Abstrakt

Case Studies and Problem-Based Learning are student centered approaches used to empower students to conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a solution to defined problems (Savery 2006, 12). Simulations have long played a role in international relations pedagogy, used to teach students how to adopt particular roles as leaders and/or countries to foster and develop critical thinking, improve information retention and give deeper insight into the processes of international relations (Asal and Blake 2006; Taylor 2013). This poster highlights the use of both Case Studies and Simulations to improve student motivation, help students make practical connections to theoretical materials, and enhance inclusivity through group work.

Case Study Format/Delivery

**Day One**
- Discuss problem based learning
- Present first part of problem
- Break up into groups of four
- Decide what is needed to answer question
- Preview online resources
- Carry out initial investigation

**Day Two**
- Share initial research results
- Present second part of problem
- In groups, assign four roles
- Re convene in groups according to role
- Decide on research agenda for roles
- Carry out further research

**Day Three**
- Re convene in groups according to role
- Discuss and develop positions

**Day Four**
- Re convene in original groups
- Negotiate among four roles
- Begin to draft final report
- Hand in report next day

Simulation Format/Delivery

**Game Setup**
- Students are automatically assigned to countries
- They must meet to decide their country name, city names, type of government, and country attributes
- One student will enter in the country name, type of government, etc. once everyone has agreed
- They decide the President by vote
- They will also discuss who will take on which roles/positions within their countries

**Turn Responsibilities**
- The President assigns team members to specific roles and sets decision key
- Team members receive information and updates based on their assigned roles
- Country teams decide research priorities, and domestic and international priorities to preserve and expand their resource base QOL, political capital, and military/Intelligence capabilities
- Each team member will focus on their own specific areas of responsibility
- Only designated president has authority to create the decision key and issue it to other students
- Students write first memos for their chosen roles
- Repeat for several turns

**Final Turn**
- The statecraft system totals all final points for participation and performance

Outcomes

Based on a survey administered to students one week before the last turn in the simulation, N=17
- 89% of students stated the simulation helped improve their understanding of course material
- 84% of students stated the simulation would help on their final exam

Challenges

Managing group dynamics: students are grouped randomly or based on ideological alignment, so students had to work through communication issues, deeply held biases, and variation in ability

Accessibility: Statecraft Simulation is run through online. This creates an issue for students who do not have technology (smartphone, computer, etc.)

Fear of the unknown: students were initially concerned that they did not know their range of options; in other words, what the “right answer” was. Getting students to buy into problem-solving as a learning opportunity took some time.

Class time: 50 minute class period was too short for students to fully develop research agendas as a group

Simulation Components

Target Audience: Introductory, majors and non-majors

Length of Time/Staging:
- At least 8 weeks of class. Students are broken up into a minimum of 6 groups. Each week serves as a "Turn", starting with "Turn 0", a dedicated class period to set up the simulation. Students work primarily outside of the classroom during the week.

Group Formation:
- Students decide on the basis of their political character through a Foreign Policy Assessment Quiz; groups are formed based on students’ stated world view

Description:
- Statecraft is a computer-run, role-playing simulation where students, in groups, create their own countries and work to interact with other countries/groups under the constraints and demands of the simulated international and domestic world. Students are motivated by the goal of earning as many points as possible by being a successful and surviving country in a simulated world.

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