"GAMING IN EDUCATION AND E-LEARNING: MOCK-TRIALS, MOCK-ELECTIONS AND CRISIS-SIMULATIONS FOR POLITICAL SCIENCES AND COMMUNICATIONS COURSES"

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ABSTRACT

Among recent e-Learning Pedagogical Strategies, gaming and crisis-simulation games are increasingly used in recent years in university-learning and Blended-courses as an out-of-context effective tool for role-playing and education, especially in Law Schools and Business Schools. Gaming covers several sub-fields (war-games; Law School Mock-Trials; Tailor-made educational games in Business; playing commercials-off-the-shelf games; programming and code-learning; games to promote social inclusion of marginalized groups; Model U.N. and crisis-simulations) and are recently enhanced by the impact of using multi-modality and on-line education to apply several concurrent modes of presentation/communications, which are now being applied also in Political Sciences and Communications courses. In recent years, the much-touted future role of the *Net-Generation* of children and youth who grew-up with computer games should find a natural educational outlet in gaming, but this has been limited to the entertainment field, rather than university education, or in computer coding and programming, where gaming (both on-line and face-to-face) has only marginal effects, due to students' inability to grasp theoretical concepts, poor preparation or poor motivation. Thus, despite already existing methods of gamification in education, its promise as a didactic method in schools and universities is still at its beginnings. This paper analyzes as case-studies the emerging impact of gaming simulations in Political Sciences Blended-courses at Saint Leo University, USA and in Communications courses at the Pedagogical University of Kraków, Poland.

KEYWORDS

Gamification, Gaming, e-Learning Pedagogical Strategies, Blended-Courses, Political Sciences, Communications, Mock-U.S. Presidential Elections, crisis-simulations, International Relations, Model U.N., Mock-Trials, War-games

1. ON-LINE E-LEARNING AND GAMING IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Since the 1990s, universities and schools in the West and increasingly world-wide have benefitted from the rapid growth of on-line e-Learning education, which has been spurred by the parallel impact of the Internet-driven technological revolution and the overwhelming public use of professional and public computer networks at cyclically lowering costs. This technological revolution in education has expanded the academic reach to both traditional (by increasing the availability of on-line courses alongside with traditional campus classes) and non-traditional student-populations (by providing cheaper on-line e-Learning alternatives to traditional campus brick-and-mortar academic programs). However, the overall percentage of tenure-track faculty which has steadily increased until the 1970s, has declined since, being first replaced by the ubiquitous rise of Adjunct-faculty on-campus, followed by exponential growth on non-tenured faculty in on-line academic institutions.

Thus, Western universities in the U.S. and Europe were the first to enjoy massive growth rates after World War II by expanding their earlier traditional brick-and-mortar academic reach from the male-dominant upper- and middle-class students to new inflows of veterans, women and lower-class youths, which was enhanced across-the-board demographically by the post-war long "Baby Boom" of 1946-60 to reach 8.6 million university students by 1970. However, by the 1970s, higher inflation in the operations-costs of higher education institutions provoked in-turn continuous rises in tuitions and student-debt, as well as a freeze in new tenure-track hires compared to the growth in Ph.D. programs creating highly-specialized student-mills. Then,

by the 1990s, U.S. and European universities experienced a twin unexpected gradual decline of traditional university enrollments and state contributions to public universities. This forced all academic institutions to match cyclical rises in tuitions with across-the-board cost-savings in infrastructures, while halving permanent, tenure-track faculty by stalling new replacement tenure-track hires, despite widespread generational retirements, who were replaced by a rising sub-class of cheaper massive amounts of part-time Adjunct-faculty (skyrocketing from 105,000 in 1970 to 755,000 in 2019), composed of ABDs ("All-But-Dissertation" Doctoral students), graduated Ph.D.s unable to land permanent jobs, and professionals teaching on-the-side.

These latter dual trends continued at the onset of the Twenty-First Century, despite the nation-wide positive rise in universities' student enrollments to 20 million during the 2000-2015 "Baby Boomlet" years, with consequent higher retentions and revenue-streams, because all university institutions have remained saddled with fast growth in institutional operation costs, rising tuitions, declining state contributions to public institutions and smaller endowments (especially private colleges). Thus, as the Adjunct-faculty underclass has continued to rise, many Western universities have set aside initial skepticism to embrace the fast rise of Internet-based e-Learning academic revolution as a major cost-saving educational tool to expand enrollments among traditionally under-served student populations, while overcoming local constraints (remote areas, military bases, abroad).

With new distance-learning delivery-systems and wide-range academic courses for credit coming first from "for-profit" business-academic providers (like Phoenix, Argosy, DeVry, Keiser, Cappella), also many traditional universities have joined e-Learning by accepting many credits-transfers from accredited on-line distance-learning providers, while slowly developing their own "non-profit" academic blended classrooms and e-courses. By the 2000s, traditional universities also accepted credits-transfers from any accredited on-line distance-learning academic provider, while many also offer their own on-line classes in conjunction with traditional campus ones. This has spurred in Western higher education systems (North America, Japan, East Asia, Europe) competition between public, private and "for-profit" business-academic education providers to control these new educational markets and reach working professionals, working class, military (bases and abroad) and low-income social groups (stay-at-home parents, urban poor, rural poor and immigrants).

E-Learning digital modes of education-delivery are seen as "easier" to grasp, more "democratic" and inclusive for non-traditional students, not usually part of the dominant traditional education system, while also providing needed "critical-thinking" skills, rather than traditional regurgitation of knowledge. The high growth-rate and popular use of on-line education programs stimulated the acceptance of both on-line and blended courses in both virtual "for-profit" universities and more innovative campus-based traditional academic institutions. Yet, e-Learning has expanded the existing pool of non-traditional students with new on-line course-offerings at cheaper costs than traditional campus education, rather than systematically reduce rising operational-costs and tuition costs, or increase new tenure-track Faculty hires.

Within this technological and e-Learning revolution, in recent years the rise of the *Net-Generation* of children and youth who have grown-up with computer games since age-2 is now seen as a natural educational outlet through gaming. But in Western university education and computer coding or programming, gaming (both on-line and face-to-face) has had only marginal effects, due to the students' inability to grasp theoretical concepts, poor preparation or poor motivation. Thus, despite already existing methods of gamification in education, so called gamification as a promising didactic method in schools and universities is still at its beginnings. Instead, gaming has evolved especially in Law Schools and Business Schools as an effective role-playing educational tool for Mock-Trials and case-studies. Gaming covers several sub-fields (war-games; Law School Mock-Trials; Tailor-made educational games in Business; playing commercials-off-the-shelf games; programming and code-learning; games to promote social inclusion of marginalized groups) and are recently enhanced by the impact of using multi-modality and on-line education.

2. GAMING IN POLITICAL SCIENCES AT SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

This paper analyzes as limited case-studies the emerging impact of gaming simulations in Political Sciences Blended-courses at the private "non-profit" Catholic Saint Leo University in the United States and in different universities in Poland for Education and Communications courses. Saint Leo University under the visionary leadership of its 8th President Arthur F. Kirk Jr. (1997-2015) has pursued innovative technological strategic goals to enhance the institution's teaching excellence and national reputation as Florida's modern, tech-savvy Catholic University. In three cycles (1998-2005, 2005-2015 and 2015-2020) Saint Leo University applied new

technologies to enhance teaching excellence and standardization at both traditional campus and far-flung non-traditional Distance Centers for its 8-weeks On-line and Blended courses, while applying audio-visual technologies, standardized Master-Syllabi and rigorous assessments to campus and on-line classes.

By 2005, Saint Leo University switched to a university-owned on-line platform (Learning Studio leased from Peterson), standardized both on-line and campus teaching with 8-weeks Master Syllabi and Internet resources for campus and Blended-courses, while redeveloping university-owned on-line courses-content (PIE, outcomes, assessments). Since 2015, on-line teaching shifted to a new university-owned on-line platform D2L and redeveloped courses, while imposing D2L also on-campus as multi-use skeleton platform for grades, assessments, permanent content-loading and Blended-courses, which allows also the inclusion of gaming.

In the Political Sciences discipline, games and role-playing have developed in Graduate schools since the 1980s-90s out of earlier military war-games, which in the past few years have been revitalized in academia through educational game case-studies. Indeed, currently the use of gamification is becoming very relevant as a promising didactic method in universities, beyond traditional Law and Business Schools. In this context, Saint Leo University's Political Sciences faculty (Professor Marco Rimanelli and Director of Polling Institute Frank Orlando) have striven with limited resources to reapply to their classes the academic use of international crises-simulation, Model United Nations, U.S. Presidential elections and mock-trials.

First, Political Sciences students were exposed since 2010 to education gaming based on free-standing Model U.N. at local and regional competitions (Florida Southern College and University of Pennsylvania) by training motivated student-members of local ΠΣΑ (Pi-Sigma-Alpha) Honors Society for Political Sciences and International Affairs. Then, with the ability to rely on the more flexible D2L computer platform, this was followed in 2014-2017 by the creation of specialized Political Sciences courses where Director Frank Orlando applied gaming through the university-wide "Alternate Reality Learning Experience" (ARLE) concept to teach both U.S. Presidential Elections and Mock-Trials for the two new Minors of "Campaigns and Elections" and "Legal Studies". Faculty participation university-wide was encouraged under the 9th President Bill Lennox Jr. (2015-18) and Dr. Jeff Borden, Chief Innovation Officer at Saint Leo University, with his Teaching and Learning Innovation Department funding the ARLE experiential learning.

While many Political Sciences programs take part in some form of experiential learning or simulation based on political phenomena, there are a variety of factors that made ARLE a unique experience for the students involved. The vast majority of simulations in Political Sciences are contained within the confines of a single course, but at Saint Leo University, the ARLE experiential-learning combined many classes, departments and schools. In 2015 Director Orlando's new upper-level "Presidency" class first applied the ARLE experiential learning project and repeated it in 2016-2020 with the 2016 and 2020 U.S. Presidential Election in his newly-developed "Campaigns and Elections" class through learning-objectives and assignments. Director Orlando's courses provided the chief players, with other courses pooled in planning and execution of campus-wide multi-disciplinary simulations with 100 students.

Saint Leo University's Social Sciences Department faculty have promoted more creative opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning and the 2015 "U.S. Presidential Election ARLE" simulation was the first one related to applying gaming to e-Learning. It involved not only the "Presidency" students, but also a "Communications" class that aided the campaigns in honing their message, a "Psychology" class that ran analyzed the effectiveness of the rival campaign strategies, two "Communications" classes on "Social Media" that helped to handle the *Twitter, Facebook* and *Instagra*m pages for the rival candidates, a "Multi-media Management" class that filmed campaign commercials and filmed the climactic debate event, an "Education" class (at a Center campus hours away from University Campus) that acted as an education interest group, and an on-line "Criminal Justice" class that provided a security plan for the event. There was such interest in the event that the only negative feedback was from faculty members disappointed that their classes were not invited to participate, except as external resources for policy experts to help create party-platforms.

In planning the event, involved faculty met weekly from March through Fall 2015, while facilitating cooperation between students in each class was of utmost concern, especially because most courses met at different times (and some at remote campuses or in different learning environments), while natural rivalry emerged between students of different disciplines. Even though several classes were taking part in the 2015 "U.S. Presidential Election ARLE", "Presidency" students were the focal point of the experience: students from that class provided the rival Presidential candidates, Vice-Presidential candidates, Party Leaders, Campaign Managers, Communication Directors and key policy experts. All students were allowed to apply for any positions and party teams (Republicans vs. Democrats), but final "casting" decisions were coordinated by Instructors. The Presidential candidates were the centerpieces of the experience and needed to act in

ready-made commercials, conduct interviews and participate in several debates. Vice-Presidential candidates had similar duties and participated in their own Vice-Presidential debate. Party Leaders were responsible for compiling their respective party platforms and shaping general policy. Campaign Managers were tasked with coordinating strategy. Communications Directors were in charge of media requests and messaging. Policy experts focused on specific issues and wrote reports that comprised their party's platform and researched topics that were useful in debate preparations.

It is important to note that these students were not just imitating real life politicians, and there was no requirement that the ARLE Simulation's political platforms needed to align completely with their counterpart in reality. In order to protect the students involved and separate their personal life from the ARLE Simulation, the Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates were given fake-names and background-stories provided by the Instructor who approved any student "tweaking" their fake-biographies to personalize their candidacies.

The ARLE "U.S. Presidential Elections" simulation ran for almost the entire 2015 Fall Semester. During that time the campaigns were afforded a great deal of autonomy to pursue the strategies that they best believed would lead to victory. Along the way, both campaigns performed in debates, filmed commercials, produces flyers and buttons, engaged in voter outreach and wooed interest groups for their support. The culminating event was a Mock Presidential Debate, moderated by top students from other classes. The debate was modeled on the 2016 Presidential debates, but the questions were original and created by Instructor Orlando with input from students in other disciplines. Neither campaign had access to the debate questions beforehand, but in addition to agreements on format, their rival campaigns were able to mutually decide what issues would be focused on during the 90-minute debate. This led to a situation where students spent a great deal of time preparing for the event, because the prize was around the corner. At the conclusion of the debate, audience members watching on a live *YouTube* stream were allowed to vote for the Mock U.S. President.

The 2015 ARLE Simulation became the all-encompassing focus for the students in the "Presidency" class. While some of their "colleagues" in other classes treated it as just another assignment, the goal for the "Presidency" students was to be all in. In order to facilitate this, the course assessments changed, but not the desired learning outcomes: readings were assigned and lectures presented on Presidential campaign strategy, but the total number of tests and quizzes was decreased. Instead, students were directed to focus their energies on carrying-out the simulation by applying what they had learned. They were graded not only on the effort and success of their performance as judged by the Instructor, but also on the evaluation of their final work by their teammates (with many team meetings taking place away from the classroom). Finally, students provided their personal assessment of the experience at the end of the semester.

The results of such experiential gaming were overwhelmingly positive. The event was attended by over 200 students, faculty and staff, with Saint Leo University President William Lennox Jr. providing opening remarks. Local media covered the events of the campaign, and students in the "Presidency" class were featured in radio interviews throughout the Tampa Bay area. Hundreds of people watched the final event on-line live on *YouTube* and cast their ballots. Students in this experience extolled the virtues of this type of experiential learning in their class exit-survey, with many declaring it to be the best course that they could apply towards their future careers. In fact, during the 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections of Donald Trump (R) vs. Hillary Clinton (D), one Senior was able to parlay their performance in the ARLE simulation into a job position with the Florida Democratic Party (despite portraying the Republican Vice-President candidate in class!). A final assessment in class showed how students learned from this game and interiorized the U.S. Presidential Elections.

The successful 2015 performance was repeated in 2016 with a completely new group of students. Students were made aware of the ARLE university exercise in advance of their registration to the courses, and this increased overall course enrollments to the maximum number capped by the University. The onus was on faculty to improve communication between classes, and to streamline the ARLE process. Because of the success of these type of events, ARLE exercises planned mock-elections every even year in Fall to capitalize on the excitement of campaign season and to maximize the educational element for students involved.

In odd Fall 2017, Political Sciences students in several multi-disciplinary classes ("Presidency", "International Relations", "Comparative Politics" and two classes in Criminology), were also integrated in a mock-trial called: "The Trial of the Century: Oswald". This was another ARLE organized by Saint Leo's TALI department that involved classes from across the university, including Criminal Justice and Multimedia Management. Again, planning began since the previous term to find a case not tried before and reflected back to the "real world". As Saint Leo's School of Arts & Sciences was commemoration the 1960s decade in a year-long celebration, the ARLE game focused o one of the most famous events from that era was the live-TV assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy in 1963 by Lee Harvey Oswald.

On account of the later dramatic subsequent assassination by the infamous Jack Ruby of Oswald on live-TV, while in Police custody, Oswald never stood trial for his unprecedented political crime and so took to the grave all secrets surrounding the assassination decision, which in turn syphoned out decades of conspiracies. This mock-Trial scenario offered an illusory experience where the truth could finally come out in a trial setting: instead of creating an "alternate universe" to conduct the trial of a "living, wounded" Oswald in 1964, ARLE focused on the facts of the trial and legal process. Since Oswald had been killed, this mock-criminal trial innovatively used a plausible fictitious scenario showing the Oswald's family seeking to cash in on a life insurance policy. But the policy would not pay out if the holder committed a felony. Thus, the Oswald family challenged the insurance company's decision to withhold benefits to his descendants through a civil trial to litigate the domestic aspect of the Oswald Case in our game: "Trial of the Century: Oswald!"

While students from Criminal Justice classes were arguing the case on strictly legalistic terms, Political Sciences students were involved as background experts: students in the "International Relations" and "Comparative Politics" classes acted as country and leadership experts on different governments and organizations that were interacting with the United States at the time of the assassination, such as the Soviet Union, European countries and NATO. Students in the "Presidency" class served as experts on a variety of domestic conspiracy theories (on who Oswald worked for) that have circulated over the past 50 years, including FBI, CIA, Mafia and/or foreign conspirators. Students learned a great deal about their subject area in the context of the larger class. This experience took place as a graded class project. Support was provided to both the plaintiff and defendant throughout the process until the trial at the end of the semester.

The ARLE faculty coordination team met regularly during the Summer 2017 to plan and develop the learning exercise, and then actual ARLE mock-trial took place over two-days in November 2017. The ARLE team was able to secure a respected former judge to preside over the trial in order to add another layer of verisimilitude to the proceedings. As with the mock-election the years before, local media covered the case as a learning exercise open to the public to attend. The jury was comprised of volunteers, and because of the high visibility of the experience, there was no shortage of students willing to join in. The mock-Trial staffed two juries, one that served as the actual jury, and the other that consisted of jurors that were eliminated after *voir dire*. Neither of the juries knew which of their groups was the actual jury whose decision was accepted by an actual retired Judge as guest.

In addition to the jury, dozens of students, faculty members, school administrators and members of the local community attended the trial. Within the University's blended-courses and technologies, this event was live-streamed across the world so family members and others curious about the outcome could enjoy the hard work of the participants, and other students from Saint Leo Centers in different locations. Most students in Political Sciences courses were called to the stand as expert witnesses in their respective fields, and successfully withstood examination and cross-examination, while sticking to their well-rehearsed researched version of events. In the end, the main jury found Oswald guilty and allowed the insurance company not to pay benefits to the Oswald family. Instead, the alternate jury (comprising dismissed members) found the opposite! In future mock-Trials, cameras will be in the deliberation room to record the jury's decisions as another post-fact learning tool.

This process was successful for all classes involved, including Political Sciences. All students were able to learn a great deal about an important period in political history from a variety of different perspectives (legal, domestic, international, communications, and conspiracies), but perhaps more importantly, they were forced to work on their individual critical communication skills and team-efforts, while faculty strove to coordinate multi-disciplinary assignments and the mock-trial between all classes. Preparing witnesses involves a lot of research, but answering hostile questioning in front of hundreds of people in a courtroom setting was a raw experience for many students and helped build their self-confidence in public speaking. By observing in this mock-trial context the interaction of the different elements of the legal system (judges, prosecutors, defense, jury, experts, witnesses, security), the ARLE game has emerged as both a solid blended learning tool and a recruiting ground for future careers-preparation, or Law School as professional goals.

Today, Saint Leo University's 10th President Jeffrey Senese (2018-current) continues innovative strategic goals ("Renaissance 2021", while cutting costs through infrequent annual ARLE multi-disciplinary mock-trials and mock-Presidential Elections, blending only Political Sciences and Criminologist students. Essential is to continue faculty supervision as a group, with both types of students and classes assembled together for briefings, because the negative element that emerged out of the intense preparation for ARLE mock-trials was the deep-seated rivalry and unwillingness to cooperate between students in Criminal Justice and Political Sciences, when the former classes, once in-charge of the trial, did discount the latter's expertise and recommendations, even refusing to use them as pre-trial experts because the Political Scientists' international

and diplomatic policy-papers and knowledge challenged the pre-ordained ways Criminologists approached Prosecution and Defense as a purely domestic legal proceedings with only minor international input. This enraged the Political Sciences students who strenuously insisted that all legal challenges (from either Prosecution or Defense) meant to prove that Oswald had, or had not, acted as a "foreign agent", and related conspiracies tied to this or that enemy countries (USSR, Cuba, Red China) or government agencies (CIA, FBI) or non-state actors (*Batistas* Cuban exiles, or the Mafia), did require detailed expert-witnesses (Political Sciences students) who were the only experts qualified to recount the geo-strategic role of the Cold War and positions of each major enemy countries to provide proof or debunking most conspiracy theories. Only in this way could the Insurance company legally debunk Oswald's family claim by proving his actions as part or not of a global conspiracy based on the Cold War. This clash of visions among students shows the danger of "tunnel-vision" in rigidly applying only institutional positions learned in class.

Finally, concerning applying games to International Relations (IR), security and international organizations, Statecraft Simulation offers 5 automated on-line commercial war-games for classes with scoring. Instead, Professor Marco Rimanelli experimented on a compressed ARLE model as a 2-days live war-game simulation on an important current international political crisis: "Crimea and Eastern Ukraine Secessionism: Russia vs. Ukraine/E.U./NATO/U.S./U.N., 2013-19". This could become at a graded Cap-Stone experiential assessment for both first-time students in introductory courses ("International Relations"; "Democracy") and more advanced classes ("Comparative Governments", "Diplomatic History/Foreign Policy", "International Law & Organizations"), by using the global crisis-simulation he previously launched in 2014 at John Cabot University in Rome, Italy, during his 2013-14 U.S. Fulbright-Schuman Chair Award. This IR crisis-simulation (Maidan Revolution, Crimea, Ukraine) has students from different Political Sciences classes re-enacting in person the current Russo-Ukrainian international clash (U.S./NATO/E.U./U.N. backing Ukraine with international sanctions against Russia for its sponsoring of pro-Russian Ukrainian secessionists (Crimea and East Ukraine).

This latest Saint Leo faculty-led gaming exercise mirrors traditional war-games (used at the Pentagon, U.S. State Department and CIA) in which the student-players are led through the crisis' timeline, key stages and actors to then develop a plausible future conflict-resolution scenario. This faculty-led war-game exercise provided student-players with background information on the timeline of the 2013-19 Ukrainian crisis and conflicting political interests pursued by the major Powers (Russia, Ukraine, U.S.A., Germany, Great Britain, France, China), international organizations (North Atlantic Treaty Organization/NATO, European Union/E.U., United Nations/U.N.) and non-state actors (pro-Russian ex-Ukrainian President in exile, pro-Russian Ukrainian secessionists in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, international media, demonstrators, terrorists). As all students become familiar during class-time with the basic issues at play, and each parties' claims and counter-claims, they also become able to re-enact the 2013-19 time-line of events and diplomatic duels in the first part of the gaming exercise during an initial two-days weekend war-game. Then they can re-enact with realistic confidence their chosen roles and take over specific *personae* out of the official players roles, often with most students re-enacting 2-3 different roles in multiple policy settings (based on numbers of roles vs. numbers of student volunteers).

Student-players rehearse the following IR actors and enact multiple policy roles: *U.S.A.* (U.S. Presidents Barack Obama to Donald Trump, Vice-Presidents, National Security Advisors, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of Homeland Security/C.I.A.); *Russia* (President Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov, Defense Minister, FSU Intelligence Chief); *NATO* (Secretary-General, Supreme Allied Commander-Europe/SACEUR, North Atlantic Council/N.A.C.); *E.U.* (President, Foreign Affairs Secretary, Security Chief, EuroParliament); *U.N.* (Secretary-General, Security Council 5 Veto permanent Powers—U.S.A./Russia/Great Britain/France/China—General Assembly; International Court of Justice); *pro-West Ukraine* (Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, Foreign Affairs Minister, Defense Minister, Intelligence Chief); *pro-Russian non-state actors* (pro-Russian ex-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych in-exile after the 2013-14 Maidan Revolution, pro-Russian secessionists in Crimea in 2014 and East Ukraine in 2014-19, pro-Russian demonstrators); and *non-state actors* (Media).

The key sites for policy-decisions to be debated and announced are: U.S.' White House NSC; Russia's Kremlin; NATO's NAC; E.U.'s Secretariat; U.N.'s Security Council and General Assembly; Ukraine's Kiev government; and pro-Russian secessionist hide-away. As a blended campus war-game all these policy players have to meet in different classrooms, relabeled by their flags, to develop decision-making positions and resolutions, and then announce them to both other international diplomatic counterparts in their own rooms ahead of their own decision-making proceedings, as well as public press-releases to the international media. On-line students at Saint Leo University Centers and military bases can also participate in this blended exercise through

instantaneous video-conferencing, experts and policy contributions and mini-videos on smart-phones via Discussion Board postings displayed on scroll-down screens, plus live-feeds.

In the second part of the gaming exercise during a follow-up two-days weekend war-game all student-players were able to re-apply their policy roles and national interests rehearsed previously along the 2013-19 timeline to a new rational possible alternative policy future for 2019 to bring this international crisis-simulation to a successful conclusion or an explosive surprise end. Thus, student-players were forced to pursue both free-wheeling (students-initiated from their respective policy roles) and controlled policy interactions (by faculty's hidden involvement to stir-up the diplomatic waters through secret initiatives or surprise events) with related responses and changes in their respective policy positions until they could arrive to an agreed conclusion spinning the same lessons-learned of the original crisis' timeline in whichever way the student-players saw it fit and logical as end-result of their polities and crisis-simulation.

In this context, the faculty made gaming more uncertain for the players by adding surprise interventions from hostile non-state actors: demonstrators; pro-Russian terrorists against Ukraine and secretly controlled by the Kremlin; or Islamic terrorists attacking a "soft" key international gathering as target of opportunity (U.N. or E.U. compared to "hardened" ones, like NATO or the U.S.A.) to provoke uncontrolled Western reactions and chaos. Thus, students-players rationalize each actor's current and desired policy positions vs. collective push-&-pull from the interactions of the others in a live, unscripted and uncontrolled IR war-game, promoting either some diplomatic conflict-resolution or an uncontrollable explosive escalation of the crisis into a wider war.

3. COMPUTER-BASED GAMIFICATION IN POLAND

In Poland the development of computer-based gamification has been on-going for about 20 years and its educational use is not much younger. This has been the result of the rapidly developing commercial market of computer games, with the simultaneous high level of competence of Polish computer programmers, which produced a boom in the creation of various types of native computer games in Poland. One of the elements of this trend is the computer design and production of games for education. Although it must be admitted that this is not a large segment of the national market for the production of computer games.

The most frequently used method of learning using gamification is reliance on so-called "serious games". In contrast to pure gamification, "serious games" do not rely on the use of game mechanisms in educational scenarios, but the use of games in learning. While games remain autonomous and can serve as entertainment, they also play an educational function. In "serious games", the educational effect is an intended side-effect. Applications with the use of simulation games are also common at leading Polish technical and military universities, as well as in Education and Communications courses at the Pedagogical University of Kraków.

In higher education programs and educational scenarios developed in Poland for about 10 years now, more and more often elements of gamification and application of "serious games" are applied to schools. This is due to projects aimed at improving the competences of academic and school teaching staff, financed by the Ministry of Education and the National Centre for Research and Development.

4. PEDAGOGY AND CONCLUSION

All these successful experiential-learning blended exercises in both countries have as educational goal to bring together both campus and on-line/Center students in contemporary IR war-games, mock-trials, mock-U.S. Presidential Elections and also traditional Model U.N. remote exercises. However, a good pedagogical criteria to systematically evaluate all these games in Political Sciences, Criminology and International Security is not really available, although these various games satisfy similar requirements, but are still works in-progress. The Saint Leo University faculty applied 6 pedagogical goals, by mixing written exams, learning-guides, videos of electoral candidates as mock-publicity spots or mock-Trials, rubric assessments and collective voting to select winners.

- The first pedagogic lessons-learned is that through planning and faculty control of all related learning materials and gaming exercise proceedings, the students will become exposed to the complexity of contemporary international diplomatic interactions or domestic political elections or legal scenarios (first pedagogic goal), giving them the ability and self-confidence through role-playing to arouse the interest and understanding of the public (in the game this refers to all participants and judges, as well

as through remote VTT sensing and video-recording all future viewers) in the different stages of the game-exercise (second pedagogic goal), while bring the student-players to live through their actions each policy-decision and consequences to the best of their academic abilities (third pedagogic goal).

- Thus, as much of the first pedagogic goal of the gaming is based on preparation before the actual game, both learning and assessments must initially rely on the traditional preparatory learning conducted within a structured university class along its scholarly discipline points to be reviewed and assessed through two written exams on traditional and interactive course materials (each 20% of course grade).

- The second pedagogic lessons-learned (second and third pedagogic goals) are attained through students prepping and oral application of their class studies and discipline-related previous knowledge to the related theme of the game-exercise (in this there is similarities between Political Sciences, International Studies and Criminology). Thus, students will form group-studies that prepare each members' stated positions (political postures and campaign elections, or international diplomatico-security postures, or Trial Prosecution vs. Defense arguments) and each team's respective roles, position-papers, communiqués and strategies (second pedagogical goal). Student-teams will morph into live action during a 2-days gaming-exercise as trained teams (be them countries and diplomatico-military teams running a war-game; or rival political parties and platforms vying for elections; or clashing arguments by Prosecution and Defense teams towards Judges and Jury/Audience), with each student taking on few different roles as leaders, experts or audience (third pedagogical goal).

- The third pedagogic lessons-learned (fourth and fifth pedagogic goals each at 10% of course grade) focuses on how the gaming-exercise eventually leads to a specific outcome for the winning team completing the third pedagogical goal through a voting selection, although the after-game debriefing with the faculty, staff and student-teams will attain a clearer understanding if the actual victory of one specific team was due to superior academic preparation, or sheer charisma by the winners in swaying opinions of participants, or a slow-slog among mediocre teams with the slightly better one edging victory out of the errors of the others (fourth pedagogic goal). This last point is very important in highlighting the lessons-learned for faculty to apply in future games, and for students to learn singly or collectively in teams to evaluate their own performance and their ability to evaluate others (fifth pedagogic goal).

- Assessments of the game-exercise's first 3 pedagogic goals (1-2-3 each at 10% of course grade) require the use of a single custom-designed rubric filled by the faculty at the conclusion of each goal by comparing visual and exercise-based observations of the each student's role-playing and activities.

- A second rubric can be added to evaluate as a technical pedagogic goal 4 (at 10% of course grade) the clarity of scope and result of each candidates' video spots or campaign forums for candidates in mock-elections (Political Sciences), or longer videos on teams performance in mock-trials (Criminology), or longer videos for the concluding moments of a war-game (International Studies).

- Assessments of the game-exercise's last 2 pedagogic goals (5-6 each at 10% of course grade) requires that the faculty use visual assessments and note-taking of the students' own ability as an audience to reward at the end of the game-exercise one team with victory through a collective secret vote (Political Sciences mock-elections or Criminology mock-Trials) or a collective assessment by a panel of judges (faculty and students team-leaders) on how clean or messy is perceived to be the end of a war-game to declare a presumptive winner (International Studies) as fifth pedagogic goal.

- The faculty then combines in a third rubric the students' own votes and an oral interview of all students and teams in a post-action oral analysis to draw a third rubric on gaming performance as individuals and teams, with extra-points for the winning team (as sixth pedagogic at 10% of course grade).

- All assessments for coursework exams (1-2) and gaming-exercise (3-4-5-6) in 3 rubrics are added to reach a max. score of 100 points as identified in the course's on-line electronic grading portfolio.

Finally, the costs of staging such experiential-learning blended exercises remains limited for multi-disciplinary or single-discipline classes coordination (regardless of cuts), while the game proceedings are filmed and posted on *YouTube* and the University's website as visual record to advertise academic activities and inside for future training of a new generation of student-players in similar annual scenarios.

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