

THE HOLY TRINITY? CONNECTING LEARNING OBJECTIVES, ASSESSMENT, AND DEBRIEFING IN IR SIMULATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Upon carefully and critically evaluating the prevailing literature on simulation evaluation and assessment within the context of International Relations (IR), this paper argues that a focus on developing standardized assessment methodologies to be applied uniformly to multiple simulations with the goal of generating common metrics for comparative purposes is insufficient relative to the stated objective of improved assessment. By contrast, this paper contends that an approach to and philosophy of assessment which is primarily concerned with the design of the exercise itself and accordingly is carefully calibrated to individual simulations seems more likely to generate richer and more robust measures of assessment than a uniform or standardized approach. This contention rests in part on a content analysis of a set of debriefing assignments submitted in conjunction with three (3) IR simulation exercises designed and administered by the author during the period 2010-2014 at Clark University.

The Holy Trinity? Connecting Learning Objectives, Assessment, and Debriefing in IR Simulations

Despite (or perhaps because of) their innovative nature and instructional potential, the assessment of learning outcomes in conjunction with in-class simulations remains a prominent and vexing challenge. Though there are numerous and well-chronicled examples of potentially useful approaches to simulation assessment, incorporating the most appropriate and effective method(s) of assessment within a given simulation exercise can prove daunting even for those instructors experienced in using simulations. In response to this challenge, many within the field who employ and/or study simulations and other active learning pedagogy have called for more systematic and rigorous approaches to assessment (Krain and Lantis, 2006). Such appeals rest primarily on the notion that the development and application of standardized tools applied consistently to and across simulations are likely to provide the best (read: most accurate, generalizable, and replicable) measures of their educational impact, and thus the best change for confirming what to date remain merely experiential and conjectural claims regarding the educational impact of classroom simulations in IR (*ibid.*).

The present paper advances an alternative perspective on the problem of assessing the instructional benefits of simulations. In carefully and critically evaluating the prevailing literature on simulation evaluation and assessment within the context of International Relations (IR), this paper argues that a focus on developing standardized assessment methodologies to be applied uniformly to multiple simulations with the goal of generating common metrics for comparative purposes is unhelpful, if not counterproductive, to the stated objective of improved assessment. This is largely due to the potential (if not likelihood) for this approach to discount or even reject the nuance and particularity that renders the simulation a valuable learning tool in the first place – thus in effect introducing approaches to assessing outcomes that sacrifice internal validity in the quest for external validity.

Following from this cautionary note, this paper contends that the valid goal of improving simulation assessment is more likely to be obtained through approaches uniquely tailored to each discrete simulation rather than ‘one size fits all’ approaches intended for application across multiple simulations. The paper explores the ways in which an approach to and philosophy of assessment which is primarily concerned with

the design of the exercise itself and accordingly is carefully calibrated to individual simulations seems more likely to generate richer and more robust measures of assessment than a uniform or standardized approach. This exploration rests in part on a content analysis of a set of debriefing assignments submitted in conjunction with three (3) IR simulation exercises designed and implemented by the author. These simulations were conducted on a largely non-computer mediated basis of a mixed instructional type (combining in-class sessions with a facilitator with dynamic, spontaneous, and non-facilitated sessions external to class time). Combined with insights gleaned from recent forays into assessment in the literature on pedagogy and active learning in IR, the results presented here suggest the need to situate course learning objectives at the center of simulation assessment – and to seek out contextually-sensitive instruments for assessment best suited for conveying the realization of said objectives within the environment of each discrete simulation.

I. The Particular Challenge(s) of Simulation Assessment

Simulations have long proven to be popular instructional tools across disciplines ranging from the natural and physical sciences to economics and business to political science (Raymond, 2012). Political scientists have incorporated simulations into their pedagogy for decades, in applications ranging from constitutional law (Fliter 2009; Hensley 1993) to American politics (Baranowski 2006; Mayer 2009) to comparative politics (Dougherty 2003; Marsh and Bucy 2002; Shellman 2001) to international relations (Williams and Williams 2010; Chasek 2005; Shellman and Turan 2003; Kaufman 1998). Indeed, simulations continue to be amongst the most popular innovative additions to international relations (IR) pedagogy, growing in use and complexity alongside and in conjunction with the diversification of ontological perspectives and methodological approaches in the field and the resulting spotlight they shine on the complexity of key issues in IR (Starkey & Wilkenfeld, 1996)¹. In general terms this is due to the capacity of all types of simulations – whether computer-mediated, mixed, or in-person - to provide

¹ Starkey and Blake (2001) provide an extensive list of simulations employed expressly for educational purposes in the IR field, capturing the ubiquitous (Model UN, Model EU, etc.), high-profile examples including the Inter-Nation Simulation (Guetzkow, 1995), GLOBUS (Bremer, 1987), Diplomacy (Skidmore, 1993), Nations (Herzig & Skidmore, 1995), Global Problems (Lantis, 1996, 1998), and the International Communication and Negotiation Simulations (ICONS), and various one-off exercises.

students with a unique environment and opportunity for experiential learning, knowledge retention, and skill development (Stice, 1987; Winham, 1991; Hertel and Millis, 2002).

Though what constitutes a simulation itself remains somewhat open to debate (see Shaw, 2010), one helpful criterion suggested by Krain and Shadle (2006: 52) is that, for instructional purposes, simulations in social science applications are best understood as exercises in which “students are placed within a reasonable representation of a real environment in which political or social interactions occur.” Further to this point, Smith and Boyer (1996: 690) have described simulations as having the “...power to recreate complex, dynamic political processes in the classroom, allowing students to examine the motivations, behavioral constraints, resources and interactions among institutional actors.” Thus, as an exemplary form of active learning pedagogy, simulations are thought to offer a unique tool for engaging with complex social processes (Shellman, 2001) in which traditional instructor/student dynamics are disrupted to the end of cultivating student engagement, innovation, and creativity within the context of defined problems and scenarios (Dorn 1989; Brock and Cameron 1999; Shellman 2001).

These dynamics and alleged benefits themselves are considered by some to be inherent to the ‘constructivist learning environment’ (Brown and King, 2000) that simulations provide (see also Passman, 2001; Applefield, Huber, & Moallem, 2000). As Clayton and Ismene Gizelis (2012) note, whether explicitly attributed to the latest developments in educational psychology or not, the benefits of simulations as immersive and problem-oriented instructional tools have been touted by practitioners of simulations for as long as simulations themselves have been employed for educational purposes (Greenblat 1973; Shade and Paine 1975; Lester and Stoil 1979; Bredemeier and Greenblat 1981; Ruben and Lederman 1982; Thatcher 1990; Petranek *et al* 1992). Even those practitioners and analysts of simulations who are dubious as to the prospects for tangibly measuring the learning benefits of simulations typically allow that the specific activities and practices which are often incorporated within simulations likely themselves confer benefits on students, even if the larger causal relationship between simulations and learning gains is itself unproven and/or potentially spurious (Raymond, 2012).

Assessment v. evaluation

Calls for improvements in the design and validity of assessment criteria and metrics in general have become part of the narrative fabric of higher education discourse. Yet as is sometimes the case in such charged climates, the meaning of assessment can be (and in some cases has been) subject to multiple and even conflicting interpretations. One of the areas of greatest imprecision comes in the conflation of the concept (and by extension, implementation) of assessment with evaluation. As Baehr (2005) helpfully distinguishes, assessment in the truest sense is concerned with capturing the utility and effectiveness of an educational treatment (i.e., where and why it was successful – or not) with the intention of identifying areas for future improvement. Conversely, evaluation conveys or measures information pertaining to the quality of that treatment as translated through student performance (*ibid.*). Building on this point, Ip and Linser (2001:22) note that simulations in fact ‘...gives [sic] examiners and students greater scope in the assessment process.’ At the same time, while the dynamic and process-oriented characteristics of simulations open multiple potential pathways for meaningful assessment, by virtue of not being a fixed or discrete instrument they are in some sense incompatible with evaluation *per se*. (Coulthard, 2009). As such, approaches to assessing simulations which rely on or call for measuring their impact on student course grades (either within or across courses) or performance on other static evaluation tools such as papers, exams, or teaching evaluations (Raymond, 2010) run the risk of perpetuating the problem of conflating the concepts of assessment and evaluation while also delivering concrete data that itself may still lack the type and degree of validity being sought.

Distinguishing assessment from evaluation is undoubtedly an important conceptual move, but doing so hardly solves the panoply of problems confronting the instructor seeking an effective approach to simulation assessment. Take, for example, the problem of confounded variable effects. Even if we acknowledge and avoid the conflation problem above, thereby resisting the temptation to assess a simulation’s effectiveness on the basis of its impact on grades or other similar benchmarks, the challenge of disentangling the simulation from other pedagogical techniques employed in the same learning environment or with the same students remains. This is so even if we can determine what the desired and potentially discernable/measurable effect is in the first place (Powner & Allendoerfer, 2008). Thus, while

the point that assessing the effectiveness of the simulation treatment relative to knowledge retention, attitudinal shifts, or skill acquisition/refinement requires more than 'merely' evaluating student grades on other assignments or in the course or across the curriculum at-large is well-taken, this does not solve the problem of encroachment or 'bleed-in' by other aspects of the course in question (i.e., lectures, case studies, research projects, etc.) or other courses and learning opportunities in ways that might confound or otherwise obstruct 'pure' (independent) assessment of the simulation itself (Klassen & Willoughby, 2003). Acknowledging such a dynamic in the assessment venture seems imperative, as does the quest for assessment tools which can control for or even avoid it.

The 'scant evidence' thesis

Even a cursory review of the literature on the use of simulations and games in the IR classroom readily supports the notion that assessment is a particular, and particularly pernicious, problem. Moreover, within that literature the problem is typically framed in similar terms – what I call here the 'scant evidence' thesis. Though, as will be discussed below, particular formulations of this thesis vary in important ways, the general notion that pervades most of the reflective analytical treatments of the use of simulations as instructional methods in IR is that the benefits they confer *seem* or even *feel* real, but that absent significant improvements in assessment, remain speculative and presumed at best.

Purveyors of the 'scant evidence' thesis generally accept *prima facie* the conventional wisdom as to what the presumed instructional benefits of simulations actually are, electing instead to focus on deficiencies in, and improvement of, the codification and measurement of these benefits. What, then, does that conventional wisdom suggest is beneficial about the instructional use of simulations? In general terms, simulations exhibit desirable features commonly associated with the broader category of active learning pedagogy in the university classroom – including the provision of enhanced opportunities for meaningful and enjoyable student engagement, or what Bonwell (2003) characterizes as "... (involving) students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing" (Powner & Allendoerfer, 2008; Bonwell and Eison, 1991). Relatedly, if more precisely, Brock and Cameron (1999) have articulated the benefits of active learning approaches by drawing upon the sequential logic of Kolb's Experiential Learning Model and linking such approaches to four posited stages of learning – namely, concrete experience, reflective

observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). They contend that active learning techniques are uniquely capable of transcending the default mode of most instructional tools - which are limited to one or at most two of these stages - and instead engaging all four stages of learning, thereby appealing to students with a variety of learning styles (*ibid.*). In this vein, active learning proponents frequently summarize the benefits of such instructional approaches through allusion to the oft-cited maxim that “students retain 10% of what they read, 26% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what they say, and 90% of what they say as they do something” (Stice, 1987).

The central point of contention at the heart of the ‘scant evidence’ thesis, then, is not the nature of the pedagogical benefits allegedly associated with classroom simulations, but rather the inadequacy of prevailing methods of assessing the conveyance of those benefits and, consequentially, a dearth of empirical data. As Rochester (2003:2) argues, “Perhaps the claims made for the new progressive pedagogical paradigm are valid, but we should insist on no less rigorous empirical evidence for judging competing hypotheses in education than we do in our scholarly disciplines.” This inadequacy is compounded by what is thought to be a lack of sufficient attentiveness to that problem (Endersby and Webber, 1995; Dougherty, 2003). In the view of Shaw (2010), many of the “evaluations of the effectiveness of simulations were methodologically weak and flawed by research design, sampling, or other methodological problems.” Thus, while in the words of Bengsten and Sifford (2010) the literature is ‘replete with the pedagogical benefits’ of simulations, in the absence of rigorous methods of assessment it is difficult if not impossible to conclude with any certainty that what instructors using simulations *think* is worthwhile about them pedagogically is, in fact, manifesting itself in the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of those participating in them. If true, this is an important contention not only because the educational benefits of simulations for students may be less than is widely presumed, but also because simulations tend to be time and labor-intensive endeavors for students and instructors alike.

Of course, the educational impact of simulations has been subjected to intensive study across a range of disciplines (Krain and Shadle, 2006). Many of these studies in turn have delivered consistent empirical findings affirming the beneficial impacts of simulations as instructional devices. For example,

Krain and Lantis (2006) have chronicled the expansive number and range of studies which have demonstrated increased student comprehension (Jensen, 1998; Yoder and Hochevar, 2005), problem-solving skills (Bransford *et al.*, 1989; Lieux 1996), and knowledge retention (Stice 1987; Schachter 1996; Silberman 1996; Hertel and Millis 2002) as well as enhanced student enjoyment and satisfaction (Albanese and Mitchell 1993; Leonard and Leonard 1995; Dedeke, 1999; Shellman and Turan 2006) associated with simulations. Such investigations notwithstanding, the increasingly ubiquitous 'scant evidence' thesis typically hinges on an expressed need for more (ostensibly) objective and quantitative data so as to move beyond the 'grey area' of indeterminate pedagogical effectiveness which itself is a by-product of prevailing, and largely qualitative, assessment criteria (Lean *et al.* 2006).

From the 'scant evidence' perspective, qualitative and impressionistic data derived from written and/or oral debriefings, post-simulation surveys, and the like are considered to be problematic in that they contribute to non-scientific conclusions about learning gains rooted mostly in the perceptions of students and/or instructors (e.g., Davidson *et al.* 2009; Enterline and Jepsen 2009; Chasek 2005; Shellman 2001; Marsh and Bucy 2002). The problems of this form of assessment data are considered to be two-fold; one, such data may not provide an accurate substantive portrayal of what students learned; and two, it may not provide a scientifically valid assessment of the impact of the simulation environment and/or intervention on that learning (Raymond, 2012).² While numerous studies seem to support the positive impact of simulations on knowledge generation/retention, attitudinal shifts, and skill development, the design and application of assessment metrics to confirm the nature and extent of these impacts on students (in both the short and long-run) remains largely an aspiration – and the desired objective data they might generate elusive (Shaw, 2010).

In pursuit of 'best practices'

Explaining as well as compounding the purported problem of 'scant evidence' is the fact that assessment has traditionally been neglected in the pedagogical literature in political science and IR. As

² Raymond (2012) provides further discussion of the particular forms of bias that can emerge as a function of such approaches to assessment. These include the dynamic of 'hindsight bias', wherein individuals attempt to locate or retrieve causal antecedents that potentially caused an outcome (Nestler and von Collani 2008:482) as well as the more commonly understood phenomenon of 'confirmation bias', in which the educational import of the simulation might be disproportionately magnified by the impact it had in confirming (or disconfirming) beliefs held prior to the exercise rather than by the educational impact of the simulation itself (Maznick and Zimmerman 2009:34; Eiser *et al.* 2008:1023).

chronicled by Krain and Lantis (2006), simulation practitioners have instead focused on providing detailed examples of their exercises (Jefferson 1999; McIntosh 2001; Shellman 2001; Chasek 2005) or relaying student accounts of the benefits of participating in such exercises (Endersby and Webber 1995; Kaarbo and Lantis 1997; Dougherty 2003; Zeff 2003; Shellman and Turan 2006). However, a shift towards a more direct and robust engagement with assessment has emerged in recent years, elicited by and contemporaneous with the emergence of the 'scant data' thesis outlined above. Drawing in part on elements within the educational psychology literature, these attempts at filling the assessment void have identified prevailing notions of 'best practices' in assessment emanating from that literature with the hope of making significant inroads in the political science and IR pedagogical literature.

One such identified 'best practice' is the use of pre- and post-tests as benchmarks for simulation assessment. One compelling argument for such approaches can be found in Klassen and Willoughby (2003). In seeking a more robust means of measuring the educational impact of an ongoing simulation exercise conducted at the University of Calgary (specifically in the operations management and information systems science field), they describe a methodology in which before-and-after questionnaires were employed, allowing for paired t-tests of scored answers (Klassen & Willoughby, 2003). The strength of such a methodology notwithstanding, conducting such paired tests of knowledge, skills, and attitudes before and after the exercise still runs the (aforementioned) risk of confounded effects unless both test instruments (and particularly the pre-test) can control for variations in exposure to actually or potentially useful content, data, or *praxis* across participants (*ibid.*).³ Beyond this, pre- and post-tests must be designed carefully so as to facilitate assessment (treatment-oriented) rather than to provide another means of evaluation (participant-oriented), and must be formulated and presented to participants in a way that clearly conveys the potential educational benefits of the exercise so as to generate accurate and valid responses.

Another identified 'best practice' which allows for the practitioner to circumvent some of the problems of pre- and post-tests is running two or more iterations of the same game, with the same participants. Doing so avoids the problem of bias that may manifest itself in the design and application of

³ Asking students to report this information may be insufficient (depending on recall, accuracy may suffer) or even counter-productive (if doing so triggers perceptions amongst students that such information will be used to determine grades.

the test instruments as well as the related problem of (mis)interpretation on the part of the participants. Klassen & Willoughby (2003) document the findings of precisely such an approach to assessment, in which the same groups of students were subjected to the same simulation twice – with the goal of measuring improvements in student performance with each successive round of participation. Among significant findings, they reported gains in appreciation for issue complexity as well as student satisfaction from the first to the second iteration (*ibid.*); however, additional controls were necessary in order to isolate on the effects associated with the second iteration, and further analysis required to extrapolate and project gains from each successive iteration of the game to the next. Moreover, from a logistical standpoint, administering the same simulation on multiple occasions to the same students requires additional instructional (and instructor) time in a learning environment in which that resource is already at a premium, given the amount of time and preparation that designing and running the exercise itself requires. Doing so also raises ethical issues of fairness and equity, in that the same students are given a repeated opportunity for exposure to the (potential) benefits of participating in the simulation, at the expense of other students.

Perhaps the strongest but least frequently employed ‘best practice’ relative to simulation assessment is the use of control groups, typically organized in a fashion such that the operative comparison is between groups of students who have and have not been exposed to the simulation treatment. Such an approach allows for a more direct and robust assessment of the pedagogical utility of simulations, as opposed to other approaches (including pre- and post-tests) which measure individual gains in knowledge, skills, and attitudes within an active-learning vacuum. As Powner and Allendoerfer (2008) note, control groups represent a significant improvement over the pre/post-test approach for this very reason, particularly with respect to problems of designing and applying the instrument in ways that provide for comparable and valid data. Thus they advocate for “carefully designed experiments [which] use randomized or other nonsystematic means to establish control and treatment groups to ensure that the sample populations are comparable” (*ibid.*: 78-79). The most prominent example of such an approach to simulation assessment in the political science/IR domain is the incorporation of control groups into the long-running Global Problems Summit exercise (Krain and Lantis, 2006). This innovation was prompted by a desire to assess the relative effectiveness of the summit as a pedagogical device in comparison to

traditional lecture/discussion approaches (rather than evaluating the learning gains of individuals attributable to participation in the simulation). The use of a control group of non-participants yielded strong evidence of gains from simulation participation in the areas of empathy and student extension 'beyond the boundaries of their own locales and experiences' but suggested rough equivalence in student knowledge acquisition between active learning and 'traditional' pedagogy (Krain and Lantis, 2006; see also Raymond, 2010).

II. Improving simulation assessment

The various problems of assessment chronicled above collectively underscore how difficult it is to convincingly demonstrate a durable and unique contribution to enhanced student knowledge, skills, and abilities from simulation participation (Shaw, 2010). This is especially true if one seizes on and remains committed to approaching assessment with the sole or primary goal of identifying uniform practices designed to facilitate the accumulation of concrete data reflective of measurable impacts across multiple simulations. However, it remains an open question as to whether such an approach to assessment is the only or best pathway towards attaining the goal of ascertaining whether or not the presumed learning benefits of simulations are actually realized in implementation.

In defense of idiosyncrasy

The open nature of this question is further magnified when one considers the nature and type of the instructional benefits most frequently associated with simulations. The clearest and more comprehensive treatment of those presumed benefits likely remains the typology proffered by Greenblat (1973; see also Shaw, 2010). Greenblat's typology continues to reside at the heart of the conventional wisdom which even proponents of the 'scant evidence' thesis as well as those seeking to identify and incorporate 'best practices' largely leave intact. According to Greenblat, the educational benefits of simulations fall into distinct (if overlapping and mutually reinforcing) categories: the promotion of ***cognitive learning***; the promotion of ***affective learning***; enhanced ***student motivation and interest***; increased ***self-awareness***; associated and longer-term benefits for ***knowledge retention***, and improved ***instructor-student relations*** (Newmann and Twigg, 2000). Relative to the intellectual domain of political science and IR, these categories are often best reflected in enhanced opportunities for connecting theory to practice (Bengsten &

Sifferd, 2010), deeper insights into the dynamics and exchanges of power (Asal and Blake, 2006), heightened capacities for empathy on controversial and polarizing issues (Morgan, 2003), and immersion in complex and goal-directed problem-based application environments (Smith and Boyer 1996; Caruson 2005).

Given the widespread acceptance of at least these *categories* of instructional benefits, it would stand to reason that they would serve as a useful lodestar for effective simulation assessment. Accordingly, any approach to assessment would be best served by situating Greenblat's typology at the center of the enterprise. The operative question for assessment purposes would thus seem to be: to what extent does the assessment effort correspond with, and shed light on, whether (or not) the simulation positively contributes to cognitive learning, affective learning, student motivation and interest, self-awareness, knowledge retention, and student-instructor dynamics? In other words, considerations such as the assessment methodology, instrument design, and type of data generated may be important, but are necessarily secondary to prioritizing ***what it is we seek to or must know*** in order to convincingly speak to the presence, absence, or relative degree of instructional benefit associated with employing simulations.

Following from this intuitive (if not obvious) supposition, this paper contends that a focus on generic applications of supposed 'best practices' and/or the prioritization of assessment metrics to be applied uniformly across multiple simulations are not the best methods for attaining the laudable goal of improving simulation assessment. This is not to say that rigorous and precise measures lack merit and virtue as means to the end of social scientific analysis. Nor is this to say that simulations should be thought of as frivolous, ill-defined, or ad-hoc adventures in pedagogical innovation for innovation's sake. Both characterizations represent extreme and unhelpful misrepresentations. But what is being said is that the best method of assessment is one which assesses the pedagogical intervention (in this case, an individual simulation) on the basis of how it is designed and what it is expected to accomplish (Lester and Stoil, 1979). In this way, assessment can be understood as being at least as much art as science. Such a position should not be construed as a license to dismiss assessment – which some instructors may be tempted to do, given that simulations require a significant amount of additional preparation and effort and since assessment likely isn't the object of many (most?) instructor's passion. Indeed, designing and administering useful and

appropriate assessment tools is the best way to ascertain whether all the hard work you've invested in the exercise has paid off. The key, of course, is determining what exactly constitutes 'useful' and 'appropriate' assessment tools in the first place—which returns us to the aforementioned deficiencies in the 'one size fits all' approaches. The dominant focus of such approaches on introducing rigorous and precise measures of outcomes in fact reveals a profound dis-alignment between such rigor and precision and the idiosyncratic nature of the educational experience embedded within many simulation exercises. It is precisely this idiosyncratic quality – borne of the pedagogical distinctiveness of simulations, as well as the unique, hard to measure, and hard to replicate dynamics of each individual simulation – that, above all else, underscores and magnifies the potential beneficial impacts of simulations. While this quality certainly does not obviate the need for improved assessment, it does render attempts at such improvements that are defined by the quest for and application of 'best practices' and measurement metrics ill-suited to that task.

Especially bearing in mind the conceptual differences and even tensions between assessment and evaluation, it seems clear that approaches to assessment that are entirely dedicated to pursuing the 'holy grail' of quantitative measures of student performance are (erroneously) pursuing the latter under the guise of the former (Raymond, 2012; Raymond, 2010; Clayton & Ismene Gizelis, 2012). Whether analyses conducted in this way suggest no appreciable difference between simulations and lecture/discussion (Raymond, 2010), or instead that simulations are improvements on such traditional approaches with respect to student comprehension of complex concepts as well as preparation and participation (Clayton & Ismene Gizelis, 2012; Powner & Allendoerfer, 2008), they lack the essential validity which they covet. Furthermore, such approaches run the risk of tossing out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. Citing a dearth of objective and quantifiable learning gains, Raymond (2012) remains largely dubious on the pedagogical benefits of simulations – or, more specifically, on the extent to which any benefits that might accrue to participants can be attributed to any generalized learning environment associated with simulations. However, in asserting that the particular activities and practices that constitute many if not most simulation activities (which he defines as 'cooperative-engaged learning activities') may themselves foster important learning gains for those engaging in them, it would seem as if any sighting of

the forest has been lost for the sake of the trees comprising it.⁴ As Brown and King (2000) note, simulations are at their very pedagogical core constructed learning environments, which by extension are essentially and fundamentally defined by the activities, practices, and resulting intersubjective understandings that occur within and constitute them.⁵ In light of this characterization of simulations emanating from the educational psychology field, the effort to disentangle the activities and practices of simulations from the simulation environment (as if the latter were a unique and distinct entity), while attributing learning benefits to the activities and practices while denying them to the environmental context in which they occur, seems misplaced. It also seems a likely (and representative) by-product of an approach to simulation assessment steeped in the 'scant evidence' school of thought which, by virtue of its singular concern with the shortfall of data-driven meta-analytical findings demonstrating quantifiable and replicable gains from simulations relative to other pedagogical techniques, is loath to assign value to simulations even while conceding such value in relation to the constitutive practices that comprise them.

Ultimately, the need for an alternative, contextually-oriented approach to simulation assessment which recognizes the singular importance of the uniqueness of each simulation and the instructional dynamics embedded within it is prompted by more than a quibble (serious as it may be) with what is being measured. The chief claim here is not that the 'wrong' things are being measured, but rather that the overall approach to measurement being promoted is not amenable to the task at hand. This is particularly true when one takes into account the manifold variables which define and shape the learning environment of each individual simulation, including (but not limited to) the problem scenario, the rules and duration of the game, group versus individual participation units, timing of the exercise viz. start/end of semester or term or in relation to relevant 'real world' events, the demographic composition of the participant group, and so forth. In light of these and other factors which can and typically do by definition vary, simulation

⁴ For example, Raymond (2012: n.p.) allows that "...simulations may require that students collaborate in small groups; work to achieve common goals; formulate questions instead of memorizing facts; directly observe problems and engage in discussion that provides them with immediate feedback; and engage students' higher-order cognitive skills through problem solving and hands-on experimentation..." (see Hosal-Akmun and Simga-Mugan 2010; Breslow 2010).

⁵ Raymond and Usherwood (2013) articulates this consubstantiality, noting that the simulation learning environment readily provides for cognitive integration and feedback and 'efficient' learning which has the related but additional effect of increasing student motivation to learn. See also Kolb (1984), Enterline and Jepsen (2009).

assessment measures must begin with and place a premium on the idiosyncratic learning environment that typifies each simulation exercise and the experiences of each participant in them.⁶

Assessing what? Learning objectives all the way down

What is being proposed here is an alternative take on simulation assessment which, embracing the idiosyncratic nature of each simulation, focuses on developing an integrated and synthetic approach to assessment. The key to such an approach is for the assessment effort to be informed by, and calibrated to, a set of well-defined and clearly articulated learning objectives for the course or module in which the simulation is being employed. These learning objectives, in turn, should themselves be constructed so as to explicitly incorporate and reflect the categories identified in Greenblat's typology of simulation learning benefits. An explicit articulation of learning objectives is itself widely considered best practice in the higher education literature, regardless of the disciplinary, thematic, or pedagogical focus of the course (cites). Thus, this recommendation is likely one which most instructors already satisfy. For the purposes of the proposed integrative/synthetic approach to simulation assessment being advanced here, what is really imperative is that the effort to articulate course learning objectives be sensitive to, and intentional about, crafting those learning objectives so that they reflect one or more of the presumed instructional benefits of employing simulations (i.e., the promotion of cognitive learning; the promotion of affective learning; enhanced student motivation and interest; increased self-awareness; associated and longer-term benefits for knowledge retention, and improved instructor-student relations).

The level of specificity with which these potential benefits are referenced in course objectives, the relative emphasis they receive, and the totality or partiality with which they are incorporated and pursued as learning outcomes are decisions which instructors can and must make as they determine what is most suitable to the desired learning environment. That being said, an explicit and intentional effort to formulate and state learning objectives for the course or module in which the simulation is being employed, in a way that expressly incorporates one or more translations of the widely accepted types of learning benefits associated with simulations, is both logically and pedagogically sound (Bengsten and Sifferd,

⁶ Wilkenfeld's (2006) comparison of computer-mediated with face-to-face simulations is instructive on this very point, particularly his finding regarding the challenges confronted by introverts in face-to-face negotiation simulations.

2010; Kille, 2002). Doing so meaningfully integrates and binds the simulation – and the presumed learning benefits associated with it—into the overarching impetus for, and structure of, the course. Purely from the standpoint of the goal of improved assessment, this approach reflects the increasing recognition within the pedagogical literature of the important role that *ex ante* factors (such as course design) play in effective, holistic assessment practices (Clayton & Ismene Gizelis, 2012).

Weaving the simulation exercise into the very fabric of the course, making this known to all participants from the outset, and directly and expressly linking the exercise to the desired knowledge, skills, and attitudes which the instructor seeks to cultivate, are all simple but powerful steps toward improved assessment. Each of these steps mitigates against the potential for ill-designed arrangements in which simulations are, or appear to be, 'tacked on' to the course or module in which they are being employed. Such actual or perceptual outcomes stand directly in the way of useful and effective assessment, regardless of how well-conceived and executed the simulation itself might be.⁷ They also help control against the possibility that any realization of one or more of these learning benefits proves an incidental or ephemeral phenomenon. The pursuit of an integrated and synthetic approach to simulation assessment must, then, include a primary emphasis on appropriately crafted course learning objectives which reflect the pedagogical objectives of simulations to provide an alternative presentation of/perspective on course material, promote student interaction and input, and encourage student curiosity and creativity (Shaw, 2004).

While the emphasis on course learning objectives as a means to the end of improved assessment is an evident necessity borne of the idiosyncratic nature of each simulation in application, it is also a by-product of the pedagogical uniqueness of simulations. While some of the presumed learning benefits of simulations as identified in Greenblat's typology (especially enhanced cognition and knowledge retention) can easily and readily be associated with more 'traditional' methods of instruction, others (especially

⁷ Though not directly related to the problem of assessment, such concerted and intentional linkages between learning objectives and simulations – attained through the formulation of said objectives in ways reflective of the 'conventional wisdom' regarding the presumed learning benefits of simulations – has the additional and not insignificant advantage of increasing the likely yield of attainment of those very benefits. Though almost so obvious as to be a truism, actually realizing the presumed benefits of simulations seems a more likely proposition in learning environments where there are clearly specified and intended synergies between the larger objectives of the course and the pedagogical instrument(s) being employed.

enhanced affective learning, self-awareness) are less readily cultivated by those methods (Orbach, 1977). This is an observation borne out objectively (if anecdotally) in the reasoning of so many instructors to identify and incorporate active learning pedagogy (such as simulations) in the first place. Thus in our quest for improved assessment, in which course learning objectives reflective of the supposed and unique learning gains of simulations reside at the fore, the importance of explicitly referencing and intentionally pursuing enhanced student engagement, enjoyment, and especially capacities for empathy and cross-cultural understanding is magnified.⁸

This claim stands in stark contrast to the prevailing trends in simulation assessment chronicled above, which dismiss such considerations as subjective, resistant to quantification, and ultimately unscientific – deeming them less deserving or even undeserving of attention as a result (Sasley, 2010). Logically and methodologically speaking, downplaying or even excluding such presumed benefits from the assessment effort is consistent with an ontological position on assessment which prioritizes standardization, rigor, and quantification. Such a position would, not surprisingly, deride student satisfaction as ‘far removed from any genuine academic worth...students may simply enjoy playing the games, rather than undertaking the more standard methods of teaching’ (Clayton & Ismene Gizelis, 2012:7). Conversely, a position which prioritizes the idiosyncratic nature of each simulation and, relatedly, the pedagogical uniqueness of simulations themselves would and does contend that student enjoyment and satisfaction are crucial in and of themselves, but especially as means to the end of growth and development in knowledge, skills, and attitudes across demographic groups, students with multiple learning styles, and for the expanding population of students with diagnosed learning disabilities (Shaw, 2010; Shaw, 2004; Merryfield & Remy, 1995); Shade & Paine, 1975).⁹ As such, potential or actual benefits in the areas of student engagement, enjoyment, and attitudinal transformation – by virtue of their greater and more frequent association with active learning techniques and simulations in particular – are precisely the benefits that are *most* important to capture in our assessment efforts – at least if the goal remains a more robust understanding of the

⁸ Apart from the well-documented psychological and societal benefits of such factors.

⁹ As Shaw (2004:3) notes, simulations as ‘interactive exercises are particularly helpful to kinetic learners, but are also suited to aural learners...These exercises are well suited for students who are nonlinear thinkers and allow them to incorporate lecture and assigned reading materials in a more meaningful way that can be recalled and applied in the future.’

instructional utility of simulations, rather than the promotion of best practices and assessment metrics for their own sake.¹⁰

Assessing how? Debriefing as a missing link

Returning to the litmus test posed above with respect to improved methods of assessing simulations – namely, that such improvements are contingent on the extent to which assessment tools convey information about the simulation’s delivery of gains relative to one or more of Greenblat’s six categories – raises the question of what, if any, potential assessment tools might convey such information while still being sensitive to the idiosyncratic nature of the simulation itself. One possible pivot point linking assessment to learning objectives is a ubiquitous, but often overlooked or under-utilized, feature of most simulations – namely, the debriefing component. Wedig (2010) describes debriefing as ‘the key to the entire simulation’, in that it serves as the connective tissue between the student-driven active learning component of the simulation exercise with the instructor’s pedagogical objectives and course content. As such, the process of debriefing – and the particular instruments or methods for debriefing that may (and likely are already) being used by most simulation practitioners – seemingly offers great potential for ‘double duty’ relative to assessment.

Debriefing is a vital and standard part of the simulation process, as it allows for self-reflection not only on the experiential exercise but also the applicability of theories, concepts, and empirical data relative to that exercise (Markulis & Strang, 2003). Among other things, debriefing assignments allow for students to reflect upon (and sometimes answer) questions which emerged during the exercise, to sort out and clarify ideas identified, refined, overlooked, or dismissed during the exercise, to piece together actions, events, strategies, and developments occurring during the exercise, and to evaluate the relevance of the exercise as a pedagogical instrument for examining the ‘real world.’ Whatever the method(s) or instrument(s) employed in debriefing, Wedig (2010) correctly underscores the need for debriefing to be understood as an active and fluid process rather than a discrete and static event.

This need is particularly acute given the interactive and iterative nature of simulations in general; in light of the dynamism of the learning environment experienced by most students, the debriefing opportunity (-ies) provided should be similarly oriented. Yet in practice, debriefing and assessment are

¹⁰ These are also the learning benefits which are least likely to be captured in test performance or course grades, further compounding the (previously discussed) error of utilizing such existing metrics in the assessment process.

frequently and erroneously conceived of as wholly distinct considerations, with the former too often considered to be little more than an opportunity for participants to 'vent.' While debriefing may serve this function, this is hardly its main purpose, and thinking of debriefing in this (limited) way is likely to result in suboptimal debriefing experiences – and, by extension, failing to capitalize on the opportunity that a more systematic and thoughtful approach to debriefing may provide in terms of obtaining substantive 'data' of relevance to and for the assessment enterprise. Conversely, if the debriefing instrument(s) or opportunity (-ies) are designed and conducted with sufficient attention to the learning objectives driving the course and the simulation exercise, there is every reason to believe that debriefing can confer important added value in terms of assessment (Wedig, 2010). In large part this is due to the fact that debriefing is necessarily an exercise-specific and inwardly focused enterprise. Additionally, given their potential to provide personal and unfiltered reflections, debriefing instruments offer the opportunity for instructors to capture direct and honest assessments by participants of the realization of course learning objectives through the exercise. Parallel to Sasley's (2010) characterization of simulations as beneficial tools for teaching failure, so too can the debriefing process not only reveal student perceptions of their own 'failures' within the confines of the exercise, but similarly and by extension reveal possible or actual 'failures' of the exercise itself for the benefit of assessment.

Debriefing itself is hardly a monolithic venture. The motivation for or purpose of debriefing is generally broken down into two broad categories - the more immediate 'hot' or 'flash' style of debriefing, and decoupled or 'reflective' debriefings (Asal, 2005). The impetus for, and objectives of, these approaches to debriefing differ and accordingly generate different results. Typically 'flash' debriefings are collectively oriented, and occur immediately upon conclusion of the exercise. As such, they seek insight into the motivation, actions, and positions of various parties to the simulation, and reactions to the formation and unfolding of various group dynamics (inter- or intra-) playing out during the exercise. Conversely, 'reflective' debriefings expressly introduce an interregnum (albeit one of short duration), are individually oriented, and intentionally require a degree of intellectual and emotional remove from the exercise on the part of participants. In doing so, this approach to debriefing seeks input on the relationship of the simulation as it was designed and implemented to (a) the 'real world', (b) the stated objectives of the

exercise, course, and/or curriculum, and (c) the intellectual, attitudinal, and behavioral impacts and implications of participating in it (Petranek, 2000).

Either approach to debriefing can be realized and implemented in a variety of ways, and thus debriefing naturally can and does take on many forms, including various types of writing assignment(s), group discussions (with or without the involvement of the instructor/facilitator), occasions for peer review, and so forth.¹¹ Asal (2005) helpfully chronicles and analyzes the various forms that debriefing may take in accordance with two overarching categories (oral and written), in the process capturing the multiplicity of questions and concerns pursuant to debriefing that might fall under each of these headings. Regardless of the form it may take within a given simulation, for the debriefing venture to double as a useful assessment tool requires the instructor designing the simulation to select the appropriate form of debriefing and to craft the debriefing instrument(s) or assignment(s) with the focal point(s) of assessment in mind.

Though a gross oversimplification, one could broadly characterize flash debriefing as affective and reflective debriefing as analytical. While both serve important functions within the bounds of a given simulation exercise, the latter seems more directly pertinent and useful from an assessment standpoint.¹² Again, the typology of learning goals as first advanced by Greenblat (1973) provides a critical point of orientation. In the same way that one or more of these goals (promotion of cognitive learning; the promotion of affective learning; enhanced student motivation and interest; increased self-awareness; associated and longer-term benefits for knowledge retention, and improved instructor-student relations) should inform the development and articulation of course learning goals for the course in which the simulation is being employed, so too should it (they) be called out as specific referents within the debriefing process.¹³ Weaving this thread throughout the entirety of the simulation, both *ex ante* (course

¹¹ Reflective debriefings in written form may have the most universal appeal in conjunction with variations in learning style and level of introversion/extroversion (Wilkenfeld, 2006).

¹² Asal (2005) introduces a third perspective on debriefing – that of simulation as case study. In this view, the content of the exercise itself can be understood and approached in a similar fashion pedagogically, at the debriefing stage, as that of a ‘real world’ case study. As such, the various decisions, events, and dynamics contained and subsumed within the exercise represent a ‘shared lived experience’ and can serve as the basis not only for reflection but also careful analytical investigation – up to and including serving as relevant content for other assignments in the course in which the exercise was employed.

¹³ Debriefing assignments represent one, but only one, opportunity for capturing such information. If possible, they can be examined in relation to the actualization and realization of course objectives alongside other student products such as position statements, issue briefings and the like generated during the course of the simulation. You can also attempt to

learning objectives) and *ex post facto* (debriefing), is crucial to realizing the synthetic and integrated approach to assessment called for above, while also informing an assessment mechanism in position to capture the idiosyncratic dynamics and learning outcomes of each individual simulation.¹⁴

III. Idiosyncratic insights: lessons from three simulations

Overview of simulations analyzed

In light of the preceding discussion, the remainder of this paper is devoted to identifying and evaluating the nature and character of the linkages between and among the stated learning objectives and debriefing tools employed in three discrete and distinct IR simulations, as a means of supporting the larger suppositions of this paper: namely, that simulation-specific means of assessment are preferable to more generalized and metricized approaches, and that learning objectives in concert with debriefing can play a vital role in such an approach. More specifically, three in-class IR simulations designed and implemented by the author and employed in three separate classes and semesters at Clark University during the period January 2010-May 2014 are evaluated here (see Table 1).¹⁵

The simulations identified for inclusion here exhibit a representative degree of variability in terms of the classes in which they were utilized, as well as a temporal span of sufficient but not excessive degree. In light of the former point, it is not surprising that each also varies not only in terms of content but intellectual orientation: the PIPA simulation primarily focusing on theories/ontologies, the IGC: RE simulation on international institutions, and the ANML simulation on foreign policy processes. Furthermore, the settings (and associated time horizons) for each simulation varied significantly: the PIPA simulation was situated in a reactive, crisis management setting, and the IGC-RE and ANML simulations in a prospective, policy planning environment. Lastly, two of the simulations featured participants working in small groups of 3-4 students (PIPA, ANML) and one featured students working individually (IGC: RE).¹⁶

collate and assess the number, scope, and most importantly quality of participation in the in-class sessions (you may need help from someone else with this if you are serving as facilitator of these sessions).

¹⁴ The use of reflective papers as debriefing tools for an EU simulation as chronicled by Galatas (2006) provides one apt illustration of the natural synergies between assessment and debriefing.

¹⁵ The scenarios for each of the three simulations are included as Appendices A, B, and C.

¹⁶ Although the concern here lies wholly with assessing the simulation exercise in its totality, a word about the challenges of assessing student participation in said exercises when that participation comes through the mechanism of small groups seems warranted. There is no magic bullet when it comes to assessing group work in any exercise, least of all in simulations which may (and often do) have much of that group work occurring outside the classroom and therefore outside the observational

Table 1. Simulations included in present analysis¹⁷

Title	Simulation description	Course title	Semester
Paradigms in Practice and Application(PIPA): Crimea-Ukraine crisis simulation	Three weeks/31 students. Within the structure of a crisis summit, students participated in small groups as designated representatives of nine major IR theories, engaging in research and in-class and extracurricular simulated negotiations to identify and produce an agenda outlining the most relevant facets of the ongoing crisis in Crimea/eastern Ukraine and representative policy responses.	PSCI 207 - International Relations Theory	Spring 2014
IGC: Revisiting Europe 2020 (IGC:RE) simulation	Three weeks/28 students. Within the structure of an EU Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), students participated on an individual basis as designated representatives of the member-states of the European Union; engaged in research and simulated negotiations to identify and produce an agenda outlining the most relevant policy issues and appropriate responses for the EU for the next decade.	PSCI 243 – Politics of the EU	Spring 2012
Agenda for the New Multilateralism (ANML) simulation	Three weeks/29 students. Original simulation exercise/curriculum developed around structure of a multilateral summit to craft an international policy agenda for the next decade. Students deployed in small groups representing seven foreign policy actors – six states (Brazil, China, India, Iran, Japan, Russia) and the European Union.	PSCI 169 – Foreign Policy Analysis	Spring 2010

domain of the instructor. To attempt to cope with this, in the simulations discussed here (and others) I have administered anonymous surveys to students asking them to rank themselves and other members of their own group on various dimensions (attendance at group meetings; contribution to research and preparation; contribution to sessions; etc.) as well as to provide open-ended feedback on the group's functioning in general. This works best if you can trust students to provide honest assessments and not to just give everyone (themselves included) high marks or, conversely, to unfairly denigrate others or inflate their own contributions. There's no way around these problems, so while this information is valuable enough to collect, I tend to take it with a grain of salt and place much more weight and onus on other assessment methods.

¹⁷ Several other simulations designed and conducted by the instructor during his tenure at Clark have been excluded from consideration here. These include a PIPA (Paradigms in Practice and Application) simulation centered around the European refugee crisis ongoing in PSCI 207 (International Relations Theory) in Spring 2016; three additional EU simulations in PSCI 243 (Fall 2007, Fall 2008, Fall 2010), and the GPH (Global Public Health) simulation conducted in Fall 2006 in PSCI 169 (Foreign Policy Analysis), structured around a multilateral summit convened to craft an international policy agenda for emerging global health challenges. The decision to exclude these additional simulations from consideration here was based on a range of factors, including incompleteness (PIPA – Refugee crisis is ongoing at the time of this writing), potential redundancies (three earlier EU simulations), and anomalies in design (the GPH simulation was a mixed classroom/computer-mediated negotiation simulation in conjunction with Project ICONS, and thus something of an outlier relative to the others).

At the same time, each of the simulations featured important commonalities justifying and sustaining a comparison across them. Each were conducted entirely with undergraduate students (ranging from 28-31 student participants) drawn from a range of majors and programs, but with the majority in each instance Political Science majors. All three courses utilized a range of other pedagogical and assessment tools, with the simulations occurring at the same temporal juncture (approximately 2/3rds of the way through the semester). All simulations featured the assignment of students to actors/roles primarily on the basis of expressed student preferences. The paramount problem confronting participants in each simulation was the identification, crafting, and successful advancement of positions consistent with assigned roles. Each simulation was also designed primarily as an exercise in negotiation and bargaining, working from a common starting point and toward the pursuit of a consensual outcome in terms of a shared policy agenda and strategy/approach.¹⁸ Each simulation featured a mix of formal, in-class negotiation summits governed by the same set of common procedures (see Appendix D) along with opportunities for informal, extra-curricular negotiation and bargaining sessions.¹⁹ Lastly, each simulation also featured the use of technology in a secondary, supplemental capacity as an information clearing house and medium for electronic communication.

Content analysis: design

With the 'eyes on the prize' of what specific potential learning gains we seek to assess (namely, cognitive learning; affective learning; student motivation and interest; self-awareness; knowledge retention; improved student-instructor relations), this paper identifies a need for contextually sensitive approaches that allow for assessment of each individual simulation in terms of these categories.

Furthermore, the preceding argument contends that course learning objectives and debriefing opportunities - or more accurately, the intersection and interaction of the two – represents one possible means of this

¹⁸ Such an objective serves a useful function, by channeling competition between groups/delegates necessary for realistic 'heat' and 'light' for the in-class sessions. Thus consensus-driven outcomes for the exercise; e.g., a resolution or policy statement that must be voted on and unanimously accepted, etc. can help re-direct the competitive juices toward making a major contribution to the end-product, and toward getting an individual's or group's idea or contribution accepted by other delegates rather than towards posturing via zero-sum interactions.

¹⁹ As Krain and Lantis (2006) note in discussing the Global Problems Summit, a summit diplomacy style approach to IR simulations offers advantages in terms of relaxing some of the formal-institutional, rule bound constraints which typify Model UN, Model EU, and other similar endeavors. Sessions structured in this way, when implemented alongside a preconceived and clearly specified scenario, tend to favor an enhanced problem-based learning orientation for the exercise. At the same time, specific roles (in terms of actor assignments) are important, and best allocated through a process of mediated student selection.

type of assessment. That intersection is examined here through the crafting of a delimited content analysis of the debriefing results from the three simulations referenced above. To start, the course objectives articulated for the three courses in which these simulations were employed were assessed for their proximity to the categories identified in Greenblat's typology, as follows: 1=cognitive learning; 2=affective learning; 3=student motivation/interest; 4= self-awareness; 5= knowledge retention; 6= improved student-instructor relations. The course objectives and categorical learning benefit codings (listed in brackets in conjunction with each objective, in descending order) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Course learning objectives

Course title	Stated Learning Objectives (from syllabus)
PSCI 207 – International Relations Theory	<p>The main pedagogical objectives of this course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a thorough introduction to established theories of international relations, including their logic and underlying assumptions as well as major critiques [1, 5] • To promote the ability to apply established theories of international relations to empirical events, so as to advance a better understanding of each [3, 2, 1, 5] • To cultivate the habits and faculties of critical thinking as demonstrated through both oral and written communications [2, 3, 5] • To convey a basic overview of the ontological and epistemological evolution of the field of International Relations [1, 5]
PSCI 243 – Politics of the European Union	<p>The objectives of this course are three-fold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to provide a comprehensive overview of the emergence and evolution of the EU [1, 5] • to critically examine and evaluate the political, economic, social, cultural, and normative factors that have propelled the process of European integration [5, 1, 2, 3] • to examine the implications of constructing (or attempting to construct) a single European market, currency, foreign and defense policy, regulatory structure, legal infrastructure, legislature, and citizenship. [5, 1, 3]
PSCI 169 – Foreign Policy Analysis	<p>The major objectives of this course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce students to the comparative method, through examination of the foreign policy interests, priorities, and processes of a subset of nation-states and one regional actor; [1, 5, 2] • To provide an in-depth exploration of the process by which foreign policy is constructed in and pursued by these states; and [1, 5] • To promote critical thinking, reasoned discourse, and systematic analysis as demonstrated through both oral and written communications [5, 2, 3]

Given the occurrence of the simulations analyzed here well in advance of the drafting of this paper, it is interesting to note the discrepancies between the stated course learning objectives and some of

the categories in Greenblat's typology (which in turn reveals a lack of intentionality in developing course objectives that expressly link to the categories of presumed simulation learning benefits). Particularly notable is the complete absence of any semblance of value 4 (self-awareness) and value 6 (improved student-instructor relations) in the articulation of any of the course objectives for any of the three courses in which these simulations were employed. This omission clearly reveals a lack of emphasis on the part of the instructor. Though such omissions, along with variable degrees of emphasis across potential benefits included in Greenblat's typology, are to be expected depending on the goals that an instructor has for the course (and, ideally, simulation) it is worth noting that such learning benefits could potentially be realized through the conduct of these simulations – but would not be captured in the assessment process given its reliance on learning objectives as a baseline.

Following from this association with Greenblat's typology, the course objectives articulated for the three courses were subsequently mined for potential signifiers or indicators reflective of the objectives themselves (see Table 3). These signifiers of learning objectives were then subjected to the procedure of a basic content analysis, with each of the three simulations analyzed for the presence, absence, and relative weight of the learning objective signifiers in the debriefing papers submitted by all participants. In order to supplement and contextualize any general patterns revealed by this process, more in-depth interpretation of debriefing papers in accordance with course learning objectives was also conducted. Each of the three simulations included for consideration here featured the same method of debriefing – a primary 'reflective' debriefing approach, paired with a secondary 'hot' debriefing session. Thus the primary (reflective) debriefing entailed submission of a short (3-4) page paper, structured around a series of prompts grouped under four headings: personal reactions; discussion of (simulation) events; discussion of learning outcomes; assessment of the 'reality' of the exercise (see Appendix E).²⁰

²⁰ In all cases, the debriefing paper was submitted within 72 hours after the conclusion of the simulation so as to allow for sufficient time to reflect, but not so much as to 'over-think' things.

Table 3. Learning objectives – signifiers for content analysis

Course title	Signifiers
PSCI 207 – International Relations Theory	Learning objective #1: logic of theory (ies); assumptions; critiques Learning objective #2: application; empirical/real world; understanding Learning objective #3: critical thinking; communication/communication skills Learning objective #4: evolution of IR; field of IR
PSCI 243 – Politics of the European Union	Learning objective #1: comprehensive; evolution of EU Learning objective #2: critical thinking; (European) integration Learning objective #3: market; currency; foreign/defense policy; regulation; law; citizenship; implications; construction
PSCI 169 – Foreign Policy Analysis	Learning objective #1: comparative/comparison; foreign policy; interests; processes Learning objective #2: foreign policy process Learning objective #3: critical thinking; discourse; analysis; communication

Content analysis: results

Forthcoming.

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APPENDIX A. PIPA SIMULATION SCENARIO



CRIMEA – UKRAINE CRISIS SUMMIT

SIMULATION SCENARIO

I. Simulation Context and Mechanics

For a period of nine days (16 April – 25 April 2014), Clark University will host an international summit of 32 of the world's newest and brightest luminaries in the field of international relations theory. The primary goal of this summit is the crafting of a consensus agreement to define the parameters of an Action Plan for response to the ongoing crisis in the Crimea and Ukraine. If realized, this Action Plan should be understood to constitute a definitive statement of the international scholarly and policy communities with respect to a feasible and appropriate course of action regarding said crisis.

In light of the still-evolving situation, in a rare moment of clarity the international community has determined that the insights of international relations theory are essential to the fashioning of any potentially effective policy response to that situation. Accordingly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations has convened the present Summit in order to provide a forum for the world's newest leading experts on international relations theory to: (a) identify a priority list of action items to inform the response of the United Nations to the crisis; and (b) identify appropriate and feasible implementation plans for said action items.

These twin objectives will define and sustain the proceedings throughout the Summit. Their satisfaction shall be reflected in the ability of the participants in the Summit to develop an Action Plan responsive to the actual constraints, demands, and challenges posed by the events of recent months in Crimea and Ukraine, as well as by anticipation of potential constraints, demands, and challenges associated with any proposed efforts at remediation or resolution of the crisis. In the event that delegates to the Summit are successful in these regards, said Action Plan will be transmitted by the President of the Society for the Advancement of Arcane Theories (SAAT) to the UN Secretary-General and the UN Secretariat for full consideration by those organs and further dissemination as they deem fit.

A. Context of the simulation

At present, the situation in the Crimea and Ukraine clearly resides in a state of flux. As the Russian presence in Crimea continues to solidify, the Ukrainian government in Kiev continues to emphasize the need for a united Ukraine, and regional leaders and citizens in Crimea continue to express support for unification with Russia. In light of these dynamics, world leaders seek to avert a major military conflict in what increasingly appears to be an intractable situation.

Clearly the international community faces a number of significant challenges posed by the Russian incursion into Crimea and its effects on Ukraine proper. Regional security considerations reside at the very forefront of the crisis, with significant implications for regional institutions such as the European Union, NATO, and the OSCE (among others) as well as many of their core member-states. Beyond the direct implications for regional security, the crisis has significant economic, legal, and human rights dimensions. The will, capacity, and effectiveness of various states, regional institutions and international organizations are all being put to the test by the dynamics of the crisis and the challenge of crafting a feasible and acceptable response to it. As such, it remains hard to envisage whether cooperation, collective interests, and some form of brokered agreement resolving the crisis—or, conversely, conflict, self-regarding interests, and some continuation or even extension of armed violence—will carry the day. Whatever the case may be, it is inarguable that the security, stability, and well-being of a wide swath of states, societies, and people are contingent on the ability of the delegates to the PIPA: Crimea-Ukraine Crisis summit to fashion workable, feasible, and effective solutions to the major challenges and problems *extant* in the crisis.

B. Mechanics of the simulation

In the PIPA: Crimea – Ukraine Crisis simulation, students will work in small groups to represent the range of IR theories, using the simulation setting to expound upon what they have learned over the course of the term. As is typically the case, this exercise will straddle the realms of empirical reality and intellectual and creative license. On the basis of a complex selection procedure, you have been assigned to represent one of the nine theoretical perspectives represented in this summit (see below). As such, you are expected to approach this gaming activity so that it mirrors an environment where time is an issue and creative problem solving is required. Throughout the simulation, you must act in a way consistent with that of a theorist tasked with addressing a pressing and important ‘real world’ policy challenge, and therefore are expected to faithfully represent the core ideas and logic of the theoretical perspective to which you are assigned as you simultaneously seek to develop, in consultation with other participants in the simulation, a comprehensive and effective Action Plan to contain, defuse, and/or resolve the crisis. Your ability to do this will depend in large part on the basis of your own research and preparation.

The following theories (see table next page) will be represented in the PIPA: Crimea – Ukraine Crisis simulation, which will be chaired and facilitated by the President of the Society for the Advancement of Arcane Theories (SAAT), Dr. I.M. Agnostic. In addition to convening and presiding over each session of the summit, Dr. Agnostic will transmit the proceedings of individual sessions and the final agenda agreed to at the summit to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, for subsequent distribution to the UN Security Council and UN General Assembly. As a delegate to the Summit, you must be fully knowledgeable about and faithful to the theoretical perspective you are representing and remain in character at all times. Also, as a means to the effective conduct of negotiation and the brokering of an accord within the context established by the simulation, you should seek to become as familiar as possible with the positions of others participating in the simulation. This will, of course, require you to conduct external research not only on the potential (and later, actual) policy issues that can/will be introduced and your own position on them, but also the position of the other delegations on said issues.

II. What is the PIPA: Crimea-Ukraine Crisis Summit?

A. Origins

While the present crisis has deep historical roots, its most proximate temporal trigger was the 21 November 2013 decision of then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich (under Russian pressure) to abrogate an extensive economic accord with the EU. This decision proved to be a flashpoint exposing deep divisions within the country over its political, economic, social, and cultural orientation and future direction. More specifically, it stimulated major expressions of opposition and support for greater ties with the EU and the West centered largely in Kiev's Independence Square throughout late November and early December. Protesters numbered in the hundreds of thousands, and were met with a forceful crackdown by police and security services (generating a proliferation of affecting images in the media) as well as the quick passage of anti-assembly laws. These moves only ratcheted up the intensity of the protests, with City Hall and the Justice Ministry (among other government installations) seized and occupied by the protesters in late December and early January.

Though a key background variable, Russia inserted itself into the crisis directly for the first time with Russian President Vladimir Putin's announcement of a new deal to purchase \$15bn. in Ukrainian bonds (government debt) and a major cut in the price of Russian gas exports to Ukraine in mid-December. This announcement only stoked the fires of the opposition to Yanukovich, whose regime was increasingly considered little more than a Russian proxy. By mid-January, the use of live ammunition by police in Kiev and elsewhere had caused the first deaths amongst protesters, representing yet another step in the intensification of the crisis. On 28 January 2014, Prime Minister Mykola Azarov resigned, triggering a sequence of events which resulted in the Parliament's about-face repeal of the anti-protest laws passed in December and effectively mounting a direct challenge to Yanukovich's authority.

On 16 February, the opposition ended occupation of City Hall in Kiev in exchange for the release of over 200 jailed activists. This apparent breakthrough was short-lived, however, as the street clashes (met by deadly force from the police) resumed after the Parliament's failure to pass constitutional reforms limiting Presidential powers. Mid- and late-February was marred by extensive violence, with hundreds severely injured and killed in clashes with the police – including the specter, on 20 February, of government snipers shooting protesters from the rooftops in Kiev, resulting in over 70 deaths that day alone.

The events of 20 February represented yet another turn in the crisis, as the next day protest leaders, members of the government opposition centered in Parliament, and Yanukovich brokered a deal calling for early elections and a new government as well as a notable diminution in Presidential authority. Emboldened by this deal, protesters took to the streets and seized control of Kiev, causing Yanukovich to flee the capital on 21 February. With his whereabouts and future unknown, on 22 February Parliament voted to remove Yanukovich from power (imbuing temporary executive authority in the Parliament itself, including the new Speaker Oleksandr Turchinov), and established 25 May as the date for a new presidential election. Two days later, a warrant was issued for Yanukovich's arrest, and it comes to light that the now-deposed President has been granted sanctuary in Russia (after being informed by Putin that his political career is over).

These developments, popular in the Western part of the country, triggered major protests in Russian-oriented eastern Ukraine and the Crimea – signaling the dawn of yet another phase of the crisis. On 26

February, Crimean Tatars and others supportive of the new administration in Kiev clashed with pro-Russian protesters, against the backdrop of Russian troops along the Ukrainian border being put on full alert and engaging in combat readiness drills. The very next day, armed men in unmarked fatigues fanned throughout Crimea, initiating a process of the seizure of government buildings, the airport in Simferopol, and a military airfield in Sevastopol. Contemporaneously, the Crimean parliament established a parallel 25 May referendum to determine the region's status – leading Kiev to accuse Russia of aggression and a violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, and spurring the UN Security Council to action.

On 28 February, European and U.S. government officials issued strident denunciations of Russian military intervention in Ukraine; the next day (1 March), Crimean leaders formally requested Russian assistance, and the upper half of the Russian Parliament approved Putin's decision to deploy Russian military forces in Crimea. That deployment, which began in earnest the following day, was simultaneously characterized as a stabilization mission to protect Russian civilians in Crimea and eastern Ukraine from the predation of terrorist and fascist elements (by Putin), an act of war (by new Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk), and a threat to the peace and security of Europe (by NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen). Amidst the diplomatic rhetoric, Russia's Black Sea Fleet confronted the small Ukrainian naval presence and Sevastopol and presented an ultimatum to surrender, while Russian forces fired warning shots in the direction of unarmed Ukrainian soldiers and Ukrainian military bases as well as, later, unarmed OSCE observers.

On 5 March U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry arranged a face-to-face meeting between Ukrainian foreign minister Andriy Deshchychytsia and his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov. This meeting proved an abject failure when Lavrov refused to engage in direct dialogue with his Ukrainian counterpart. While efforts to sustain dialogue continued, their conditionality (predicated on the removal of Russian forces from Crimea) resulted in further stalemate. The U.S. subsequently announced visa restrictions on Russians and Crimeans, while also introducing targeted ('smart') sanctions against members of Putin's inner circle and the freezing of Russian assets in the U.S. For its part, the EU deliberated over similar measures as well as proposing a package of trade liberalization measures to support the new government in Kiev. Additionally, in mid-March NATO initiated a series of reconnaissance flights over Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states designed to monitor the situation in Ukraine as well as offer security assurances.

Against the backdrop of the passage of a declaration of independence by the Crimean regional parliament on 11 March, Yatsenyuk declared before a huge rally in Kiev that Ukraine would never cede 'one inch' of territory to Russia. Yatsenyuk subsequently travelled to Washington on 12 March and received a show of support and assurances from President Obama that the U.S. 'completely rejects' the upcoming referendum over Crimea's future (pushed up to 16 March). On 15 March, the UN Security Council voted in favor of a draft resolution condemning that referendum as illegal; the resolution was blocked by Russian veto (with China abstaining). The results of the subsequent 16 March referendum were overwhelmingly in favor of union with Russia; two days later, on 18 March, President Putin signed a treaty with Crimean leaders annexing Crimea into Russia. With the death of a Ukrainian soldier in the storming of a Ukrainian military installation in Simferopol that same day prompting concerns about further escalation of the crisis, an Association Agreement between the government of Ukraine and the EU was signed. It is amidst this climate of uncertainty, tension, and the potential for further violence – as well as the looming specter of the 25 May Presidential elections – that the Crimea-Ukraine Crisis Summit has been convened.

B. The Charge of the Summit

1. Defining an agenda for action

To date, the international community has been greatly divided over how to respond to events in Crimea. Some states, institutions, and other observers have pushed for coercive measures such as the imposition of sanctions against Russia, increased arms transfers to Ukraine, or even the deployment of military forces, while others have called for more measured action centered on diplomacy, mediation, and other measures of sustained non-coercive involvement by third-parties. The main issue at hand for your consideration, of course, is what the most effective reaction to the crisis in its current form **at the time of the Summit** should be. In considering this issue, however, you will also have to identify the central issues and dilemmas permeating the crisis **from the perspective of the theory with which you are associated**. The possibilities in this regard are many, as you will undoubtedly find in the course of your research. The empirical ('real world') context surrounding this simulation suggests equivalent possibilities for major discontinuities and surprises or, conversely, the emergence of conditions favorable to stability and coordination. In either case, it is evident that the major challenges which confront the international system and community today and in the future as a result of recent events in Ukraine and Crimea reflect something of a hybrid between the novel and the familiar. As such, delegates should take these continuities, discontinuities, and complexities into account when seeking to identify the policy issues that will define the Action Plan.

2. Advancing an effective response

No less important will be your ability to develop a strategy to advance your priorities during (and in-between) our sessions. The failure to identify and develop such a course of action will result in the failure of this Summit and its participants to realize their two central charges. As such, you should strive to familiarize yourself with the key issues embedded within the parameters of the Crimea - Ukraine Crisis Summit. In doing so, your main objective should be the crafting of a list of priority issues and concerns from the vantage point of your own (assigned) theoretical perspective that you will pursue during the nine-day Summit. However, there are a host of policy issues that may garner the attention of one or more delegations, and perhaps even pass muster and gain a place in the final Action Plan. The issue at hand for your consideration as delegates, of course, is the identification and specification of what features of the crisis are of supreme importance and what response to them is likely to be effective, feasible, and acceptable.

C. Further Considerations

Delegates are strongly encouraged to define and advance collective consideration of the imperative features of the crisis as well as potential responses in a thorough, concrete, and rigorous way, such that generality, imprecision, and misunderstandings can be kept to a minimum. It is also likely (if not almost certain...) that at least some of the crisis features and responses identified by various delegations and introduced for consideration will prove major sources of consternation and disagreement. As such, an unstated charge of the Summit is the need for delegates to work towards brokering compromises wherever and whenever possible, so as to satisfy the stated charge of the Summit.

APPENDIX B. IGC: RE SIMULATION SCENARIO



IGC: REVISITING EUROPE 2020



SIMULATION SCENARIO

I. Simulation Context and Mechanics

For a period of eleven days (16 April – 26 April 2012), Clark University will host an inter-governmental conference (IGC) comprised of the 27 Member-states of the European Union. The primary goal of the ‘IGC: Revisiting Europe 2020’ is the crafting of a consensus agreement to define the parameters of an Action Plan for the European Union for the next decade. This Action Plan shall constitute an update to the European Commission’s EUROPE 2020 Strategy, issued in March 2010 to ensure ‘smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth’ for the EU for the next decade. The EUROPE 2020 Strategy initiative itself was a response to a series of ‘crises’ confronting the EU in recent years, including (but not limited to) the 2008 financial crisis, the contentious debates surrounding the Lisbon Treaty, and the failure of the effort to craft an EU Constitution.

In light of what has transpired since the adoption of the Europe 2020 Strategy –including, but not limited to, the sovereign debt crisis—the European Council has determined that a revisiting of that Strategy is necessary. Thus the European Council has called for the present IGC in order to provide a forum for the EU Member-states themselves to: (a) identify a priority list of action items to define the EU’s policy agenda for the next decade in light of the reality of the current situation; (b) ensure the integration and implementation of those priority items within the EUROPE 2020 Strategy initiative over the next decade; and (c) identify appropriate and feasible responses to said action items. These three objectives will define and sustain the proceedings throughout the IGC; their satisfaction shall be reflected in the ability of the participants in the IGC to develop a Council of the European Union Action Plan relative to the EUROPE 2020 Strategy. In that event, said Action Plan will be transmitted by the President of the European Council (Herman Van Rompuy) to the President of the European Commission as well as the President of the European Parliament, for full dissemination throughout the Union.

B. Context of the simulation

At present, European integration clearly resides in a state of flux. With the momentum of the 1990’s dissipating, the European Union now faces a raft of internal and external challenges. Foremost among these, of course, is the ongoing dilemma of the sovereign debt crisis and its various components and dimensions. In spite of differences over how best to deal with the crisis, EU and member state policy makers have shown a strong sense of solidarity in making sure that no state is allowed to “fail”. Yet Union-led interventions have not only strained public support for the EU in member states financing the bailouts, they have also been coupled with fiscal austerity measures which have the potential to impede economic growth for years to

come. Undoubtedly, maintaining the capacity of both the EU and member-states to provide social services and undertake major policy initiatives pertaining to economic productivity and competitiveness and technological innovation and acquisition is a primary challenge for the EU going forward.

Beyond the economic domain, Europe is facing political instability in its neighborhood to the south, the rapidly increasing economic and political clout of Asia (especially China and India), and security concerns related to organized crime, terrorism, immigration, and climate change. Compounding these policy challenges are ongoing debates over intra-institutional relations and competencies, the appropriate degree of (and domain for) supranational authority and governance, the accountability of EU institutions, and the difficult task of advancing a European identity and common polity. These long-standing and fundamental debates are heightened by the specter of enlargement, both recent and future, and in particular the effects that enlargement has had (and seems likely to continue to have) on the 'European project.'

As the European community faces a multiplicity of significant challenges related indirectly, if not directly, to the dynamics of globalization as well as the persistence of competing national interests, the future of European integration is very much at stake. With that said, the future of the EU nonetheless seems murky at best. As such, it remains hard to envisage whether cooperation, harmonization, and supra-nationalism—or, conversely, rivalry, parallelism, and inter-governmentalism—will carry the day. Whatever the case may be, it is inarguable that the continued viability of integration and the EU itself, along with the prospects for a secure, prosperous, and vibrant Europe which provides for the well-being of all Europeans, are contingent on the ability of the EU's institutions and Member-states to fashion workable, feasible, and effective solutions to the major challenges and problems of the day.

B. Mechanics of the simulation

In the 'IGC: REVISITING EUROPE 2020' simulation, students will represent the Member-states of the European Union, using the simulation setting to expound upon what they have learned over the course of the term. As is typically the case, this exercise will straddle the realms of empirical reality and intellectual and creative license. On the basis of your own preference ordering, you have been assigned to represent the Member-states represented in this summit (see below). As such, you are expected to approach this gaming activity so that it mirrors a real world policy-making environment where time is an issue and creative problem solving is required. Throughout the simulation, you must act in a way consistent with that of a high-level decision-maker, and are tasked with representing the interests and objectives of the actor to which you are assigned as you construe and interpret those interests, on the basis of your own research and preparation.

The following actors (see table next page) will be represented in the 'IGC: REVISITING EUROPE 2020' simulation, which will be chaired and facilitated by the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy. In addition to convening and presiding over each session of the summit, M. Van Rompuy will transmit the proceedings of individual sessions and the final agenda agreed to at the summit to the Presidents of the European Commission and European Parliament, for subsequent dissemination throughout the Union. As a delegate to the IGC, you must be fully knowledgeable about the official position of the Member-state you are representing and remain in character at all times. Also, as a means to the effective conduct of statecraft and the brokering of an accord within the inter-governmental setting, you should seek to become as familiar as possible with the positions of other actors participating in the simulation. This will,

of course, require you to conduct external research not only on the potential (and later, actual) policy issues that can/will be introduced and the position of your assigned party on them, but also the position of the other Member-states on said issues.

II. What is the 'IGC: Revisiting Europe 2020'?

A.Origins

Europe is facing many challenges, including stagnant economies, financial instability, pressure on social security systems and the welfare state, an aging population, and problems stemming from climate change and the degradation of the environment. Ensuring the continued progress of Europe requires a cohesive and effective response to these and other matters emanating from the European Union and its member states. Accordingly, in March 2010, the Barroso Commission proposed the 'Europe 2020 Strategy' to promote 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' and a 'new sustainable social market' emphasizing innovation and the knowledge-based economy. The Europe 2020 Strategy has been advanced by the Commission as an updated, improved and more comprehensive successor to the Lisbon Strategy, itself advanced in 2000 as the preeminent guiding strategy for the EU for the just-concluded decade. Upon its adoption, the Europe 2020 Strategy was touted by President Barroso as a necessary and inventive step borne amidst the 'window of opportunity' provided by recent EU-level crises, including the 2008 financial crisis and the constitutional crisis of 2005-06. The Europe 2020 Strategy includes five specific target areas: employment, research and development, green house gas emissions, education and poverty—all of which have been defined by the Commission at priorities for the Member-states. Further, the Europe 2020 Strategy has proposed a series of 'flagship initiatives' intended, together, to sustain and propel the Union through the coming decade.

The Europe 2020 Strategy has faced significant criticism on a variety of fronts. One area of criticism points to the emphasis on economic growth, competitiveness, and productivity. From this vantage point, the Barroso Commission has been accused of overlooking and/or deemphasizing the social aspects of the 'social market'. Another main point of contention with the Commission's Europe 2020 Strategy as it currently stands lies in its seemingly stark and disaggregation of the economic and political realm, as well as the disaggregation of the European and external (global) arenas. From the perspective, the Strategy is insufficient in that it does not take into account issues and problems which may in some cases have direct ramifications for the proposed goal of 'smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth' but which lie outside the traditional purview of the Single Market and/or the European economic area. The convergence of these two lines of critique (and related ones, including the charge that the Strategy seeks to ignore or paper over the persistent problems of institutional inefficiency and lack of accountability) seems to be the contention that the Europe 2020 Strategy is too limited in scope, and does not encompass all (or even the most important) issues and problems confronting the EU today.

Of course, the most salient and pointed critique of the Europe 2020 Strategy stems from the perspective that events subsequent to its passage – most notably, though not exclusively, the sovereign debt crisis and the fallout thereto – have undermined the efficacy of the Europe 2020 Strategy, if not rendered it irrelevant. The position of the European Council is that, in light of the confluence of the goals and objectives of the Strategy with the continuing goals and objectives of the European Union, this is not the case. At the same time, it is clear that the Strategy requires revision in light of empirical realities and the pressing challenges which have arisen since its adoption in March 2010, in order to ensure the efficacy of the Strategy and the viability, economic and otherwise, of the Union in the near and long-term. It is in this spirit that the European Council has called for convention of the present 'Revisiting Europe 2020' Intergovernmental Conference (IGC).

B. The Charge of the IGC

1. Defining a future agenda

The real world context surrounding this simulation suggests equivalent possibilities for major discontinuities and surprises or, conversely, stability and coordination. In either case, it is evident that the major policy challenges which confront the European Union today and in the future reflect something of a hybrid between the novel and the familiar. Whereas traditional concerns of the Union such as economic growth, competition, financial stability, and productivity are obvious centerpieces of the EUROPE 2020 Strategy, they likely require reconsideration in light of present realities. Further, related issues such as energy, environmental quality, social welfare, and the like would seemingly merit fuller consideration under the aegis of the EUROPE 2020 Strategy. Lastly, it remains an open question as to whether other issues – including (but not limited to) the threat of transnational terrorism, the scourge of organized crime, the external security and defence presence and capabilities of the EU, challenges associated with migration and minority rights, the prospects and problems of further enlargement, and the representativeness and functioning of the EU and its institutions (to name only a few) have received the necessary consideration in the process of developing the EUROPE 2020 Strategy to date. A related challenge stems from the degree of issue linkage between and across these and other major policy issues, and the manifold ways in which these inter-woven issues impact the security, prosperity, and well-being of the EU, EU Member-states, and their citizens. As such, delegates should take these continuities, discontinuities, and complexities into account when seeking to identify the policy issues that will define the Action Plan.

2. Advancing an effective response

Whatever the eventual constitution of the Council's Action Plan, the IGC is charged with crafting at least a tentative set of responses to address each of the issues featured in that Plan. This additional challenge facing delegates is a significant one, given not only the challenge of securing extensive multilateral cooperation on issues of common concern, but also in light of the recent challenges facing the EU which have exposed fissures and areas of profound disagreement. While the current moment in European integration may generate obstacles to common initiatives, it also has the potential effect of promoting greater autonomy and freedom of movement by and among the Member-states. These two possible trajectories stemming from the current challenges confronting the EU and its institutional authority must be accounted for by IGC participants when seeking to define the effective course(s) of action to address whatever policy issues may be included in the Action Plan. The failure to identify and develop such a course of action will result in the failure of this IGC and its participants to realize one of its, and their, two central charges.

C. Further Considerations

There are a host of policy issues that may garner the attention of one or more delegations, and perhaps even pass muster and gain a place in the Council's Action Plan. The issue at hand for your consideration as delegates, of course, is the identification and specification of what policy issues are of supreme importance and what response to them is likely to be effective, feasible, and acceptable. Delegates are strongly encouraged to define and advance such issues and responses in a thorough, concrete, and rigorous way, such that generality, imprecision, and misunderstandings can be kept to a minimum. It is also likely (if not almost certain...) that at least some of the policy issues and responses identified by various delegations and introduced for consideration will prove major sources of consternation and disagreement. As such, an unstated charge of the IGC is the need for delegates to work towards brokering compromises wherever and whenever possible, so as to satisfy the stated charges of the IGC.

APPENDIX C. ANML SIMULATION SCENARIO



Agenda for the New Multilateralism (ANML) Simulation

SIMULATION SCENARIO

I. Simulation Context and Mechanics

For a period of ten days (16-27 April 2010), Clark University will host the inaugural Agenda for the New Multilateralism (ANML) Summit. This summit will feature the participation of the majority of the most powerful and/or prominent actors in the contemporary international system, exclusive of the United States (Brazil, China, the European Union, India, Iran, Japan, Russia). The primary goal for the Summit is the crafting of a consensus agreement to define the parameters of an international policy agenda for the next decade—the much anticipated ‘Agenda 2020’. It is anticipated that this agreement, to be developed at the ANML Summit, will establish both a well-crafted and workable policy agenda and a tentative course of action relative to the issues meriting inclusion on that agenda.

A. Context

In the view of many foreign policy analysts, the international system currently resides in a state of flux. With Cold War bipolarity and the ‘unipolar moment’ of post-Cold War American hegemony increasingly fading into the past, much of the conventional wisdom points to a ‘back to the future’ scenario predicated on a return to multipolarity. Historically, eras defined by emerging multipolar systems have typically been associated with extensive strategic rivalry and conflict, leading most observers to conclude that they are less stable than unipolar or bipolar systems. However, the complex interdependence that has defined, and continues to define, our contemporary age suggests that the prospects for cooperation and collective action are perhaps greater with respect to the emerging multipolarity than at any time in the past.

While the international community faces a multiplicity of significant challenges—many related indirectly, if not directly, to the dynamics of globalization as well as the persistence of competing national interests—it seems unlikely that even crises such as the recent disruptions to financial markets are likely to trigger a complete breakdown of the international system. With that said, the future of the emergent multipolar order nonetheless appears murky at best. While commercial exchange, technological innovation and acquisition, and the proliferation

of select norms and ideas (and the rejection of others) seems likely to continue apace, so too does the spread of armaments, the quest for security, and the pursuit of territorial gain and natural resource endowments. In any and all of these areas, it remains hard to envisage whether cooperation and partnership—or, conversely, rivalry and conflict—will carry the day.

B. Mechanics

In the ANML Summit simulation, students will represent the various foreign policy actors studied in this course, using the simulation setting to expound upon what they have learned over the course of the term. As is typically the case, this exercise will straddle the realms of empirical reality and intellectual and creative license. On the basis of your own preference ordering, you have been assigned to represent one of seven actors represented in this summit (see below). As such, you are expected to approach this gaming activity so that it mirrors a real world policy-making environment where time is an issue and creative problem solving is required. Throughout the simulation, you must act in a way consistent with that of a high-level decision-maker, and are tasked with representing the interests and objectives of the actor to which you are assigned as you construe and interpret those interests, on the basis of your own research and preparation.

The following actors will be represented in the ANML Summit, which will be chaired and facilitated by UN special envoy (and former Secretary-General) Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In addition to convening and presiding over each session of the summit, Mr. Boutros-Ghali will transmit the proceedings of individual sessions and the final agenda agreed to at the summit to all participants, as well as the Presidents of the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the United States.

Brazil	China
India	Iran
Japan	Russia
European Union	

As a delegate to the ANML Summit, you must be fully knowledgeable about the official position of the state/RGO you are representing and remain in character at all times. Also, as a means to the effective conduct of statecraft and the brokering of an accord within the inter-governmental setting of this summit, you should seek to become as familiar as possible with the positions of other actors participating in the simulation. This will, of course, require you to conduct external research not only on the potential (and later, actual) policy issues that can/will be introduced into the Summit and the position of your assigned party on them, but also the position of the other actors in the Summit on said issues.

II. What is the ANML Summit?

A. Origins

The origins of the ANML Summit stem from several factors. Most notable among these is the ascendance of the so-called BRIC bloc of states (Brazil, Russia, India, China) to an increasingly prominent position in the international

system on the basis of a varying mix of factors including demonstrated economic growth, economic potential, technological capacity, geographic, demographic, and natural resource factors, and political prominence. With the relative power and influence of these four states on the rise, the shared desire for an ad-hoc forum for an exchange of positions and information on major international policy issues involving all four actors (one outside of existing institutional avenues, and without the direct involvement of the United States) proved to be a major catalyst for the preliminary consultations that eventually produced the ANML Summit, consultations dating back nearly a decade.

Another, and no less important, step in the journey to ANML was the concerted effort of Japan and various European states to build more and better avenues for the exchange and coordination of foreign policy positions with a wider range of actors, including (but not limited to) the BRIC bloc. These efforts, reflected in parallel efforts such as the broadening of the G-8 to the G-20, ongoing calls for UN Security Council enlargement, and the like, were consonant with and therefore well-received by BRIC states. At the same time, different mechanisms and dynamics prevailed in each context. Capitalizing on a muted though perceptible shift in public opinion regarding foreign policy orientation (in the direction of greater autonomy *viz.* the U.S.) in recent years, the DPJ government under Hatoyama took the initiative in promoting the Summit as a means to that end. Within the European theatre, perspectives on the merits and utility of the ANML Summit varied widely, with the larger EU member-states in favor of an intergovernmental approach that would result in various individual seats at the Summit, and the remainder of the EU member-states adhering to a supranational position culminating in a single, unified EU delegation. This long-standing impasse was eventually broken at the veritable eleventh hour with the passing into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009. Among other things, the Lisbon Treaty created the office of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in the interest of promoting greater foreign policy coordination and a unified external visage for the EU in diplomatic matters. This breakthrough in European integration effectively resolved the matter of European representation at the Summit, with the selection of a delegation representing the EU under the auspices of the High Representative.

Progress towards formalizing and launching the Summit remained stalled in large part because of the intransigence of the Bush Administration. The Summit concept received a sudden and important boost in late 2007 with the issuance of the much-publicized report 'A Smarter and More Secure America' by the Center for International and Strategic Studies' (CSIS) *Commission on Smart Power*. This report, endorsed and largely developed under the direct supervision of the Commission's co-chairs, Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye, called for a new approach to U.S. foreign policy resting on 'smart power'. The 'smart power' concept—itsself a definition and translation of power that leans heavily on multilateral cooperation and burden-sharing—was openly endorsed by U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, as well as all the subsequent foreign policy principals of the incoming Obama Administration, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in 2008. As a centerpiece of current U.S. foreign policy, it demonstrably altered the U.S. position toward a tentative endorsement of the ANML Summit.²¹

The final piece of the puzzle leading to the convening of the ANML Summit proved to be the ambiguous and still evolving position of Iran in the international order. It bears mentioning here that the political developments bending towards the Summit (as chronicled above) unfolded at roughly the same juncture that Iran's profile and perceived importance relative to the international community in general, and the participants in the Summit in particular, grew exponentially. In equal parts a function of Iran's nuclear ambitions, more assertive and coherent

²¹ While expressing muted support for the Summit, the Obama Administration to date has refused to issue any *a priori* endorsement of the work of the Summit or any potential findings or resolutions. The major concession of the U.S. thus far has been an agreement to receive the transmission of Agenda 2020 by the UN Special Envoy.

foreign policy stance, geostrategic importance, and human and natural resource base, the first decade of the 21st century appeared to represent the ‘coming of age’ of the Islamic Republic on the world stage. These and other factors underscoring Iran’s importance to regional and global security and order were only punctuated by the exceedingly poor relations between Iran and the U.S. The synergy of these considerations convinced the ANML participants of the importance of Iran’s inclusion in the Summit, for reasons both pragmatic (e.g., to help broker resolution of many of the outstanding international policy issues concerning, and of concern to, Iran) and symbolic (to signal the importance and *gravitas* of the ANML Summit and its proceedings). Still, this is a view which the U.S. clearly does not share, irrespective of the Obama Administration’s slight moderation of rhetoric and policy towards Iran. In fact, the sudden outbreak of political unrest throughout the summer of 2009 nearly proved fatal for the Summit, with the heavy-handed response of the Iranian regime engendering strident U.S. opposition to Iranian participation and a not-inconsequential degree of equivocation by some of the delegations. In the end, the final hurdle to the Summit was overcome by a joint EU-Japanese proposal (advanced under significant U.S. pressure) to extend an invitation for full participatory status to Iran, under the sole condition that all parties (including Iran) commit to consideration of the Iranian nuclear program among other items to be considered in the Summit.

B. The Charge of the Summit

1. Defining a future agenda

The real world context surrounding this simulation suggests equivalent possibilities for major discontinuities and surprises or, conversely, stability and coordination. In either case, it is evident that the major policy challenges which confront the international community today—and in the future—reflect something of a hybrid between the novel and the familiar. Whereas traditional concerns such as war, trade, and political stability are likely to remain vital, other (and sometimes related) issues such as energy needs, the spread of disease, the proliferation of organized crime, economic and social inequality, demographic pressures, and environmental degradation seem likely to take on increasing importance. It is worth noting that both the issues traditionally defined as ‘low politics’ and those associated with the realm of ‘high politics’ each in their own right exhibit an increasingly transnational dimension and character, making effective responses to them all the more challenging. A related challenge stems from the degree of issue linkage between and across these and other major policy issue areas, and the manifold ways in which these inter-woven issues impact national and global security, prosperity, and well-being. As such, delegates should take these continuities, discontinuities, and complexities into account when seeking to identify the policy issues that will define Agenda 2020.

2. Advancing an effective response

Whatever the eventual constitution of Agenda 2020, the ANML Summit is charged with crafting at least a tentative action plan to address each of the issues featured on that Agenda. This additional challenge facing Summit delegates is a significant one, given not only the well-chronicled difficulty of eliciting multilateral cooperation even on issues of common concern, but also in light of the greater diffusion of power and authority that seems to define the current international order. While this diffusion of power translates into more (and different) stakeholders, it also has the potential effect of promoting greater autonomy and freedom of movement by and among major actors in the system. Such greater autonomy might in turn result in a weakening of the efficacy of existing multilateral arrangements and institutions, the potential generation of new strategic rivalries and the solidification of new (and competing) regional blocs and alliances, and the enhancement of the power and influence of non-state and networked actors relative to states. The potential for this fragmentation must be accounted for by Summit participants when seeking to define the effective course(s) of action to address whatever

policy issues are added to Agenda 2020. The failure to identify and develop such a course of action will result in the ANML Summit in turn failing to realize one of its central charges.

3. Coordination and burden-sharing

With the emergence of several new and rising powers, the increasing influence of nonstate actors, and the growing importance of transnational phenomena, the nascent multipolar order will almost assuredly require an accompanying foundation of multilateral cooperation if it is to endure. At the same time that the nature, scope, and breadth of the policy issues facing the international community are changing, so too are the ‘players’ wielding significant power within that community. While the United States remains by most estimates the single most powerful actor, the relative power and influence of the U.S. appears to be on the wane—and so too the American ability to promote and uphold the global *status quo*. At the same time, the extent to which states or non-state actors are willing or able to shoulder a concomitant increase in the burden of defining and maintaining global order and stability remains unknown. As such, the defining question facing the participants in this summit is whether they are willing to identify and commit to the effective resolution of the major challenges to stability, security, prosperity, well-being, and sustainability that seek likely to define our contemporary age—or, conversely, whether instability, insecurity, scarcity, and depredation are likely to define the future of the international system.

C. Further Considerations

There are a host of policy issues that may garner the attention of one or more delegations, and perhaps even pass muster and gain a place on Agenda 2020. The issue at hand for your consideration as delegates, of course, is the identification and specification of what policy issues are of supreme importance and what response to them is likely to be effective, feasible, and acceptable. Delegates are strongly encouraged to define and advance such issues and responses in a thorough, concrete, and rigorous way, such that generality, imprecision, and misunderstandings can be kept to a minimum. It is also likely (if not almost certain...) that at least some of the policy issues and responses identified by various delegations and introduced for consideration will prove major sources of consternation and disagreement. As such, an unstated charge of the ANML Summit is the need for delegates to work towards brokering compromises wherever and whenever possible, so as to satisfy the stated charges of the Summit.

APPENDIX D. SIMULATION SESSION RULES

Procedure in Brief

A modified (semi-formal) form of parliamentary procedure will be observed during the in-class sessions, as is customary in such a setting. For your information, established rules pertaining to transacting business during all sessions are listed below.

TRANSACTING BUSINESS AT A MEETING

A. Quorum:

1. A quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting for business to be legally transacted.
2. An organization, in its established rules, may define its own quorum.
3. In the absence of such a provision, the quorum is a majority of the entire membership. **For the purposes of this IGC, this condition will constitute a quorum.**

B. Obtaining the Floor:

1. Before a member in an assembly can make a motion or speak in debate, he or she must obtain the floor; e.g., the member must be recognized by the Chair as having exclusive right to be heard at that time.
2. If two or more members rise to seek recognition at the same time, the member who addressed the Chair first after the floor was yielded is usually entitled to be recognized. A member cannot establish "prior claim" to the floor by rising before it has been yielded.

C. Introducing Business (Making Motions):

1. Business may be introduced by an individual member or by a committee.
2. Business is always introduced in the form of a motion.

D. Seconding a Motion:

1. After a motion has been made, another member, without obtaining the floor, may second the motion.
2. A second merely implies that the seconder agrees that the motion should come before the assembly and not that he or she necessarily favors the motion.
3. A motion made by a committee requires no second, since its introduction into the assembly has been approved by a majority of the committee.
4. The purpose of a second is to prevent time from being consumed by the assembly having to dispose of a motion that only one person wants to see introduced.

E. Placing a Motion Before the Assembly:

1. After a motion has been made and seconded, the Chair repeats the motion verbatim, thus placing it before the assembly for debate and action.

2. During the brief interval between the making of a motion and the time when the Chair places it before the assembly by restating it, the maker of a motion may modify or withdraw it simply by stating the intention to do so; after the motion has been restated by the Chair, it is officially before the assembly and must be dealt with appropriately (e.g., adopted, rejected, postponed).

F. Debate:

1. Every member of the assembly has the right to speak on every debatable motion before it is finally acted upon; this right cannot be interfered with except by a motion to limit debate.
2. All discussion must be confined to the immediately pending question and to whether or not it should be adopted.
3. While debate is in progress, amendments or other secondary motions can be introduced and disposed of accordingly.
4. In an organization that has no special rule relating to the length of speeches, a member can speak no longer than 10 minutes unless he or she obtains the consent of the assembly; such permission can be given by unanimous consent or by means of a motion to extend debate. Likewise, debate may be curtailed by a motion to limit debate.
5. No member may speak twice on the same motion at the same meeting as long as any other member who has not spoken on the motion desires to do so.
6. During debate, no member can attack or question the motives of another member.
7. The maker of a motion, although allowed to vote against it, is not allowed to speak against it.

G. Amendments:

1. As noted above, before a motion has been restated by the Chair, the maker has the right to modify his or her motion or to withdraw it entirely. After it has been restated by the Chair, however, a motion may be modified only by means of an amendment.
2. There are six ways to amend a motion: a. Add words, phrases, or sentences at the end of a motion; b. Insert words, phrases, or sentences; c. Strike words, phrases, or sentences; d. Strike and insert words, phrases, or sentences; e. Strike and add words, phrases, or sentences; and f. Substitute whole paragraphs or an entire text.
3. Only two amendments (primary and secondary) may be pending on a main motion at any time.
4. Discussion of an amendment must relate only to the amendment, unless the whole motion is involved by substitution.
5. An amendment must be germane to the question under consideration.

H. Voting:

1. Unless special rules are introduced, a majority decides. A majority is more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blank ballots or abstentions.
2. Unless otherwise provided for, voting is by voice vote.
3. If the presiding officer is a member of the assembly, he or she can vote as any other member does when the vote is by ballot. In other cases, the presiding officer, if a member of the assembly, can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his or her vote will affect the result; i.e., he or she can vote either to break or to create a tie.
4. A member has no right to explain his or her vote during voting since that would be the same as debate at such a time.

I. Announcing a Vote:

1. In announcing the vote on a motion, the Chair should: a. report on the voting itself, stating which side has prevailed; b. declare that the motion is adopted or lost; and c. state the effect of the vote or order its execution.

J. Adjournment:

1. A motion to adjourn may be made by any member. It may be made during the consideration of other business, although it may not interrupt a speaker.
2. A motion to adjourn is not in order when the assembly is engaged in voting or verifying a vote.
3. If the motion to adjourn is voted down, it may be made again only after the disposition of some business.
4. The motion to adjourn is out of order when the assembly is arranging for the time and place of the next meeting.
5. When it appears that there is no further business to be brought before the assembly, the Chair, instead of waiting for a motion, may simply adjourn the meeting.

APPENDIX E. DEBRIEFING GUIDANCE

Debriefing Paper Assignment

Your full and successful participation in the simulation requires you to complete a debriefing paper. Debriefing is a vital and standard part of the simulation process, as it allows for self-reflection not only on the experiential exercise but also the applicability of theories, concepts, and empirical data relative to that exercise (Markulis & Strang, 2002). Among other things, debriefing assignments allow for students to reflect upon (and sometimes answer) questions which emerged during the exercise, to sort out and clarify ideas identified, refined, overlooked, or dismissed during the exercise, to piece together actions, events, strategies, and developments occurring during the exercise, and to evaluate the relevance of the exercise as a pedagogical instrument for examining the ‘real world.’

This particular debriefing assignment requires you to complete a short (3-4 page, double-spaced) reflection paper that engages with each of the broad subject areas outlined below. You are encouraged to think about novel and effective ways of addressing the broad headings here – but whatever you do, don’t give me a weak, general, or unsubstantiated assessment. Furthermore, you should not feel compelled to try to address all, or even most, of the questions listed here (you couldn’t in the space provided for this assignment anyway), as they are intended only as prompts.

1. Personal Reactions

- a. What did you enjoy most about the simulation? What did you enjoy least?
- b. How did you feel about the simulation in general, and your interaction with other teams?
- c. Why was (or not) this a worthwhile activity in terms of learning?
- d. What benefits do you think you may have gained from this experience?

2. Discussion of Events

- a. What, in your view, were the most significant developments that occurred during the simulation, and why?
- b. What major decision(s) did you make, and under what conditions? In retrospect, what is your view of the Action Plan and the process that generated it?
- c. What kinds of trade-offs or compromises did you make during the simulation?

3. Learning Outcomes

- a. What was the main thing you learned about the position, interests, and/or constraints associated with your assigned theoretical perspective during this simulation?
- b. What did you learn about the positions, interests, and constraints associated with the *other* theoretical perspectives represented in the simulation?
- c. What core ideas, concepts, arguments, strengths/deficiencies, and so forth associated with the theories considered throughout the course were reflected in the simulation? Be specific - what (if anything) was evident, and in what way(s)?
- d. From what aspect of the simulation did you learn the most? What did you learn?
- e. What kind of deeper or more complex connections among things you already knew did the simulation create, if any? Explain.

4. Links to the Real World

- a. Describe and assess the simulation's connections to the 'real world' of international relations. How well did it reflect diplomacy and statecraft within the parameters of the contemporary international system?
- b. How closely did the positions and decisions advanced within the simulation environment reflect reality – or, at least, a close approximation of it?
- c. Did participants in the simulation act in a fashion consistent with what we would reasonably expect given the theoretical positions simulated, and within the bounds of the setting of the crisis? Provide at least one example to support your assessment.
- d. What, in your view, were the chief impediments to effective cooperation in the simulation? Are these impediments similar to, or different from, what we see in the 'real world'?