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Simple Simulations

How to Incorporate Active Learning
into Teaching

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Teaching is a challenge—particularly in the face of potentially high course loads and research requirements for tenure that can seem daunting (Rothgeb & Burger, 2009). But political science professors can incorporate innovative and engaging teaching techniques into their classrooms without a burdensome investment of time and resources. In this paper, I recommend the development of low-intensity role-playing simulations using resources that are readily available to most instructors. This approach provides students with the benefits of active learning while not burdening the professor with the high costs of preparing and executing a traditional simulation.

The Benefits and Challenges of Classroom Simulations

Over the past decade, scholars of pedagogy in political science and other disciplines have extolled the virtues of classroom simulations and other active learning techniques. There have been a number of pedagogical articles published on the topic (Ambrosio, 2004; Mariani, 2007; Raymond & Sorensen, 2008; Smith & Boyer, 1996; Sutro, 1985; Thomas, 2002; Woodworth & Gump, 1994), and the American Political Science Association's Teaching and Learning Conference hosts two different simulation tracks. In addition to growing use and development of simulations, at the macro-level, teaching itself is increasingly seen as a critically important part of what we do in academia, evidenced by growing membership in teaching and learning organized sections, a new APSA committee and book series, and a new peer-reviewed journal—The Journal of Political Science Education. As teaching in the discipline gains prominence, more instructors are looking for innovative teaching techniques and, as scholarly research on the topic grows, more professors are recognizing the potential benefits of active learning.

Even without an extensive review of the literature, there is a great deal of evidence available to indicate that active learning techniques can improve student learning (Pace, Bishel,

Beck, Holquist, & Makowski, 1990; Perry, 1968; Sutro, 1985), engagement (Brown & King, 2000; Hess, 1999; Ruben, 1999; Wolfe & Crooktall, 1998), and interest (Hess, 1999; Smith & Boyer, 1996). Although there continues to be debate over the specific benefits of classroom simulations and the opportunity costs of investing in them (Christopher, 1999; Ellington, Gordon, & Fowlie, 1998), many agree that the occasional use of simulations, games, and other active learning techniques can be beneficial.

The average professor has likely encountered some of this literature, and perhaps even tried a simulation or two in his or her own courses, but many more instructors may be intimidated by the seemingly high start up costs involved. Articles on classroom simulations often summarize the author's own experiences conducting simulations, which frequently include elaborate replications of historical decision-making processes, extensive work for both the professor and the students outside the classroom, and/or complex Internet-based communication systems to facilitate the simulation (Gibler, 2004; Pace, et al., 1990; Starkey & Blake, 2001; Sutro, 1985).

Such descriptions may portray simulations as necessarily time intensive and daunting teaching tools. Most professors, busy with research, mentoring, and service requirements, may think that they do not have the time and resources to invest in implementing simulations as a learning tool. It was this reality that led me to pose the following question: how can I run simulations without ruining my life (or my career, for that matter)? The pressures of the tenure clock in particular leave little time for teaching innovation in the first 6 six years of employment.

The answer I share in this paper involves developing simulations that are less complex, but still provide the benefits of active learning to the students. This approach requires less of an investment of time and resources on the part of the professor, and requires less of a sacrifice in

the form of opportunity costs in order to run the simulation. While intensive simulations can provide excellent learning tools, instructors should not be deceived into thinking that active learning is an all or nothing endeavor. Professors can use the knowledge they already have, together with the capabilities and interests of their students, to develop interesting and engaging simulations for the classroom, without turning their lives over to the process.

In the sections that follow, I first describe the low-intensity approach I am advocating and briefly recount the pedagogy behind it. I then introduce the low-intensity role-playing simulations that I have used in my own classrooms and am recommending as valuable active learning tools. The three sections that then follow are dedicated to a more detailed description of the three major strategies I suggest for developing this type of simulation in a way that fits with the professor's teaching and learning goals.

Low-intensity Simulations

In this paper, I introduce a number of low- to medium-cost strategies for incorporating active learning into the political science classroom. The first, and easiest, way to employ active learning is to borrow ideas and techniques from other scholars and teachers. Back issues of *International Studies Perspectives*, *Political Science Education*, and *PS: Political Science and Politics* are filled with active learning ideas. Many of these describe intensive simulations that are made easier through the advice provided in the article, but may still require significant effort to implement. Some articles, on the other hand, do provide simpler or ready-to-use activities, which are easily employed and may take as little as 10 minutes to execute in class. Victor Asal's Classical Realism game (2005), or a simple Prisoner's Dilemma reenactment, are excellent examples.

Additionally, there are a few databases and resources available that provide readymade simulations and role-playing games. The U.S. Institute for Peace provides information for running nearly a dozen distinct simulations, including background information and role descriptions. Another excellent resource is the International Communications and Negotiation Simulations (ICONS) project at the University of Maryland.¹ For a small fee, ICONS simulations can be run either in a single classroom or across classrooms connected to one another through the Internet.² These start-up resources remove a large part of the research burden on instructors and can make executing even complex simulations easier.

Despite the breadth of information provided by these resources, the use of simulations and other active learning tools is currently limited by the availability of techniques that are applicable to specific course material (Smith & Boyer, 1996). When instructors attempt to wedge into a course available simulations that may not fit the curriculum or learning goals, the potential benefits of these activities diminish. As an alternative to this potentially disjunctive teaching technique, or the complete redesign of a course, I advocate the development of simulations that are tailored to the goals of a specific course. This may sound more time-intensive, but the type of simulation I advocate in this paper is low intensity and requires only about as much time as preparing a traditional lecture. Generally speaking, this type of simulation uses very little or no technology and requires less intensive preparation than other classroom simulations. In these simulations, students participate and learn by taking on the role of political actors—a technique known as role-playing (Shaw, 2004).

¹ A recent article by Asal and Blake (2006) describes using ICONS to create simulations.

² Unfortunately, despite efforts on a number of fronts, political scientists and publishers have not yet developed an authoritative source for active learning simulations and games in political science. A central website where instructors could share resources and ideas is needed but not currently available.

Whereas more complex simulations often involve every student in the course participating by playing small roles in what can become an unwieldy negotiation, the low-intensity role-playing simulations cast every student in a significant role, while still keeping the negotiations simple. In order to allow every student to participate in a meaningful way, I recommend that the students work in small groups, so that there are actually multiple simulations of the same problem taking place in the classroom at the same time. Having the students work in this “mini-simulation” format is useful because it avoids some of the problems associated with classroom simulations, such as students with strong personalities dominating the activity (Raymond & Sorensen, 2008). Although dominant students can always find a way to make themselves heard, in a smaller group the remaining students have more of a responsibility to respond and participate themselves, and even normally quiet students are more likely to participate when the risks of doing so are lower (i.e.: embarrassment in front of the whole class verses embarrassment in front of four classmates).

This format is also helpful because it can be employed in both large and small classes (Starkey & Blake, 2001). Because the simulation is taking place within a group of 4-6 students, simultaneous negotiations can be conducted with as many groups as necessary. As a result, each of the different groups may come up with a potentially different solution to the problem at hand. During the discussion period following the conclusion of the simulation, the class can discuss the various solutions proposed and students who role played the same actor in different groups can compare their experiences.

In order to develop your own classroom simulations, a professor first needs to identify an ongoing or historical political issue with multiple actors. Instructors may choose to simulate

actual negotiations, or they can bring together key actors in a conflict that may otherwise not be in communication with each other in order to conduct a hypothetical negotiation.

In addition to a background lecture and a reading assignment or two, the major resource needed to execute this type of simulation is a “position paper” for each of the actors involved in the negotiation. These documents briefly tell the student which actor they will be representing and what the goals and preferences of that actor are. In these few paragraphs, the instructor sets up which actors are going to come in conflict with one another, which issues are going to be intractable, and may even hint at some potential solutions.

Preparing these position papers is fairly easy (and some examples are provided in the appendix). In order to keep the negotiations simple, instructors should identify one or two sticking points that are up for negotiation and describe each actor’s position on these issues. Each position paper should only be seen by the student representing that actor, so incentives to misrepresent can be a part of the simulation. The professor can emphasize this aspect of the conflict, or can use the simulation to illustrate any number of concepts from the course.

All you really need in order to write the position papers is knowledge of a specific problem or conflict. Gaining this knowledge is potentially time-intensive. The strategies that are outlined below focus on different potential sources of raw material from which to develop simulations. First, instructors can use their own research as a starting point. Second, instructors can use current events to help develop simulations that will engage students in ongoing political issues. Finally, instructors can take advantage of student research to provide the raw material for simulations. I address each of these strategies in turn in the following sections.

Strategy 1: Use Your Own Research

Producing good research, while also teaching effectively, is often a fine balance for professors. By utilizing the first strategy I advocate here, professors are able to kill two birds with one stone: their own research becomes the raw material for the classroom simulations. Political science is all about who gets what, so the field is full of conflicts and negotiations that can be potentially simulated in the classroom. Given the essentially conflictual nature of our discipline, everyone with a political science PhD should have at least some substantive knowledge of a divisive political issue. Whether it be your ongoing research into the use of suicide terrorism, your dusty dissertation on the political engagement of indigenous tribes in Guatemala, or that interesting article you just finished reviewing about liberal and conservative groups in the United States coming together to fight pornography, your place as a scholar in political science and as an expert in your subfield qualifies you to design a simulation. It is easier than you think.

Comparative scholars are likely to have a great depth of knowledge regarding a particular region of the world or even a particular conflict, revolution, or regime transition. This information can easily be summarized in a handful of position papers, and thereby provide the raw material from which students can learn how the concepts of the course play out in the “real world.” Any course that includes a discussion of how government works could easily include a low-intensity simulation in which students decide how to allocate resources, respond to an international crisis, or make major policy revisions.

In-depth knowledge of a single issue area is likely to produce more than one potential simulation. Take, for instance, a research agenda focused on nuclear deterrence. There are a number of excellent readings on the theoretical and practical history of nuclear deterrence that students can read as background material. The instructor can then present the class with a

simulation that allows them to act out the role of a state contemplating developing a nuclear weapons program, a rogue state that possesses nuclear weapons, or a state attempting to deter others with its own nuclear weapons. Thus, simulations can reflect international negotiations, like the 6 party talks regarding North Korea's nuclear program, or domestic negotiations, like discussions within the United States on how to respond to Iran's provocative behavior on the nuclear issue. Instructors can draw on their own areas of expertise to assign preferences and even negotiating tactics to the actors involved.

An added benefit of this simulation format is that the instructor can include in the negotiations whichever actors he or she wants. Thus, terrorists could literally have a seat at the table in negotiations over the former conflict in Northern Ireland, or the current conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Although this may not be likely, it does give the students an opportunity to think through seemingly intractable issues from another viewpoint.

One low-intensity simulation that I have had success with is based on the Juba round of negotiations over the conflict in Uganda.³ For the Uganda simulation, I provided the students with some background information on the conflict in Uganda in the form of a lecture in a single class period. Depending on the course, instructors can provide this type of background material in the form of readings that the students do on their own, in a series of lectures, or even by using supplemental materials like video clips of news reports or a documentary.⁴

For the Ugandan peace negotiations, there are a number of groups represented at the negotiating table. For the simulation, I selected five groups, which represent the key actors in the

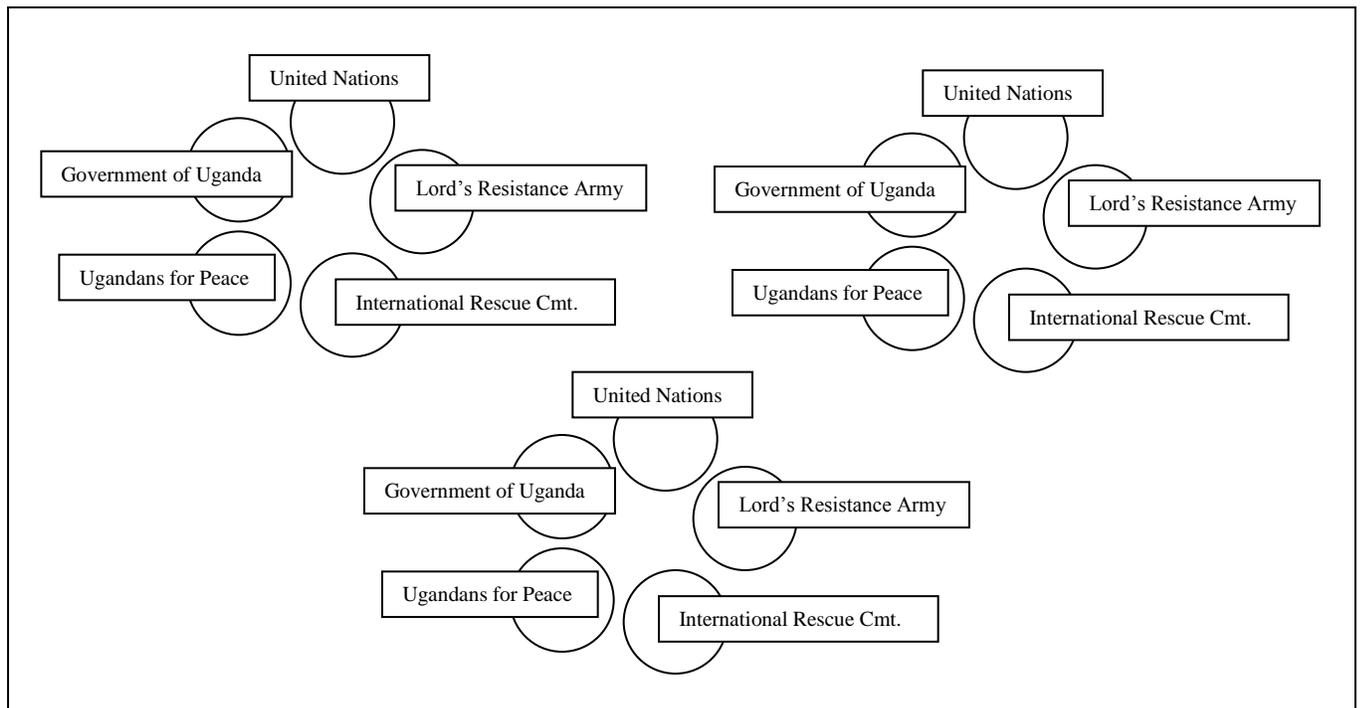
³ During the summer of 2007, I was in Washington, DC for the Women in International Security Summer Symposium and had the pleasure of meeting Melanie Greenberg, president of the Cypress Fund for Peace and Security. Melanie and the Cypress Fund work to help resolve international conflicts all over the world. She specifically shared with me some materials about the peace negotiations in Uganda, from which I developed this simulation.

⁴ *The Night Commuters* is an excellent documentary on the plight of children in Uganda that may help bring the reality of the conflict into the classroom.

conflict as well as a diversity of interests. These actors are: the Ugandan government, the United Nations, the Lord's Resistance Army, an international nongovernmental organization, and a local peace group. Instructors should feel free, as I did, to adjust the number of actors in the simulation in order to meet their specific teaching and learning goals, although I have found that groups of 4-6 students work best.

To begin the simulation, the class is divided into groups of five, with each group made up of a representative from the major players in Uganda. The classroom set up for this simulation is illustrated in Figure 1. Each group then conducts its own negotiation. In order to add some realism to the simulation, the position papers I provided for the students include the names of the actual people they are representing at the negotiating table. Examples of the position papers for two of the actors in this simulation are presented in Appendix 1. Once the students are familiar with their actor and their negotiating position, they can begin the simulation.

Figure 1. Example of Classroom Setup for Uganda Mini-Simulation



The main benefit of this teaching technique is that it allows professors to draw upon and even further their own research interests while also preparing teaching materials. This will be helpful for any faculty member trying to balance the demands of teaching and research, and may have the side benefit of engaging the instructor to a greater extent. Instead of teaching from a textbook, the professor is able to teach on a topic closer to his or her own research and interests, and that enthusiasm is likely to translate into better teaching and learning.

Strategy 2: Use Current Events

Integrating current events in the learning process is a common technique used in political science courses. Relating the course material to things that are happening in the real world helps students see the importance of the concepts they are studying and helps them connect with political science in a more meaningful way (Kelley, 1983; Reinertsen & DaCruz, 1996). Many professors require students to read a daily newspaper and/or regularly discuss the day's news in class. Doing so provides students with the type of concrete experience that will encourage their engagement in the material (Brock & Cameron, 1999). Current events can be valuable complements to other course materials, and they give students the opportunity to see how the theories and processes they read about are manifest in the real world.

Instructors can take the benefits of incorporating current events into the curriculum one step further by using them as the basis for a simulation. The strategy discussed in this section is very similar to that discussed above, but instead of drawing upon your own research materials to develop the simulation, current events provide the raw material. Thus, student roles are drawn from ongoing disputes discussed in the news in order to combine current events with this type of low-intensity simulation. There are a few simulations currently available that apply this method, to an extent (e.g.: Ambrosio, 2004; Chasek, 2005; Hobbs, 2004; Raymond & Sorensen, 2008).

Of these, the closest to the technique I am proposing is probably the Chad oil simulation (Hobbs, 2004).

Some professors may hesitate to use current events in part because the political world has been known to be somewhat unpredictable. Using simulations that are already established can provide a great opportunity for discussion and learning, while allowing the instructor more control and predictability. As stated above, borrowing simulations that are already developed is a great, low-cost way to incorporate active learning in the classroom. But using current events to develop your own simulations allows for greater continuity with teaching and learning goals as well as once again killing two birds with one stone: students are required to keep up with current events themselves while also participating in the simulation.

Finding appropriate current events to simulate is quite easy. The only criteria are that the simulated problem is ongoing (or perhaps recently resolved) and that there are multiple players with divergent interests attempting to solve it. In an international relations course, a professor could easily design a simulation around the six party talks in North Korea, with each student in a group of six representing a different country in the negotiations. Similarly, in an international relations course or comparative politics class, a simulation based on the drug trade problems in Colombia could include actors representing the Colombian government, the FARC, the United States, Venezuela, a local citizens group, and an important drug dealer. Although such a meeting might seem far-fetched, simulating it will allow the students to learn the different perspectives and incentives of the players involved. Students could also learn a great deal about global problems and the place of nongovernmental organizations by simulating a response to the global food shortage, global warming, or an ongoing humanitarian crisis like that in Darfur.

There are a number of ongoing problems in the United States that students in American Politics courses could also simulate. Two potential points of conflict may be illegal immigration and the question of health-care reform. Additionally, simulating ongoing political issues in the local community can be an effective way of engaging students in the practice of political science. Local debates over building a new high school, allowing Wal-Mart to build along Main Street, preserving the local wetlands, and so on, are likely to have an immediate impact on the students and thus maintain their interest. There may also be ongoing campus conflicts that students can simulate; for instance, there is intermittent debate on University of California campuses about the role the university plays in nuclear research. Engaging in local issues may allow for further active learning and the possibility of creative course assignments as students attend town hall meetings, meet with members of the city Council, or write letters to elected representatives.

If the simulated conflict is ongoing, it can be rewarding to have students think about what the actual outcome of the conflict might be. This is one of the great things about using current events for the simulation. A major development in your simulated issue over a weekend can provoke an excited discussion come class time on Monday. The students are able to gain in-depth knowledge about a real problem in the world for which a solution has yet to be found. Hopefully, by role playing as actors dealing with this problem, the students will stay engaged with the issue and with political science. In the spirit of carrying the idea of the simulation throughout the course, instructors might consider an essay question for the final exam that asks the students what they think the outcome of the simulated conflict will be and why.

Strategy 3: Use Student Research

The final strategy I propose is one that uses student research as the basis for simulations. The student research approach is similar to the approaches described above, but it requires making

the simulation a much more central part of the course and it is best used in upper division courses. In some cases, the level of involvement required to carry out this type of simulation may move from low-intensity to medium-intensity, but the student research approach still keeps the balance between teaching and research in mind. Thus, the heart of the second approach is utilizing the time you have in the classroom, as well as the skills of the students and the work required to complete course assignments, in order to research and design the simulation. This approach has the additional benefit of helping students develop research skills and it provides the continuity of carrying the discussion of a simulation throughout the course.

The instructor utilizing this strategy should introduce the topic as soon as possible, along with the research expectations. This way, the students can begin engaging with news reports on the topic right away, and can place new information they learn in the course in the context of the topic. It is also helpful to introduce the goals early on, so that when discussions of simulation logistics arise after the first week or two of the course, the students are mentally prepared to contribute. This is also the time when the instructor should introduce readings and provide background information for the students so that they are prepared to actively participate in determining simulation logistics.

There are a number of issue areas that students could research for this type of simulation, but, if the professor plans on using a current topic, it is best to choose one about which there will be a fair amount of media coverage. If a major summit like the G8 occurs during the course of the class, students could prepare to simulate a few issues that will be on the table. The problems in Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Iran could also provide plenty of raw materials for a simulated negotiation, whether or not the pertinent parties are actually scheduled to meet. Historical events can also provide excellent simulation topics, and require the students to conduct research that

may actually take them to the library. For instance, students could research Truman's decision to use the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Cuban Missile Crisis, NATO's response to violence in the Balkans, or the division of the continent of Africa among the imperial powers in the 19th century. One topic that could prove particularly rewarding and challenging is Iraq. Utilizing the student research strategy on the topic of Iraq's future, I developed the following simulation.

The simulation begins with the announcement that the class will be hosting a "Solve Iraq Summit" towards the end of the semester. The details of the summit are to be determined by the students, beginning within the first few class meetings with a brainstorming session. After reading some background materials on Iraq, the students decide through an in-class discussion which actors should be invited to the summit. This process may require some guidance from the instructor, who can prompt students to be more specific or to consider neglected parties. If the students suggest that Iraqis should be invited, the instructor can prompt them to think about different groups of Iraqis based on religion, level of participation in the insurgency, degree of connection to the Baath party or Saddam Hussein, etc. Students may also choose to invite international organizations or neighboring countries, or can be prompted to consider inviting such actors.

Once the list of invitees is finalized, the class should begin the second brainstorming step, regarding the issues that need to be addressed at the summit. These issues can range from the simplistic (stop people from fighting) to the complex (decide on a degree of federalism for the new Iraqi government) and, at least in this initial stage, all suggestions should be considered and discussed. There is a lot of learning going on for upper-division students at this stage—they are not just giving answers they read in a text book, but are really thinking about concepts and

applying them to real world problems on the spot. Instructors should be patient with this process and use it as a time for discussion in the class. But the process may need to be helped along with suggestions and probing questions: What about the oil revenues? Is anything currently being done about power sharing? What issue do you think is most important to actor x?

After the brainstorming session, the instructor can select as many or as few of the actors the class came up with, as well as 3-5 key issues to be on the table for the Solve Iraq Summit. In the next class, the students are divided into relatively equal groups representing each of the actors invited to the summit and then presented with their research assignment: identify and explain the position of your actor on each of the major issues to be discussed at the summit. These papers will provide the raw material for the position papers used in the actual simulation. The students can work independently or in groups, depending on the preferences of the instructor, but each student/group will turn in a paper on the positions of their actor for the Solve Iraq Summit. It may also be helpful to have the students present their conclusions in the form of an in-class presentation, but again, this depends on the instructional goals and preferences of the professor.

At this point the efforts of the instructor are required to synthesize the information in these papers into short summaries for the students to use while negotiating at the summit. An example of a position paper for an actor attending this hypothetical summit is provided in Appendix 1. Creating these position papers should not require much additional effort, as the research has already been done and the instructor has to read the student's assignments anyway.

On the day of the simulation, the students should congregate according to actor into mini-summit groups so that each actor invited to the summit is represented in each group. The students can then be assigned to role-play as a different actor than the one they did their research

on. This is a particularly interesting twist to throw into the simulation. The students are already prepared with the arguments and positions of the actor they researched; by forcing them to represent a different actor, the students' predispositions and ways of thinking are challenged. At this stage the instructor should hand out the one-page synthesized position papers and let the students have a few minutes to become familiar with the new actor they are representing.

As far as the length of time this simulation can run, it is up to the instructor. It can be limited to just one class period, but given that the students have put quite a bit of effort into researching this issue, it might be helpful to discuss one of the summit topics a day over a period of weeks. Additionally, by stretching out the simulation, current events are given a chance to intervene. At the risk of sounding somewhat callous, it can make the simulation much more interesting if one of the actors attempts to assassinate another between summit meetings. If the relationships among actors are fairly peaceful at the time of the simulation, the professor can always throw a wrench into the negotiations with a fake news report of an assassination attempt or a suicide bombing. Hopefully the end result is that students will recognize the difficulties of resolving major political issues and become interested in seeing how things will eventually turn out.

The Benefits of Developing Your Own Low-intensity Simulations

Simulations are excellent teaching tools that have been shown to engage students in the study of political science (Brown & King, 2000; Hess, 1999; Ruben, 1999; Wolfe & Crooktall, 1998). By addressing the needs of many different learning styles, this technique is able to reach more students in the classroom, and reach them in more significant ways. And as any teacher knows, more interested students mean a more rewarding teaching experience. However, the number of well-developed simulation designs that fit perfectly with specific course material is certainly

limited. Thus, the ability to design simulations is a good skill for any professor to have (Smith & Boyer, 1996). Another benefit of this teaching technique is that it can allow professors to further their own research interests while simultaneously preparing teaching materials. This is helpful for any faculty member trying to balance the demands of teaching and research.

As rewarding as these low-intensity role playing simulations can be for instructors, they hold even greater benefits for students. The approaches described in this paper bring together the concrete experience of current and historical events, the abstract conceptualization of theories and readings, and the active experimentation of role playing (Brock & Cameron, 1999). This allows students to engage with the material in a multitude of ways and provides for greater learning and retention.

As with other active learning techniques, these simulations engage students as active participants in their own education, instead of just passive recipients of information (Pace, et al., 1990; Sutro, 1985). Additionally, the students may be forced to take on perspectives that are different than their own and, as described in the Iraq simulation, different than those they researched. This stretches their cognitive abilities and leads to greater learning (Perry, 1968). Instructors that incorporate active learning techniques like the simulations proposed herein will find that their students will retain more information, develop better critical thinking skills, and be more interested in the course material (Smith & Boyer, 1996).

I also believe that getting students interested in politics through the use of classroom simulations can lead to a lifelong interest in politics—making students better citizens and growing our discipline (Niemi & Junn, 2005; Torney-Purta, 2002).⁵ Political science is about more than just teaching theories; it is about teaching students how to be interested and engaged

⁵ Much of the research on the transmission of civic skills through education has been done on high school students, but the conclusions of these studies are at least somewhat applicable to college students as well.

citizens. Utilizing the student research approach also helps students develop valuable research skills and, depending on the format of the papers, skills in presenting complex issues in an abbreviated format, which will come in handy in many careers.

Conclusion

Active learning techniques, like classroom simulations, can be great teaching tools. Despite the availability of simulations and the greater attention paid to innovative teaching, many instructors may be deterred from using simulations in their classrooms because of the potentially high costs involved. Instructors could spend a preponderance of their time and resources on developing and executing simulations, but such an approach is not necessary. By adopting some of the strategies discussed in this paper, instructors can reap the rewards of running simulations with a much smaller commitment in terms of time and effort. Low-intensity simulations can add intellectual variety to a course and engage and interest students in a new and valuable way. Simulations do not have to take over a course or an instructor's life—their benefits are available through a much smaller investment of resources.

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Appendix: Sample Position Papers

The following position papers are meant to be used on the day of the simulation. Students should have much more information than what is presented here, including information from lecture, readings, and their own research.

Peace and Justice in Uganda

Classroom Simulation

Rebecca Glazier

Melanie Greenberg

Instructions for Government of Uganda (GOU) **Isaac Mandami (Deputy of President Museveni)**

As a top deputy of President Yoweri Museveni, you helped negotiate the August 2006 cease-fire that is allowing rebels to filter out of the bush, and that is letting nearly 1.7 million displaced people return to their homes.

President Museveni is deeply troubled by the International Criminal Court convictions against Kony and his deputies. Museveni is certainly not against justice, but he is a pragmatist. He feels that the only way to reach a peace agreement is to drop the ICC indictment. Out from under the shadow of the indictment, Kony and his troops would be ready to negotiate a peace agreement, which could include more traditional Ugandan justice processes. Specifically, he feels that a “mato oput” ceremony would be appropriate. President Museveni’s first allegiance is to his people, who are exhausted by the war, and who need a return to normalcy, even if this means forgiving Kony.

In the negotiation, you push hard for a lifting of the ICC indictment, and the implementation of more grass-roots reconciliation and more traditional Ugandan means of justice. You realize that the Ugandan government had originally asked the ICC to bring the indictment, but now facts on the ground have changed.

Peace and Justice in Uganda

Classroom Simulation
Rebecca Glazier
Melanie Greenberg

Instructions for United Nations Department of Political Affairs Sarah Valjean (Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs)

As the top official of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), you represent a number of arms of the United Nations: the International Criminal Court; the UN Development Programme; the Special Advisor for the Prevention of Genocide; UNICEF; and the Secretary General's Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict.

While you understand the needs of the local Ugandan people, who are exhausted by war and need to move on with their lives, you feel extremely strongly that a peace between the GOU and the LRA, without indictments of Joseph Kony and his crazed followers, would be a peace without justice.

You feel strongly that local reconciliation processes should not be subordinated to international justice and rule of law (see attached sheets for more information). International law requires accountability for serious crimes, and fair prosecutions for crimes against humanity. By any standard, Kony's wide scale recruitment of child soldiers and sex slaves, and his terrorizing of the local population, rise to the level of crimes against humanity. Local initiatives have a place, but the international judicial process – the International Criminal Court proceedings – must move forward. Not only would the ICC process ensure justice for the victims, but it would also ensure that Kony and his comrades receive fair trials under accepted international standards for defendants.

You are concerned about maintaining the reputation of the UN and the ICC as effective international institution and you want to punish Kony and his followers in order to discourage future criminals from committing war crimes. You are willing to discuss local reconciliation processes, but you will ask the Security Council to act if the GOU and the LRA insist that the ICC indictments be dropped.

Solve Iraq Summit

Classroom Simulation
Rebecca Glazier

Instructions for radical Shi'a **Salah al-Obeidi (deputy of Muqtada al-Sadr)**

As one of the top commanders in Muqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi Army, you represent many of the radicalized Shi'a in Iraq. You have thousands of supporters and you know that you also have champions within the current government. You were strongly opposed to Saddam Hussein and you are grateful that he is no longer in power in Iraq, but you're also strongly opposed to the presence of coalition forces. You believe the United States has been in Iraq for far too long and you want to see them leave as soon as possible.

Issue 1: The Presence of the United States.

You represent a strongly nationalistic group and you are very unhappy with the presence of the United States in Iraq. Some of your friends and family members have been treated poorly by the troops and you view the occupation as humiliating. You are willing to do whatever it takes to get the US to leave, include using violence. You really don't like the US, but you are willing to work with the Iraqi government.

Issue 2: The Level of Violence.

Although you would like to see the level of violence in Iraq decrease, you're not going to unilaterally do so. You have the Mehdi Army militia at your disposal and you are willing to increase the level of violence if you believe it will get you a better bargaining position. You are particularly concerned with radical Sunnis, who have oppressed you for years and are causing a lot of the violence. You see it as your absolute duty and right to avenge their abuses, even if it means organizing death squads. However, you have called cease fires in the past, and you are willing to do so again if you think it will help get the US out. But one thing you will never agree to is disbanding the Mehdi Army or handing over its weapons.

Issue 3: Religion and Government

You represent a religious individual and a religious organization. You believe that the people of Iraq want a country that is governed by sharia law, and you want to help accomplish this. You are willing to accept a government that is only moderately religious for the time being, because you believe that the people of Iraq will ultimately demand to be governed by Islam. You are particularly willing to make this concession if you believe it will help get the United States out of your country more quickly.