

**PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES AND ASSESSMENT RESULTS IN CROSS-NATIONAL  
SIMULATIONS: CONCLUSIONS FROM A TWO-CONTINENT MODEL EUROPEAN  
UNION SIMULATION**

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## Introduction

We wish to provide a report on a project we have been involved in for a number of years: a multi-institutional, international simulation of the European Union, hereinafter, EURO-SIM. We believe our experience provides significant insights into the dynamics of student participation in simulations. As it deals with a practical pedagogical strategy we also believe there are useful lessons for individuals who are developing simulations, seeking to determine the value of simulations for student learning, or interested in developing useful assessment measures for student learning in simulations. As we are in the early stages of developing evaluative measures to assess student learning and experience in this context, our findings are presented as provisional: we hope colleagues will find them useful, but we also welcome comments for improving our assessment program.

## Historical Overview<sup>1</sup>

The concept of a model European Union resulted from interaction with eager students and a faculty member late in the fall semester of 1987. Students asked the Department of Political Science at SUNY, College at Brockport to sponsor a model United Nations. The department referred the request to its member whose academic specialization fit best, William G. Andrews, who is a scholar and teacher with an extensive background in French politics. He felt more competent to work on a project concerning what was then called the European Community than on one involving the United Nations. The students accepted his suggestion and set about to recruit delegations from other SUNY units with a view toward organizing the first simulation in the spring semester of 1988. The response was meager, and so the net was cast wider to include private schools as well. As a result, enough students (about 35) became interested: they represented six schools (Skidmore College, SUNY Cortland, SUNY Albany, SUNY Jamestown, SUNY Brockport, and SUNY Geneseo). It is worth emphasizing not only the evolutionary growth of EURO-SIM, but the crucial fact (discussed below) that students played, and continue to play, a key role in the organization of EURO-SIM and in many of its central elements, e.g., logistics, selection

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<sup>1</sup>The historical overview is adapted from an e-mail message sent by William G. Andrews, Executive Director of NYSMEUSS, March 1, 1996.

of an annual topic for the simulation, participation in the governing structure, and the like. From the very first, EURO-SIM was a partnership of faculty and students, rather than a top down

simulation exercise designed and executed by faculty. It thus met the model of cooperative learning.

The exercise was held on the Brockport campus, April 8-10, 1988, and called SUNYMEC '88 (State University of New York Model European Community). The Commission, European Council, General Affairs Council, and the Political Committee of the European Parliament were simulated, with the Turkish application for accession as the topic.

SUNYMEC '89 met April 13-15, 1989, with four additional schools (Hamilton College, Colgate University, SUNY Fredonia, and Cornell University) participating. Four Luxembourg students flew from Europe with their faculty advisor, Dr. Armand Clesse, Director, Institute for European and International Studies/Luxembourg, to serve as half of the Luxembourg delegation in the simulation. European Political Cooperation and an ECOSOC section were added; Austrian application to the EC served as the simulation's focus. Interestingly, one of the expert witnesses that year was a State Department official, Felix S. Bloch, who was arrested the following week on suspicion of espionage.

Andrews was directing Brockport's Social Sciences Program in Paris in 1990 and 1991 and was replaced by Barbara Jancar-Webster. The 1990 simulation--which focused on Economic and Monetary Union--was held in a downtown Rochester hotel because of a German measles case on the Brockport campus. Because of that scare, Geneseo and Fredonia suspended their participation, but were replaced by St. Lawrence University, the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, and Canisius College. The 1991 simulation was held again on the Brockport campus with the European Economic Area as the topic. West Point and St. Lawrence dropped out, but Geneseo and Fredonia returned and St. John Fisher joined.

During those years, Luxembourg students continued to participate, a few other students came from Europe, and a few European students at New York State colleges joined. They included Bart Deelen, a Belgian student at Bard College, who returned to Europe for graduate study at the Catholic University of Leuven and interested that institution in becoming involved.

Recent main topics have been immigration (1993), Economic and Monetary Union (1994), the Inter-Governmental Conference (1995), and social policy (1996). Table One shows approximate attendance figures for recent years:

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Table One

EURO-SIM Attendance

|                   | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| NYS students      | 131  | 114  | 137  | 130  | 133  |
| European students | 80   | 40   | 90   | 56   | 80   |

Source: Andrews 1996  
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Two major developments occurred in 1992. First, the simulation became intercontinental, alternating sites annually between Europe and Brockport. While in Europe in 1989-91, Andrews had met with Clesse and they agreed that their institutions would serve as alternating hosts. The series began with the 1992 simulation in Luxembourg, which centered on Common Foreign and Security Policy. Second, the New York Consortium for Model European Community Simulations (NYCMEUS) was reorganized and chartered under New York State law as a not-for-profit association. The founding members were Canisius College, Colgate University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Hamilton College, Skidmore College, St. John Fisher College, the SUNY colleges at Brockport, Cortland, Fredonia, Geneseo, Jamestown Community College, and SUNY at Buffalo. SUNY New Paltz and New York University have belonged since 1995 and North Adams State (Massachusetts) was an associate member in 1995. We should note that the rich mix of American institutions is as much a point of pride and purpose as any other feature.

Along the way, the name of the simulation has changed from SUNYMEC, to SUNYLUX, to NYSLUX, and is currently known as EURO-SIM, while the name of the sponsoring organization was changed to New York State Consortium for Model European Studies and Simulations (NYSMEUSS). The changing names reflect the growth in the schools represented, the US-European venue, as well as an expansion of the mission of the consortium.

EURO-SIM '96, the ninth simulation in this series, met at

the European Union facilities (Parliament, various meeting rooms) in Brussels and the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), Wednesday-Saturday, January 3-6, 1996. European students came from nearly twenty institutions from throughout the EU located in Germany, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Belgium, Holland, France, Denmark.

As noted above, in 1992, arrangements were made with the Institute of European and International Studies in Luxembourg and the simulation was held in Luxembourg, in exquisite and overwhelming facilities utilized by the EU and made available to NYSLUX without charge. For EURO-SIM '96 this changed and changed without warning at the last minute: crisis, if not panic would not be too strong to describe the initial reaction by a number of faculty advisors. Initially, NYSMEUSS and the IEIS/Lux had agreed that the 1996 simulation would meet in Luxembourg. At the beginning of October, we learned the Luxembourg government would charge a rental for use of its European Conference center (previously available without charge) that we could not afford. The Consortium improvised a contingency plan to move to Belgium with the KUL as our host. Within ten weeks the entire project shifted to the KUL. As matters now stand, KUL will be the permanent European site, politics and money permitting.

Within a space of ten weeks, our colleagues at KUL, in effect, arranged a major conference for nearly 300 persons. This involved lodging, food, transportation (from the Brussels airport over two days to Leuven, from Leuven to Brussels for two days of meetings, around Leuven), meeting rooms, considerable sums of money transferred from fifteen New York institutions to Belgium, printed materials, amenities, social functions, and arranged for speakers (e.g., Belgian Prime Minister, senior EU officials). The good news is that it was done and done by academics with no experience as conference organizers; the bad news is that things did not always go well -- lodgings were scattered, youth hostels with minimum accommodations were used, delegations were scattered, and contacts were not always made for incoming flights. These difficulties were considerable and, as we shall see, colored student responses.

## **Literature**

An assessment of EURO-SIM draws on at least three distinct pedagogical literatures. One relevant body of literature is that of gaming and simulation, which directly connect with the design and implementation of EURO-SIM. As students work as teams both in preparation of the simulation and throughout the exercise, the

pedagogy of cooperative and collaborative learning also directly impacts student outcomes. Finally, educators are increasingly interested in learning the effect of computer-mediated instruction on student learning. Simulation participants are encouraged to subscribe to a EURO-SIM LISTSERV and to utilize the WWW in conducting research on the simulation topic. In addition, we draw on perspectives from organization theory: our discussion on this point will be found below.

EURO-SIM is in its tenth year. Why only recently, one might ask, are consortium faculty turning to systematic assessment--rather than continuing to rely on anecdotal evidence--of student learning? In an era of tight budgets, the academy (and arguably, the public colleges and universities have received the most pressure) is increasingly called to defend its curricula, pedagogy, and faculty workload. Certainly the desire to prove that the simulation goes beyond a fun exercise for students becomes more critical when an overburdened faculty must think in terms of trade-offs. But beyond the connection between productivity and assessment, there is a renewed interest in non-lecture-based pedagogical techniques that run the gamut from distance learning, computer-assisted instruction, role-playing, collaborative learning, internships, and study abroad. EURO-SIM employs collaborative learning, computer-assisted instruction, and role-playing--an ideal forum in which to test the effectiveness of non-traditional teaching. Finally, the role of technology becomes increasingly controversial as widespread computer use moves beyond word processing and spreadsheets to electronic mail and surfing the World Wide Web (WWW), yet without data linking increased student learning with such computer use, many in the academy are skeptical as to whether student access to discussion lists and the WWW are actually facilitating learning. In conclusion, EURO-SIM is a unique pedagogical instrument which offers us the ability to assess both the role of technology and innovative pedagogical techniques.

The strength of simulation and game-playing lies in the ability of teachers to raise questions as well as formulate answers regarding the connections between what they have experienced and the lessons they draw from those experiences (Thatcher 1986). Simulation and game-playing grew out of the humanist school of psychology founded by Carl Rogers in the 1960s, the inspiration for the spread of group learning activities on college campuses in the 1960s and 1970s. And although simulation and game-playing were incorporated into college curricula almost three decades ago, as a method of teaching simulations still remain outside of the educational mainstream for at least six reasons (Boocock (1994, 176-177): difficulty in documenting effects on learning; never

demonstrated consistent significant advantage over other teaching methods in the acquisition of knowledge; never able to obtain clear evidence that academic gaming has special value for students who underperform in lecture-based courses; the effects of game on players' attitudes have been difficult to document; critics continue to point to the possible unintended consequences of a game's lack of verisimilitude; and simulation games may a victim of the times, simply out of fashion because the intellectual atmosphere differs markedly from that of the 1960s and 1970s.

Do students learn from role-playing in a simulation? Greenblat (1975, 282) finds that there is little evidence students learn more when taught by games than by conventional methods, but "there is no evidence that they learn less...games seem to be at least as effective as other modes of teaching." Greenblat (1989) points to the need for stronger evaluative measures, while recognizing that game designers often do not have the resources to develop and administer reliable evaluation instruments.

Much of the difficulty lies in the technique itself. Lederman and Ruben (1984) point out that "the instructor's role is not to teach, but to facilitate learning." How can one measure the effectiveness of this approach vis à vis classroom-based instruction?

Collaborative and cooperative learning is an increasingly popular alternative and/or supplement to lecture-based teaching. Rogers (1983) long argued that group interaction would enhance learning because it taps into students' social needs. Studies indicate collaboration enhances learning (Abercrombie 1960; Bouton and Garth 1983; Johnson and Johnson 1987; Lambiotte, J. et al. 1987; Sharon 1980; Slavin 1983; Wilson 1981). Another commonly-cited goal of collaborative learning is the preparation of students for the teamwork--developing interpersonal relationship skills, sharing and integrating sophisticated information--which is expected of college graduates in a postindustrial economy (Beckman 1990; Carroll 1991; Dertouzos, M. et al., 1989; Reich 1987; Ventimiglia 1994).

Although practitioners of collaborative and cooperative learning agree that student involvement enhances learning, the two techniques differ. In cooperative learning, which was pioneered in education, sociology, and educational psychology, the instructor assumes more direct responsibility for the group learning process than in collaborative teaching. The teacher employing a cooperative learning pedagogy is more likely to structure group activities, assign roles within teams, circulate

in the classroom observing student interactions and listening to conversations (intervening when the he or she feels it is appropriate), hold debriefing sessions, and provide training in small-group social skills. In a collaborative learning setting, on the other hand, instructors do not actively monitor groups nor do they attempt to answer substantive questions; neither do they intervene to resolve groups conflicts or indeed, in any internal group dynamics. This model is more commonly found among social scientists whose dissatisfaction with lecture-based courses is tied to issues of democracy and authority structures (American Association of Higher Education 1995).

The impact of computer-assisted instruction on learning, particularly the widespread use of e-mail and the internet, is a relatively new area of scholarly inquiry. While Yakimovicz and Murphy (1995) report positive student experiences with electronic discussion groups and e-mail messaging, Harasim (1993, 123) argues that given the lack of familiarity of e-mail messaging, discussion lists, and the WWW by many students, instructors cannot expect all students to make full use of computer-mediated learning without faculty guidance and, importantly, assessment of the frequency and quality of these interactions. Seaton (1993, 49), in a similar vein, writes that computer-mediated communication is an "effective mode of creating an interactive community of learners, but that its potential to develop self-directed learning resides outside the technology itself and in the pedagogy of the course."

Harasim advises (1993, 120) that:

"group projects and discussions must be reconceptualized so as to function appropriately and effectively in the online environment. The instructor must devise tasks and procedures that can make text-based messaging among participants feel and function like group work, despite the fact that students will be working 'together' at different times and in different locations."

Seaton (1993, 52) links collaborative learning with computer-mediated communication, finding that students must go through "a developmental evolution," with the early stages more instructor-driven; as students intellectually mature in their critical-thinking abilities, a "community of self-directed learners is appropriate...from information dissemination to critical inquiry and from instructor dominated to collaborative

learning."

While most of Harsim's and Seaton's conclusions are drawn from teaching courses completely on-line (or distance education), Wild and Winniford (1993) successfully used e-mail to link students in the same course at different universities to work jointly to solve a specific decision-making task, a model more closely resembling the goals of EURO-SIM in the context of computer-mediated communication.

### **Organization of the Simulation**

From the start, the simulation has been fairly straightforward and the basic model has been continued with little changed: each participating school was assigned a role as a country delegation (e.g., SUNY Cortland played "United Kingdom" for the first several years) and each student was assigned an individual role as an "alter ego" (e.g., Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, MEP, member of ECOSOC).

The school playing the Commission is charged with preparing a draft resolution for submission to all bodies (European Parliament, European Council, Council of Ministers, and ECOSOC); in addition, students from the school playing the commission have typically prepared lengthy position papers on various topics related to that year's overall topic.

Institutions included in EURO-SIM '96 were the European Council; the Commission, the General Affairs, Social Affairs, and European Affairs Councils; the Social Affairs and Employment and the Women's Affairs Committees of the European Parliament; the Section on Social, Family, Educational, and Cultural Affairs of the Economic and Social Committee; COREPER II; and the Political Directors of the Social Affairs Ministries. Caucuses included eight parliamentary groups, three ESC groups, and fifteen country delegations: students are not spared exposure to the full, complex, Byzantine, and often incomprehensible processes of the EU. <sup>2</sup>

With respect to students there are four additional points.

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<sup>2</sup>There is an enormous literature on EU processes, the role of Eurocrats, and the democratic deficit. The ongoing IGC seeks to address these issues. For a valuable overview, see Stanley Hoffman, *The European Sisyphus: Essays on Europe, 1964-1994* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 301-312.

First, what might be termed the "culture" of EURO-SIM is important. As indicated above, this is not a top-down or faculty-organized simulation. From the start this simulation has been organized very much as a student or faculty-student affair (depending on one's interpretation). There is a student director, the counterpart of the primary faculty director ( aka advisor) on each campus; students sit as members of the governing council and executive committee of the consortium; student interns play a significant organizational role when the simulation is in Europe (and are paid to do so). The actual degree of student involvement, however, differs within and between institutions.

Second, student preparation differs. Basically there seem to be three basic approaches, depending on the institution and/or the advisor: (a) EURO-SIM is treated as a student club or activity; (b) EURO-SIM is a credit-bearing course, or is part of a credit-bearing course; (c) EURO-SIM is a little of both, with students having the option to receive credit or not. Accordingly, and a reflection of the fiscal circumstances mentioned above, faculty involvement is also variable: for some, it is "part of load," for others it is a voluntary effort; for others, it is "above load."

Third, a set of procedures and guidelines is always distributed to participants of EURO-SIM; the consortium does not prepare, as some simulations do, a manual containing relevant documents, terms of the discussion regarding the issues, and the like. All knowledge must be acquired by the delegation on each campus, which will differ from school to school, depending on how the simulation is structured on each campus. Dissemination of information is at the discretion of participants and faculty advisors; for instance, for EURO-SIM '96 one colleague reprinted and distributed at NYMEUSS expense copies of background documents on the social charter relevant to the main topic; but in general, there is a *laissez faire* approach to preparation. The lack of a common knowledge base among American students and between American and European students (some of whom are graduate students studying only the EU or EU law) was remarked upon informally by a number of sometimes intimidated American students.

Fourth, cost. Rather than turn to a commercial student travel agency, we have done it ourselves in order to keep costs down. In general, over the three European ventures the cost to each student -- exclusive of meals, incidentals, extra travel, souvenir, beer, passport -- is in the \$600-\$700 range. We have attempted to secure external funding to help students with costs.

Some institutions pick up the entire cost; others pick up none. In between, some advisors and students manage to raise some funding. European students coming to the United States on alternate years also face cost problems, although a weak dollar has helped the Europeans.

One final point. The consortium maintains two LISTSERVs, one for advisors and one for students, faculty, and, indeed, anyone who wants to subscribe. This facilitates communication about arrangements and logistics.

### **Data Collection**

Two methods were employed for collecting data. First, in order to monitor student reactions, to solicit their suggestions for improvement, and to assess the learning process as it operates in EURO-SIM, we have designed and administered an exit survey for the 1994-1996 simulations. The survey incorporates both closed- and open-ended (1996) questions. We distribute this during the last day of the meeting, normally at a general assembly of the entire group of participants in order to reach as many of the students as possible. Our response rate is somewhat mixed--in 1995 we reached just under half of the approximately 200 students who participated in the Brockport simulation. In 1994 (Luxembourg) and 1996 (Leven, Belgium) we were more successful in reaching the participants. It is difficult to know what bias this uneven coverage introduces in our response set, but it does seem likely that those who continued to participate through to the end would represent some of the more serious and committed simulation participants.

Faculty and graduate student advisors also serve as rich sources of data as seasoned participant observers. Much can be learned by talking with advisors about their observations of the simulation.

### *Analysis of Responses on Closed-Ended Questionnaires*

In this section we report on some of the general patterns we have found in student reactions and perceptions of EURO-SIM, their preparedness, and the effects stemming from their participation. While we wish to report results from the last three simulations for comparative purposes, this presents some difficulty because the survey instrument has been significantly modified in each of the three years. The first survey (1994) was brief and focused heavily on the level of student satisfaction with the physical, administrative, and logistical aspects of the

simulation. As faculty became more interested in assessing student learning, the range of questions was broadened considerably in 1995 and again in 1996. The 1996 survey adopted a much more refined and sensitive scoring system to capture nuances the simpler scoring adopted in 1995 would subsume. For these reasons, it has been necessary to incorporate details of the scoring and occasionally question wording for each of the years in the tables that follow, and it should be borne in mind that any comparisons across years should be carefully qualified. In some cases, we restrict our attention to one or both of the last two surveys.

In addition to reporting general results for all students, we focus on exploratory analysis of variations in student responses on two dimensions. First, given the disparate organizational arrangements governing the participation of European and American students, and in light of the different level of familiarity with the EU and its operations across these groups, we are interested in learning about the different experiences and reactions of European and American participants. Second, one of the dimensions of interest in assessing American student responses is whether or not students receive any academic credit for their participation. We are interested in knowing whether the quality of participation and/or the incidence of successful outcomes is in any way contingent upon the awarding of academic credit. Note also that receiving credit is not the norm: 52.4% received no academic credit, 13.7% received one credit, 12.1% received two credits, 15.3% received three credits, and 6.5% received four credits, which presents a sampling problem: one to four credits are not identical categories.

Table Two presents some of the general student reactions over the three years to various aspects of the simulation experience. Looking at the overall assessments, it is clear that by and large our participants feel positively about their experience. The overall assessment index, summing individual "positive" outcome measures (some of which are listed separately in the bottom panels of Table 2), suggests that students generally feel they have benefited significantly from participating. This is particularly true for the 1995 and 1996 simulations, where students' assessments averaged 5 on a 6 point scale. These positive ratings are more remarkable in light of the fact that the simulation changed European venues between 1994 and 1996 (see discussion above); apparently, however, these growing pains did not detract from the overall quality of the learning experience in the eyes of the participants. Majorities in the last two simulations feel that it is "highly realistic," and for those who have experience with other simulations, most feel that EURO-SIM rates as well or better.

| =====  |        |       |
|--|--------|-------|
| Table Two  |        |       |
| Summary Student Reactions to Simulations, 1994-1996                      |        |       |
|  | 1994   | 1995  |
| 1996   |        |       |
| <u>Overall Assessments</u>   |        |       |
| Overall rating of simulation (mean index scores) <sup>1</sup>            | 2.6    | 5.04  |
| 5.03   |        |       |
| How realistic was simulation (% rating "highly realistic") <sup>2</sup>  | n/a    | 58.2  |
| 52.7   |        |       |
| Would "certainly" participate again                                      | 41.2   | 35.3  |
| n/a  |        |       |
| EURO-SIM compared to other simulations                                   | 54.8   | 80.0  |
| n/a  |        |       |
| (% "better," "much better")  | (N=17) | (N=8) |
| Summary comparison with Model UN simulations <sup>3</sup>                | n/a    | n/a   |
| 2.31   |        |       |
| (N=32)   |        |       |
| <u>Advance Activities</u>  |        |       |
| Overall quality of academic preparation                                  | 17.6   | 22.4  |
| n/a  |        |       |
| (highest category)   |        |       |
| Overall quality of academic preparation                                  | n/a    | n/a   |
| 4.61   |        |       |
| (mean index score, 1-7)  |        |       |
| Contacted alter ego for information?                                     | n/a    | 42.0  |
| 36.4   |        |       |
| Used NYSLUX-L  | n/a    | 40.2  |
| 49.6   |        |       |
| <u>Activities During Simulation</u>                                      |        |       |
| Time spent with students from across the Atlantic ("a lot") <sup>4</sup> | 50.4   | 30.6  |
| 58.7   |        |       |
| <u>General Results of Participating in Simulation</u>                    |        |       |
| Improved negotiating/debating skills <sup>5</sup>                        | 46.5   | 74.7  |
| 50.8   |        |       |
| Improved interpersonal skills <sup>6</sup>                               | n/a    | 77.3  |
| 67.2   |        |       |
| Contributed to personal development <sup>7</sup>                         | 27.5   | 22.4  |
| n/a  |        |       |
| Improved career/job prospects <sup>8</sup>                               | 30.5   | 27.9  |
| 28.7   |        |       |

<sup>1</sup> 1994 index has a range of 1-5; 1995 and 1996 indices have a range of 0-6, with high scores representing positive evaluations in each case. Indexes are constructed by summing the number of positive outcomes students report from participation in the simulation.

<sup>2</sup> 1995 measure is top two categories (very, somewhat) of a five-category measure; 1996 measure is top three categories of a seven-category measure

<sup>3</sup> 1996 measure is a summary index measure (0-6 range) based on four specific EURO-SIM/Model UN comparisons. <sup>4</sup> 1994 and 1995 figures are the top categories of a four category measure; 1996 figures combine the top two categories of a seven-item measure.

<sup>5</sup> 1994--"a lot/significantly"; 1995--"yes"; 1996--top two categories of strong agreement in a seven category measure.

<sup>6</sup> 1995--"yes"; 1996--top two categories of strong agreement in seven category measure.

<sup>7</sup> 1994-1995--"a lot/significantly"

<sup>8</sup> 1994-1995--"a lot/significantly"; 1996--top two categories of strong agreement in a

seven category measure

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Most students work in advance of the simulation, studying background information on the topic, their alter ego's country and its EU policy, and the institutions and processes of the European Union. In general, students come to the simulations feeling well prepared (roughly a fifth feel they had excellent or outstanding preparation for the 1994 and 1995 meetings). Over a third in the last two meetings made an effort to contact their alter ego for information and advice, and the proportion of participants using the simulation's electronic discussion list (NYSLUX-L) has grown to almost half in 1996 (the list was not available to 1994 participants).<sup>3</sup> During the simulation most students found ample opportunity to interact with their counterparts from across the Atlantic--an important measure of whether Americans are clustering with Americans, and Europeans with Europeans. There is a small qualification on the point: prior to 1996, all students were lodged together, whether residence halls at SUNY Brockport or student hostel in Luxembourg. In 1996, students were scattered through Leuven (a sizeable city) so that clustering (especially through informal and after hours social activity) were diminished. We return to this point below.

In terms of specific outcomes students associate with their participation, clearly the strongest and most consistent effects come in terms of improvements in their negotiating/debating and interpersonal skills. This is testimony to the intense and absorbing nature of the simulation proceedings: students clearly respond favorably to the opportunities they encounter to persuade, cajole, bargain, and otherwise influence other participants. Smaller, but still significant, proportions report more general positive outcomes in terms of their personal development or career prospects. We will return to examine these measures more closely below.

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<sup>3</sup>Unfortunately, we did not include a question which measures the extent to which e-mail messaging and NYSLUX-L were used. Was the discussion list used primarily to keep informed of transportation and housing arrangements? How important was the list in contacting cohorts? Exchanging information about the simulation topic? Debating country positions? Nor does our question distinguish for us whether the student reads the list or post to it. Please see "future assessments" for general recommendations.

One of our interests is in the motivations students have for participating in the simulation. Certainly one of the attractions for all students is the opportunity for relatively inexpensive overseas travel. In addition, in 1995 and 1996 we asked students to rate five potential reasons for their participation: the results of this--for all students--are broken out separately for American and European groups in Table Three.

Table Three

*Reasons for Participating in the Model European Simulation, 1995-1996*

|                                     | 1995 <sup>1</sup> |       |      | 1996 <sup>2</sup> |       |      |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|------|-------------------|-------|------|
|                                     | All               | Euro. | U.S. | All               | Euro. | U.S. |
| To learn more about Europe          | .84               | .70   | .98  | 4.07              | 4.75  | 3.84 |
| To acquire new interpersonal skills | .76               | .88   | .71  | 6.08              | 6.35  | 6.15 |
| To improve public speaking/debating | .69               | .73   | .70  | 5.48              | 5.29  | 5.35 |
| To make new friends                 | .71               | .76   | .70  | 5.59              | 5.67  | 5.40 |
| To meet students from overseas      | .85               | .88   | .84  | 5.53              | 5.38  | 5.74 |

<sup>1</sup> Mean scores based on dummy variables (0=No; 1=Yes)

<sup>2</sup> Mean scores based on variables scored between 1 and 7.

Particular caution should be used in interpreting US/European differences in the 1996 survey, as a problem in survey design makes it impossible for us to assign the majority of students to one of the groups (46%, or 62 of the 135 students could not be assigned). While we have considerably more confidence in interpreting the results with respect to US/European differences from the 1995 survey, we have decided to report the figures for 1996 as well (The overall figures for the entire group are reliable for 1996.)

Student motivations are at once complex and multifaceted: significant majorities agreed with each of the reasons for participation provided by the survey. Interestingly, Europeans (1995 survey) identify "interpersonal skills" as a motivation, possibly reflecting a desire on their part to have an opportunity to develop their (already formidable) English language skills. Americans are more likely, on the other hand, to participate in order to "learn more about Europe." Meeting students from overseas is an important motivator, regardless of the student's citizenship.

Participation in the simulation is intense and taxing: particular roles call for special personal and administrative skills. All roles call for knowledge of EU policies,

institutions, and processes. Preparation for the simulation, particularly for American students, is expected and supervised by a faculty or graduate student advisor. To assess how students felt about their advance preparation, we included a battery of questions in the 1996 survey tapping these issues. The results are presented in Table Four for all students, but are also broken out by American/European students and for those receiving academic credit.

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Table Four  
**Difference in Levels of Perceived Student Preparedness, 1996**  
 (Mean Scores, 1-7 range)

| Academic                                    | No       | All      | Europeans | Americans |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Credit                                      | Academic | Students |           |           |
|   | Credit   |          |           |           |
| Training in parliamentary procedure         |          | 4.15     | 3.95      | 4.12      |
| 4.05  | 4.20     |          |           |           |
| Role as chair of meetings                   |          | 4.05     | 3.23      | 4.44      |
| 3.76  | 4.35     |          |           |           |
| Way European institutions operate           |          | 5.04     | 4.73      | 5.12      |
| 4.74  | 5.25     |          |           |           |
| Policies of country of alter ego            |          | 5.07     | 5.05      | 5.00      |
| 5.07  | 5.02     |          |           |           |
| In challenges facing the EU on policy issue |          | 5.20     | 4.77      | 5.23      |
| 5.02  | 5.28     |          |           |           |
| In positions of interest groups             |          | 3.81     | 2.91      | 4.04      |
| 3.93  | 3.79     |          |           |           |
| In ideologies of party groupings            |          | 4.67     | 4.22      | 5.16      |
| 4.64  | 4.66     |          |           |           |
| Overall sense of Preparedness               |          | 4.61     | 4.14      | 4.75      |
| 4.46  | 4.74     |          |           |           |
| (index, 1-7 range)                          |          |          |           |           |

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In general, participants feel they are well-prepared for their involvement: only in parliamentary procedure, chairing meetings, and on the positions of interest groups is there evidence of any significant concerns among students as a whole. European students generally feel less well prepared, perhaps a reflection of the non-faculty-directed nature of recruitment of many European students to the simulation. American students, by contrast, are prepared by a faculty advisor and work as a team in the months leading up to the simulation. One surprising finding concerns the difference between the sense of preparedness for those receiving/not receiving academic credit. Many of the

faculty wondered if students participating for credit might work harder in preparation, and would therefore rate their sense of preparedness highly. Our results, however, suggest this is generally not the case: students participating for intrinsic rewards rather than course credit were more likely to feel adequately prepared (apart from two important aspects--country policies of the alter ego and the positions of interest groups) than others. We must hasten to add, however, that we are not directly measuring the students' knowledge base, but instead asking students if *they felt prepared*. As teachers, we know many instances where disappointed students have performed poorly on examinations who have insisted they were well prepared. These findings point to the need to better measure student attainments of knowledge, a discussion of which we will defer to the final section of this paper.

Although the primary motivation for organizing EURO-SIM is to teach students about the EU while providing an exciting and rewarding educational experience, the consortium also promulgates non-academic objectives such as career development and social development. Tables Five and Six break down the 1995 and 1996 respondents by European/American groups and whether the simulation

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Table Five

**European/American Differences in Perceived Outcomes, 1995-1996**

|  | 1995 <sup>1</sup> |          | 1996 <sup>2</sup> |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
|  | European          | American | European          |
| American   |                   |          |                   |
| Learned more about European affairs<br>4.36  | .71               | .95      | 3.79              |
| Enhanced interpersonal skills<br>4.91  | .91               | .71      | 4.37              |
| Improved public speaking/debating skills<br>5.05                                   | .77               | .76      | 4.78              |
| Made new friends across the Atlantic<br>4.07                                       | .84               | .93      | 3.78              |
| Improved understanding of other cultures<br>4.68                                   | .81               | .95      | 4.38              |
| Overall summary of positive outcomes<br>5.40<br>(1995: 0-6 range; 1996, 0-7 range) | 5.08              | 5.20     | 5.14              |

<sup>1</sup> Mean scores for dummy variables (0=No; 1=Yes)

<sup>2</sup> Mean scores for measures with a possible range of 0-6, with high scores representing more positive outcomes.

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 Table Six  
**Academic Credit and Perceived Outcomes, 1995-1996**  
 (Mean scores)

| Credit   | 1995 <sup>1</sup> |           | 1996 <sup>2</sup> |    |
|--|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|----|
|  | Credit            | No Credit | Credit            | No |
| Learned more about European affairs<br>4.23      | .95               | .69       | 3.95              |    |
| Enhanced interpersonal skills<br>4.95            | .77               | .77       | 4.50              |    |
| Improved public speaking/debating skills<br>4.31 | .74               | .75       | 3.86              |    |
| Made new friends across the Atlantic<br>4.08     | .93               | .82       | 3.98              |    |
| Improved understanding of other cultures<br>4.78 | .88               | .84       | 4.44              |    |

<sup>1</sup> Mean scores for dummy variables (0=No; 1=Yes)

<sup>2</sup> Mean scores for measures with a possible range of 0-6, with high scores representing more positive outcomes.

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 carried formal academic credit.

With respect to American/European differences in perceived outcomes, both the 1995 and 1996 surveys suggest American students are generally more positive about the experience than Europeans. Only on the dimensions of improving interpersonal and debating/negotiating skills--areas where most European participants are likely to feel the taxing of their English language skills--do European students rate more highly than American (and here the pattern only holds for 1995). It seems likely that some of this difference can be attributed to the different knowledge bases students bring to the simulation. European students are clearly less likely to learn about Europe by talking to Americans than *vice versa*. Intuitively, we also believe that some of this difference is due to the fact that the American students were on balance younger than their European counterparts (late teens/early twenties vs. early- to mid-twenties) and were not experienced international travellers.

As in the study of motivations, the issue of receiving

academic credit for the simulation produced equivocal results. In the 1995 survey, it appears those who were receiving credit were slightly more positively disposed to the outcomes we inquired about than were others. In the 1996 results the opposite pattern emerged: those receiving no academic credit were considerably more likely to report positive outcomes from their experience than those who received at least some academic credit. But as in the finding reported above, it would be premature to conclude that academic credit has no bearing on (or even exerts a negative influence, as the 1996 data indicate!) a student's experience and level of preparedness: a number of factors could confound these results--from dissatisfaction with housing arrangements, homesickness, to a broken heart. Again, it points to the weakness of our survey instrument and our overall evaluation design. <sup>4</sup>

Responses on the closed-ended questions should be interpreted with caution: certainly it would be premature to counsel changes in policy (such as eliminating academic credit) based on these results. We are gratified, however, to have found some of the anecdotal evidence corroborated by the hard data: students feel positively toward their experiences and there is little variation across groups by continent. One potentially interesting finding, however, is that Europeans seem to be looking for, and finding rewarding, the more practical experiences of negotiating and dealing with people in English, while Americans seem to seek out and value more the substantive and intellectual concerns of the simulations.

### **A Note on the Organization of Simulations**

Before we begin our analysis of responses on the open-ended

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<sup>4</sup>One possible explanation for this finding rests on cognitive dissonance theory. Someone who is receiving academic credit for the simulation is almost like one who is getting paid to participate and may be more free to be honest in his or her responses. For someone not receiving academic credit there may be greater cognitive dissonance to report negatively. The group receiving academic credit has, in effect, already been rewarded, whereas the group not receiving academic credit must find their rewards from the simulation experience. (Also, grades serve not simply as "pay" but as a coercive mechanism: one adviser instituted grades simply as a way of insuring preparation and attendance during the period leading up to the simulation.) The question of equity persists: is it fair to expect students to spend so much time preparing for an activity for which they are not paid and receive no credit when that time might be more profitably spent in courses for which they will receive a grade. It would be interesting to learn the responses from the following question: "Do you think you should receive academic credit for your work preparing for the simulation and the simulation itself?"

questions, it might be helpful to discuss and place EURO-SIM in the context of organization theory. To begin with, we regard the simulation itself as a formal organizational structure. Selznick (1961, 19) utilizes Chester I. Barnard's definition of formal organizations as a "system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons." From this perspective, formal structure is what Selznick terms "an instrument of rational action."

Selznick (1961, 19) goes on to argue that:

As we inspect these formal structures we begin to see they never succeed in conquering the non-rational dimensions of organizational behavior. The latter remain at once indispensable to the continued existence of the system of coordination and at the same time the source of friction, dilemma, doubt, and ruin.

The reason for this, he argues, is that rational action systems are inescapably imbedded in an institutional matrix in the sense that (1) it is "itself only an aspect of a concrete social structure made up of individuals who may interact as wholes, not simply in terms of their formal roles within the system", and (2) the formal system itself is subject to pressure from an institutional environment -- which we interpret as the external institutional, social, and inter-personal environment -- to which it must adjust (Selznick 1961, 20).

Selznick (1961, 20) notes, in words pregnant in meaning for pedagogues pursuing simulation instructional strategies, "that which is not included in the abstract design...is vitally relevant to the maintenance of the formal system itself."

Selznick's theoretical perspectives alert us to several aspects of a simulation and as we reviewed our preliminary data we found it best understood in these terms:

(1) *A simulation is a system.* It is composed of a number of elements that are related to and interdependent on each other. Changes in part of the system have consequences--or may have consequences--throughout. In this respect, Merton's classic notion of "unintended consequences" is particularly powerful. Ignore changes or disturbances in one part of the system and pay a price in another. At times, unintended consequences improve upon the intended outcomes (student learning, the quality of the student experience); at times, the result may be Selznick's friction, dilemma, doubt, and ruin.

(2) *Individuals are wholes.* It may be common knowledge,

but is easily forgotten and ignored, especially by academics, many of whom, may, as part of their professional culture, shy away from encountering students "as wholes." The students interact, in other words, not simply in their "roles" within the simulation "game" or "theatre," but as "whole individuals" with complex needs and wants and reactions and as "role players" vis à vis others. As they are with each other twenty-four hours a day, they are inescapably in touch with each other as whole beings. We utilize the concept "whole," we hope, not in some touchy-feely New Age sense, but in the sociological way in which Selznick and others use it. We address this below in a suggested typology of faculty advisors. To return to the language of drama and theatre, we also note that a simulation very much demands elements of "role" playing: suspension of disbelief (i.e., "I am not a student from SUNY Cortland, I am the Austrian Foreign Minister", "I am not a student at Fredonia, I am a supporter of Jean Le Pen") and "staying in role." Anything that dislodges the role-playing affects the rational or manifest intention of the formal system.

(3) *The external environment is crucial.* We are dealing, however, not with one, but with many external environments -- environments that, in some sense, change as the students and faculty move from first acquaintanceship to some sense of familiarity, move from their home campuses to Europe, move daily from one venue (meeting room, youth hostel, social encounters) to another. The changing environment, one of the most stimulating aspects of this cross-national simulation, is also, we believe, a key element in the growth of students as individuals in the Rogerian sense.

(4) *Above all, Selznick's notion that rational structures -- and, we should add, rationally defined goals and purposes -- do not succeed in conquering the non-rational dimensions of organizational behavior.* These are difficult terms. To begin with, we can take rational here to refer to the formal purposes of the organization and non-rational to refer to the informal purposes participants bring to the formal structure and, indeed, impose on it. We can also take non-rational to refer to the purely personal and affective aspects -- these range, as we found, from culture shock (happily not apparently significant), fatigue, desire for social activities (drinking, romance, tourism), to frustration with basic need elements (food, lodging, security of possessions) and with the simulation itself.

### **Hard Lessons**

In reviewing the open-ended comments of the 1996 survey--the

first for which we have such data--we were torn in two directions. On one hand, we looked for immediate practical lessons for ourselves and others. On the other, we wish to draw conclusions that might advance the pedagogical literature on gaming and simulation. But because our initial experience at assessment is so recent, what follows is in the form of somewhat discursive observations -- more than a field diary, as it were, less than a final report. Our main point is that the Selznick framework above has given us a way of looking at student comments and considering comments of participant observers in a more systematic fashion, but not yet to the point of developing a generalizable model.

### **Site Matters**

We wish to return to a point about the background and the aforementioned task of in arranging the simulation in Leuven with only ten weeks notice. Quite apart from the practical problems (e.g., finding enough lodging at a reasonable low cost), there were other aspects to the question of site. The original site in Luxembourg had the following advantages: Luxembourg is a small, easy to negotiate, and comfortable city. The atmosphere is a combination of "old European atmosphere" and new European chic. It is a walkable city: students found quickly they could walk to and from bars and restaurants, while advisors quickly realized they did not need to worry about them. Moreover, after two previous experiences, the faculty advisors were familiar with Luxembourg. All the students were housed together in one youth hostel and the interaction between Americans and Europeans flowed very, very well. As all students were in one place, students could caucus and talk; in the Luxembourg hostel in the evening one found everywhere small groups of students passionately "into it." Quick bonding relationships were formed and were genuine. When we departed in the past, hugs and tears accompanied the leave-taking. Transportation was not a major problem because the site was reachable from the hostel by bus and by foot.

In Belgium, we were confronted with a host of logistic problems and, in Selznick's terms, these problems created an environment, which affected the students as "whole" individuals causing some difficulty in holding to the role. For example, dispersing the student into three or four hostels and hotels through the city of Leuven meant that students did not interact as much socially with a broad range and, more important, the constant interaction, the caucusing of other students, was less possible. Students tended to cluster with those from their home campus or those who shared lodging. Interaction between American and European students was diminished. Our sense was--as a

Selznick perspective predicts--that diminished social bonding leads to diminished intellectual bonding. A final night "dance" which was sponsored could not make up for weak contacts the previous three-four days.

In Belgium, the simulation was split between Leuven (two days) and Brussels (two days). Transportation was a problem. IT is not helpful to have a bus disappear carrying a whole delegation or the European Commission. Split between two cities, two new sites had to be mastered. The interior architecture of EU buildings is as complex and difficult to master as the EU's formal decisional procedures.

Site matters as an environment permitting the system to maintain its coherence, integrity, and purpose.

### **No, They Are Not Adults**

What does it mean to say that the students are "whole individuals." It meant that this particular group of advisors needed to put aside a set of attitudes drawn from a particular slice of academic culture -- "they are adults," "we are only responsible for the simulation," -- and deal with a range of non-academic issues for which their training, experience, and inclination had not prepared them. Advisors from community colleges or certain small institutions appeared to have no trouble in this respect, suggesting the obvious: academic culture differs according to school (Ivy/little Ivy--university--public four year vs. community college/small Catholic) and we suspect possible background of advisors in terms of professional values and aspirations.

One cannot be trusting, naive, or indifferent and succeed in taking a group of high-spirited, young adult and late adolescent Americans overseas. Any simulation puts additional demands on advisors: especially cross-national ones. We note that organizationally, EURO-SIM has been casual about certain things and so far nothing has happened of a serious nature--no illness, accident, death, disruptive social situation--although in some past simulations, some students have been so thrown off by the digs provided they went into culture shock and wished to return immediately to the states, whatever the cost. ("Spoiled" is one characterization.) This time, it is true, an American female student and a Dutch male student disappeared overnight--not to worry, it turned out harmless. But we discovered we did not have evacuation waivers signed, did not have the students' passport numbers, photocopies of passports, and could not answer questions put to us by the American Embassy. While students are legally

adults, the advisors of EURO-SIM have been slow to accept a much broader and not welcome set of formal and informal responsibilities. The culture of the university and the culture of EURO-SIM over the years (chiefly, self-reliance) carries the potential for serious trouble, not to say legal liability.

### **What Did the Students Say?**

It is difficult to convey all the things that did not go right or the negative often very vocal and emotional reactions to them. Nor is it possible to describe all that went well. Not surprisingly many students were very much put out by the difficulties with logistics and arrangements. "Horrible" was one of the milder statements. What was quite surprising was the number of students who either did not mention the arrangements in their open-ended comments or showed a high degree of tolerance and understanding and still found the experience worthwhile. To some extent, the reactions were bipolar: some students simply could not abide the student hostel (spartan conditions, shared facilities, low cost) while others found them not only acceptable but "loved them." The final conclusion, however, is that a preoccupation with such things meant, as organizational theory predicts, that the means could overcome the ends --i.e., the non-rational could displace the rational.

One is not surprised to realize that meeting other students, especially European students, registered as more important than the learning experience about the EU itself. While one might expect this of young people abroad, we believe that more pedagogical work needs to be done so that the simulation does not become simply an excuse or a vehicle for getting overseas. For some students, this was clearly the case.

### **How Student Reactions and Learning are Shaped**

In reading the comments we noticed students from the same school tended to have the same opinions. Reactions were less individualized than one might expect and apparently more shaped by the student's immediate peer group. To the extent that one might hypothesize that a "good" overall experience produced better "learning," a good *collective* experience by a delegation would enhance both group and individual learning. We will describe the lesson drawn from the case of one delegation. Students from one school arrived without their advisor (whose plane had been delayed) and reacted negatively and violently to the very spartan youth hostel; this anger did not subside for days (if ever) and came through very clearly in open-ended comments). Other students recorded that they were embarrassed by

these Americans. Students from two other schools who were at the same hostel reacted very well and came to "love" the place and the Belgian proprietress--"we even went back to stay," one of them told one of the authors two months later. The "first impression" was the formative impression and it was shaped by the peer group from a complex of factors (dashed expectations, lack of travel experience, fatigue, possible "partying" on the New Year's Eve flight, for one group, and low cost, spirit of adventure, and camaraderie for the other).

There are some important common-sense lessons to be drawn, but repeating them is, we hope, all to the good. The "whole" student counts because the non-rational and non-purposive will overwhelm the formal simulation process. Our advice: pay close attention to students and their needs and dispositions. Two students who have had to sit in the Brussels airport alone all night are not going to be in a good mood and their anger will not subside quickly: it will also communicate itself to other students and intensify the preoccupation with personal discomfort and arrangements gone bad. An inexperienced student traveller who expects at least a modest hotel will not be pleased with a low-level youth hostel, however clean and neat, especially if adequate briefing has not been done. Account for jet lag and culture shock, even in a modern European setting. While many students have travelled abroad before, many have not. They are eager but apprehensive, self-confident but nervous, sophisticated but naive, self-assured but worried.

### *Student types*

There is some need to differentiate student types and to ask how learning expectations affects each. While academics tend to distance themselves from students, in some senses or in some institutions, they do in fact make assumptions about students, as their private gossip and conclusions reveal. Students differ at home, they differ abroad.

Would it be useful to create a typology of student types? Here is a suggestive typology, advanced for the purpose of discussion:

**a. Serious students.** These students are in it to learn and while they are eager to enjoy themselves and open themselves to new experiences, learning is important -- at least in behavioral terms.

**b. Here to Party.** Some students are along because it's time to party and a cheap way to Europe (or another country in Europe). These are destructive because often they take the work lightly, do not concentrate, and are a distraction.

**c. Mature.** Mature students bridge the other two.

It will not come as a surprise that European students (or American students from families who lived abroad) fall into this category more than American students. They get down to business in very serious and professional ways during the day. For them, EURO-SIM is not a game: it's about real issues that affect their lives, today and tomorrow. Further, for many it is a kind of pre-professional activity. Some of these Europeans seemed quite distressed not only, as they saw it, by the ignorance and immaturity of American students y frivolous distractions. We recall the loud anguished cry of a Scottish woman, a law student specializing in EU law, "they haven't even read the bloody Maastricht treaty." We recall a French student, clearly headed for the ministry of foreign affairs, whose intensity, single-mindedness, and sophistication produced a harsh impatience for his American counterparts. On the other hand, a number of Americans performed at a very high level while some of the European students displayed a woeful ignorance of the politics of the EU and of their own countries.

**d. Bemused.** Some students seemed not quite sure why they were there or what they were to do. This was sometimes true of European students who were recruited in EURO-SIM without really knowing what it involved.

### **Reflections on Aspects of Pedagogy: Text and Performance**

In reviewing the open-ended student comments, we were struck by the number of bitter remarks about how the European Parliament (EP) was ignored and about other aspects of the process. What was striking is that their experience, for whatever reason, is not wholly different from the EP in the real world. While we need to look more closely at the data on this point, it did produce the following reflection: Is it the case that in preparing the students we simply did not pay enough attention to

the fact that the EU is a particularly difficult institution to understand and therefore to simulate? We know this from the comments of scholars, journals, and EU participants themselves. But when students are inadequately prepared or when reflective discussions are not arranged, they blame the simulation and not the object simulated.

We conclude that one of our major on-going problems is the failure to fully and adequately instruct students in the complexity of EU process and politics. This is clearly, it must be emphasized, not true of all students or all the delegations. Some of the students were extremely well-prepared--impressively so--and this was a reflection of the expertise of their advisor/teachers, of the dedication of their advisor/teacher, and/or of the fact that EURO-SIM was a full course at their institution, complete with lectures, exams, student presentations, and papers.

The lesson we take away from this: good preparatory instruction is needed and advisors cannot leave it to the students themselves. Students must know more about the process in institutional terms, the political stands of parties and the perspectives of interests (not easy information to come by), the political and organizational culture of the EU and the bureaucrats of Brussels. We must guide them toward better integration of the policies and outlook of the countries they represent into their knowledge base.

Related to this is another consideration. In doing simulations, we use the language of the theatre, as we have done above: playing a role, the setting. This pedagogical element is crucial for it brings into the play the non-rational element and marries it to the rational. Setting, for example, is a palpable element. The EU facilities--the chamber of the EU, the soft seats, the panelled walls, the microphones, the instant translation, the very "halls of power"--have a transforming effect on the students. "This is for real" and not for play. "Awesome", was *au courant* American word; "brilliant," the British word. A great deal was lost, in our observation, when we returned to the workaday world of classrooms at KUL in Leuven. Similarly, the classrooms at the American venue do not have the same effect.

Other aspects of theater--of role-playing--are equally important. Dress has an impact: just putting on ties and jackets, dresses and suits, or other professional dress transformed these baseball-hatted, T-shirted gum chewers into young professionals. But we do not go far enough. The students

fell out of their roles at the drop of a point of order and resorted to the food-fight parliamentary behavior they learned in high school and perfected in college. American students-- political science majors in particular--appear to love nothing more than a good parliamentary fight and they go at it with an intensity that leaves European students bewildered and often angry at what they see as bizarre and immature behavior. All our careful coaching about formal means of address, courtesy, diplomatic language speaking to the brief of one's "alter ego" or "country" was lost very quickly. Why? By stressing the formal issues of the simulation (i.e. social charter), we neglected to teach them the rhythm and culture of diplomatic intercourse and EU behavior. But this, again, may be more connected to pedagogical style, i.e., a rejection of cooperative learning in favor of collaborative.

From a pedagogical point of view, it is not enough to prepare students before the simulation. Our observation, based on the quality of comments in the survey instrument, is that the formal learning must be an on-going experience. Any simulation must have built into it, we should think, debriefings, discussion, opportunities for analysis and discussion. Another would be a final "grand seminar." This need is reflected in the comments that seem to reveal that students did not learn, did not fully and explicitly understand that they had learned something, and often felt adrift. Experience without reflection, analysis, conclusion and thought is not experience that teaches. If there is no structured opportunity for constant discussion, a great deal will be lost.

### **Advisors**

One of the more surprising results from the survey was the role of advisors. Because the faculty's unarticulated and half-conscious premise about the simulation is that students are self-reliant and autonomous adults, the position has been, as noted above, that the simulation is a student activity and the faculty should remain detached -- to be "on call" at best. "Let the students do it" was the watchword for advisors, "do not interfere." One of the authors (HS) indeed felt guilty when he did interfere: was he violating some key norms in coaching, in monitoring attendance, in encouraging, in hand-holding, in cheering his students on when they did well? Another author (LL) has consistently fought her instincts to attend country delegation meetings, concerned that her mere presence would alter the group dynamics. Could these political scientists be too indoctrinated in the pedagogy of collaborative teaching, so enamored with democratic decision-making and student control,

they have lost sight of the faculty's role as manager and facilitator?

Over the years, it seems, each faculty member has come to do what came naturally to his or her personality or the circumstances of his or her institutions: some involved themselves deeply, to the point of staying with students when separate faculty lodging was available (something, we were told, not always appreciated by the students); some faculty did not come to Leuven; some were rarely to be seen, except when faculty gatherings were convened (council meeting, faculty seminar), some remained at a concerned but discrete distance--on the sidelines, as it were. We make no judgment about the "best" role, but we suggest that there are several models of faculty/advisor type, although in reality advisors probably shift from role to role or assume mixed roles:

1. Pal -- just one of the students -- overtones of 1960s student culture.
2. Den Mother--sheparding the students around, attending to TLC needs.
3. Chaperon--watchful, assuming responsibility for their behavior and decorum.
4. Coach--coaches the students during the simulation.
5. On Call--"I'm available if you need me."
6. Absentee--the students can handle it on their own.

In terms of student reaction, we were surprised to find the students very much wanted far greater involvement by the faculty, both as teachers (coaches) and as whole individuals (1-3 above). This calls for more analysis, but the first reading is this: the students wanted faculty to be both coaches and quite possible Den Mothers.

This interpretation is consistent with student answers in the closed-ended questions, which are reported in Table Seven.

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Table Seven

**Role of Faculty and Graduate School Advisors**

|   | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Faculty/GSA should help students<br>prepare for the simulation      | 92.2      | 4.7          |
| Faculty/GSA should be actively<br>involved in the actual simulation | 51.2      | 28.3         |
| Faculty/GSA should attend country                                   | 59.2      | 24.8         |

delegation meetings

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Note that 92.2% agree (62.5% strongly agree) faculty and graduate student advisors should help students prepare for the simulation, while a majority of the students agree that faculty and graduate student advisors should be actively involved in the simulation and attend country delegation meetings (21.3% and 27.2% strongly agree, respectively). The change to a diminished need for faculty in the simulation itself vis à vis preparation for it is a welcome finding.

The lesson from the open-ended portion of the survey is this: advisors in this kind of simulation probably should be more involved with the students as young people abroad in a foreign land: be prepared to answer questions about everything from currency exchange, rail schedules, lost cameras, homesickness, and the like. At times one of the authors (HS) felt like George Orwell in his classic essay, "Shooting an Elephant." Our tentative conclusion: the more involved the faculty member, the better the overall learning experience. In short, each and every meeting in the simulation is a kind of class.

This is unexpected advice. Basically, as we know, college faculty--especially political scientists--are not generally trained for this sort of thing, as high school teachers, camp counsellors, youth group leaders (e.g., church groups, Boy and Girl Scouts) or social workers may be. We live in a more rational world and assume a degree of autonomy and self-reliance, even when we know it is not present.

Faculty involved in simulations need to understand they play multiple roles. They need to know when to be a den mother, a chaperon, a camp counsellor, a teacher, and, the adult who knows when to bug off and take a walk. In terms of our own experience, advisors need to move from the rational to the affective to enhance learning, defined in cognitive terms. Or in the language of pedagogy, know when and how to move through lecture-based to cooperative to collaborative learning.

### **Future Assessment**

Our preliminary assessment of EURO-SIM has brought to the forefront six important avenues to strengthen student learning and assessment of learning: (1) the need to redesign our

evaluative measures to test for knowledge attainment, (2) understand if the awarding of academic credit enhances student learning, (3) encourage student use of computer technology, (4) train students in parliamentary procedure, (5) initiate faculty discussion of the effectiveness of alternative pedagogies, and (6) discover the impact of role assignment on student performance and attitudes.

First, until a standardized pre-test and post-test of knowledge-based items is administered to participants of the simulation, we cannot hope to discover if there is a significant correlation between student learning about EU processes, institutions, and the challenges facing the EU and participation in the simulation itself. What does the simulation add to the student's knowledge base that was not already learned in a traditional classroom setting? Certainly a positive correlation would move us well beyond advocating simulations primarily for development of debating and negotiating skills, important as these may be.

Second, in an era of faculty pressured by their administrators, college boards, and in the SUNY case--the Board of Trustees and the Governor--to increase their teaching loads, should the simulation be considered as departmental and college service or part of the faculty's teaching load? Clearly, designing a knowledge-based evaluation should help us come closer to answering this question. It might also be interesting to determine if students who are receiving academic credit expect the same level of involvement in faculty as students not receiving academic credit in preparing for the simulation. (Crosstabs would provide us with this answer.)

Third, many faculty have wondered if the simulation experience could be enriched if students at different institutions talked with each other prior to the simulation. E-mail messaging and the creation of distribution lists could be required: for instance, students could contact their counterparts at other institutions. Such an assignment is easily monitored by requiring students to copy their faculty advisors (and the quality of these interactions could be graded, could it not?) We might consider setting up chat groups as well: e.g. there could be a chat group for PMs, Foreign Ministers, party groups of MEPs, and the European Commission. All of this work could be done without too much additional burden on faculty. Our experience has been that there is usually at least one student at each institution who is conversant enough with the internet and WWW to create the necessary links.

The faculty could also perform a content analysis of the

quality of system-generated usage of the discuss list (NYSLUX-L), separating out logistics, social queries, requests for information, debate and so forth.

A particularly promising project has been taken up by Professor William Muller at SUNY Fredonia who is currently constructing an NYMEUSS homepage with hypertext links to relevant EU documents. Again, electronically monitoring home page visits will provide us with useful information as to extent of student usage.

It would be helpful to redesign the survey to include a specific (open-ended) question in order to solicit information from students (and faculty) about the usefulness of e-mail messaging, NYSLUX-L, chat groups, the home page, and the WWW in preparing for the simulation.

Finally, the draft resolution, which the two institutions playing the European Commission (one American and one European) co-author, could benefit from internet exchange and the adoption of a standard for groupware software (such as Daedelus or CommonSpace) which all faculty agreed to learn and teach to their students. This would greatly facilitate the sharing of both the writing and editing of the draft resolution.

The fourth challenge we face is finding a more effective way for all students to better learn parliamentary procedure and the chairing of meetings. Some faculty and students hold mock simulations. Perhaps a standard training exercise could be developed regardless of the simulation topic and role assignments. As for learning more about interest groups, information about these groups could be added to NYMEUSS's home page.

A fifth concern with assessment is how might a student's role assignment affect both student learning and attitudes toward EURO-SIM. Performing crosstabs with data from the 1995 and 1996 surveys with questions about adequacy of preparation, experiences throughout the simulation such as chairing a meeting, future plans, and development of interpersonal goals seems a logical first step.

Finally, we need to assess ourselves, not just the students. Does our pedagogy provide a good fit for the goals of the simulation? Given that it is impossible for us to create a control and experimental group due to confounding factors (e.g., for credit? major of the students? faculty or graduate student

advisor? faculty teaching as overload?), how might we determine the most effective teaching methods? Probably the most unequivocal guidance we receive in the 1996 survey is that students expect faculty involvement both before and during the simulation. Faculty would do well to launch a discussion of their pedagogical techniques and their perceived roles both before, during, and after (debriefing?) EURO-SIM.

## **Conclusion**

EUROSIM faculty and graduate student advisors need to focus on the impact of the environment, attend to all parts of the simulation system, treat the student participants as whole human beings, and be sensitive to the potential that a variety of external and non-rational elements can impact on the learning. In an international experience, the bonding between European and American students and the broadening of the horizons of American students -- something they comment on about themselves -- is an important goal to be cultivated. But in terms of the formal objectives that deal with the EU (in our case) an inattentiveness to the variables we specify can lessen and perhaps destroy the kind of learning that faculty hope for, substitute an unanticipated learning, and, in the end, leave many students no better off intellectually than they were at the start. One has to work very hard to make it more than an easy, cheap, fun way to get to Europe and pick up a couple of credits toward graduation at the same time. Just because students have had a good experience and because they are likely to be tolerant and generous in their judgments, the failures will not be apparent to the eye -- especially if the faculty eye is also on the train leaving Brussels at 14:19 hours for Paris.

### **Some Practical How-To-Advice**

For colleagues who wish some quick practical How-To advice based on our experience and our review of the data, we can share these lessons:

- a. review goals and objectives--both formal (e.g., learning about the EU) and informal (e.g., getting to know European students well, social activities, etc.)
- b. there must be a strong focus on the pedagogical elements--before, during, and after the simulation;
- c. a close but appropriate teacher-learner connection should be cultivated, especially if the simulation is both complex and demanding;
- d. there should be a focus on role playing behavior in preparation;
- e. to advisers:
  - i. know thyself: academic educators are not professional conference organizers and there is a critical mass in terms of size, numbers, finances, complexity of arrangements in terms of travel, food, lodging, liability, and the like that must be watched very carefully and not left to chance;
  - ii. be prepared to be more involved with the students in all roles and especially the unavoidable and informal TLC roles.
- f. build assessment into the simulation from the outset.

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