



Rethinking US Nuclear Posture

Faculty Guide

Welcome to “Rethinking US Nuclear Posture,” an active learning simulation designed by Daisy Alliance. This experience is designed to give students a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the relationship between national security and nuclear weapons. Students will gain practical skills in diplomacy and negotiation while applying the concepts learned in the classroom to actual, real-world challenges. Active learning has numerous benefits, including increased engagement, retention, and critical thinking.

In the simulation scenario, a newly elected president has created the President’s Commission on US Nuclear Posture. Students will roleplay representatives from the US delegation, humanitarian initiative delegation, or civil society delegation, and are tasked with creating a set of recommendations for the US president to help the United States reduce its reliance on nuclear weapons and signal to the international community that the United States is willing to make a serious commitment to the global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regime. Through the game, students gain practical experience on national security issues, decisionmaking processes, and intra-group negotiations. Because international relations are not conducted in a vacuum, participants learn about competing interests and influences in the executive branch and how these

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factors affect national security decisionmaking. They will also gain an understanding of issue linkages and the challenges of developing foreign policy.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will gain experience in applying international relations concepts to practical situations.
- Participants will gain experience in inter- and intra-group negotiations.
- Participants will strengthen their understanding of key international relations concepts and theories.
- Participants will strengthen their understanding of the role nuclear weapons play in global security and power structures.
- Participants will strengthen their understanding of different perspectives and frameworks in international relations.

The student guide provides an overview of the issues under consideration, additional resources to aid in research of the issues and simulation preparation, and a role guide. Each module also contains a set of questions for participants to consider while working their way through the simulation. These questions serve as an excellent starting place for the debriefing or classroom discussion both pre- and post-simulation, as well as for any additional assignments you choose to assign.

The simulation is designed as a one-day extra-curricular conference, but it can be adapted to classroom use.

If you have any questions about running the simulation, please email the Daisy Alliance simulation coordinator at daisyalliance2006@gmail.com.

Instructions

Preparation

1. The faculty coordinator assigns students to the roles, although you may take participant preferences into consideration. There are three delegations—US delegation, humanitarian initiative delegation, and civil society delegation. Depending on the number of participants, you can assign students to either a general delegation, or have them represent a more specific role.
 - a. Recommended roles for the US delegation include the vice president; secretaries of defense, state, homeland security, energy, and treasury; attorney general; director of national intelligence; chairman of the joint chiefs of staff; national security advisor; chief of staff; and United Nations representative. More than one student can be assigned to a role.
 - b. Recommended roles for the humanitarian initiative delegation include representatives from Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, the Holy See, Egypt, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, and Switzerland. More than one student can be assigned to a role.
 - c. The civil society delegation primarily represents the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.
 - d. Delegations will need to speak as a single voice during negotiations.
2. Participants should prepare for the simulation by reading the student guide and recommended readings. It is recommended that faculty coordinators require students to prepare a policy memo ahead of time, as this serves for the basis of negotiations. If students represent a delegation together, one policy memo is sufficient; if students are assigned specific roles, each role needs to submit a policy memo (if multiple students are representing a single role, a single policy memo is sufficient).
 - a. Policy memos should be two to three pages long and include the following:
 - i. Identification of the delegation's goals in the situation under consideration
 - ii. Proposal of policy options to recommend to the committee chair
 - iii. Evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of proposed policy options
 - iv. Recommendation of which policy options the committee should forward to the president, along with justification
 - b. Policy memos should be submitted prior to the simulation for review by other students.
 - i. An online learning management system is a great place to submit policy memos and for students to interact prior to the simulation (paper copies of policy memos are also acceptable).
3. Additional research is strongly recommended. The module guides provide a number of additional resources, but participants are also encouraged to read the daily news for updates and find other resources to help them prepare for the simulation.

Participants in this simulation will learn about competing interests and influences in the executive branch and how these factors affect national security decisionmaking. They will also gain an understanding of issue linkages and the challenges of developing foreign policy.

Day of Simulation

1. The faculty coordinator can serve as the meeting's chair, or this role can be assigned to a participant.
2. After the meeting is called to order, delegations will give opening statements based on their policy memos (30 to 60 minutes).
 - a. If students are representing specific roles, each role should make a statement.
 - b. If more than one person fills a role, a single group statement is sufficient.
3. After opening statements, the meeting chair calls for moderated discussion. At this time, participants are expected to discuss and defend their proposed policies (60 to 90 minutes).
 - a. Participants may be called on in turn by raising their hand or placard, or the meeting chair may create an ongoing speakers list.
 - b. Participants, the meeting chair, and the faculty coordinator may also pose questions to specific members to elicit more detail about their policy proposals.
4. Following the moderated discussion, participants will break out into unmoderated discussion, giving them the opportunity to identify areas of compromise, negotiate with like-minded council members, and build consensus on their policy proposals (60 to 90 minutes).
5. After unmoderated breakouts, the meeting chair will call the meeting back to order, followed by a moderated discussion to discuss new developments/recommendations that came out of the unmoderated discussion (30 to 60 minutes).
 - a. The chair should keep a list of proposed recommendations during this time, to be voted on after moderated discussion ends.
 - b. Following moderated discussion, the chair will call for a vote on all proposed recommendations. Each delegation (or role) may cast one vote. Recommendations that will be passed on to the president require a majority vote.
6. Once a set of recommendations has been agreed upon, the faculty coordinator should conduct a debriefing, highlighting key concepts or material

Sample Conference Schedule

Mock NSC Simulation Conference
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

8:30–9:00 a.m.	Conference registration
9:00–9:15 a.m.	Welcome Review instructions with participants
9:15–10:15 a.m.	Meeting called to order Opening statements
10:15–10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.	Moderated debate/ discussion
12:00–1:00 p.m.	Lunch/Unmoderated discussion
1:00–1:45 p.m.	Continue unmoderated discussion
1:45–2:00 p.m.	Break
2:00–3:30 p.m.	Moderated discussion
3:30–4:00 p.m.	Voting
4:00–4:30 p.m.	Debriefing

and to gain feedback from participants about their experience (30 to 45 minutes).

- a. Debriefings may consider the questions posed in the student guide, tie the simulation back to key concepts learned in the classroom, or give participants the opportunity to discuss what they learned. If you are conducting the simulation as a classroom exercise, the debriefing is a good basis for a post-simulation reflection paper.
7. It is recommended that the faculty coordinator prepare instructions for students ahead of time, including any required readings or assignments.

Tips for Leading the Simulation

1. Stick to the time limits as closely as possible. If nearing time limits, give each member the opportunity to give a brief final statement.
2. Call on other participants if the discussion is being dominated by a few people.
3. Ask questions to get discussion back on track, if needed.

Recommendations for Adapting to the Classroom

If you prefer, you may use these simulation modules as an active learning experience in your classes rather than holding an extracurricular conference. The basic simulation model will remain the same but can be tweaked to fit into a set class period. We recommend setting aside three to five class periods for the simulation.

Sample Class Schedule

Based on a 75-minute class

Session 1	Call session to order Review instructions Opening statements (30 minutes max) Moderated debate/discussion
Session 2	Unmoderated discussion
Session 3	Moderated debate/discussion
Session 4	Vote on recommendations Debriefing

Suggested Assignments

In addition to the policy memo, you may consider giving additional assignments. Possible assignments include the following:

1. Written opening statement
2. Worksheet or paper detailing their role and departmental interests
3. Worksheet or paper on external issues that may affect the issue under consideration
4. Simulation reflection paper

About the Author

A freelance writer and blogger, Holly Lindamood indulges her passion for nuclear advocacy as a content writer and regular blog contributor for Daisy Alliance, where she also serves as the Associate Director. She has spearheaded several projects for Daisy Alliance, ranging from developing model diplomacy active-learning simulations for high school and college students to organizing a panel at the United Nations on a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East. In 2010, she co-wrote and delivered a speech to delegates at the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference at the UN. Her recent writing projects are aimed at developing curricula that situate nuclear weapons within the human security framework, including the intersection between nuclear weapons and racism, climate change, sexism, and the legacies of colonialism.

Prior to freelancing, Holly taught political science and international relations at Morehouse College, the University of West Georgia, and the University of North Georgia. She has an MS in International Affairs from Georgia Tech and a BA in Political Science from Augusta State University. An aspiring novelist, she spends her free time writing her debut novel in the realm of dystopian science fiction.

The student guide provides an overview of the issues, additional resources, a role guide, and more.



DAISY ALLIANCE

Daisy Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit focused on broadening education and awareness on the risks posed by nuclear weapons, with an emphasis on bridging the gap between today's youth and the older generations.

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