pulled off.

like the Atom Crafting Menu - although I predict this will end up getting simplified into basic categories.

Big Idea Bullseye - great. Could be put earlier?

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* Cool set up! This team obviously has a great storyteller on board. They should try to find ways to make the most of that.
* We've some concerns that the first (collaborative) phase in each session may feel a little unnecessary over time. That said, switching between collaborative to competitive is a really interesting mechanic. Asher came up with a cool idea of randomly switching the mechanic, which could be interesting because it adds an element of risk and reward to attacking other players. Can you defeat your enemy before the mode switches and you need to stand together?
* It sounds like this is a Tower Defence game with some unique and interesting new mechanics. I'd say there's nothing wrong with spelling that out in the design overview. It gives the reader a few shortcuts to help visualise the game play.
* There are a bunch of interesting new ideas to explore here - switching the context between cooperative and competitive, building a physical tower, etc. Given the amount of time that you have I would just try and find one and concentrate on making it work really well. Additional layers will not only take extra time to implement, but add exponential complexity to the task of game balancing. If you are able to successfully introduce a single novel mechanic to the tower defence genre then you will be heroes in my book.
* Think hard about your first 10 minutes of game play. How are you going to teach new players how to have fun with your game? How will you introduce new elements? Plants vs Zombies is a master class for this, taking a hard core genre and making it accessible to a casual audience.