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Assessing the Benefits of Simulations and War Games for Homeland Security Enterprise Workforce Development

Why are “simulations” (Immersive Exercises) beneficial?

- Immersive environment
- Active learning
- Promotes strategic thinking
- Examination of cause and effect
- Examination of the *mechanisms* of executing decisions
- Mimics uncertainty of the real world

Project Goals

- ** Examine value of simulations as a training tool for Homeland Security Enterprise work force
- ** Apply lessons learned from project to improve training for Homeland Security Enterprise

Project Plan

- ** Assess the benefits from participation in a “National Security Simulation” course at Duke University
- ** Two iterations of course (Spring 2024 & Fall 2024)
- ** Course supported by Valens Global; game titled *Acceleration*

Key themes of *Acceleration*

- ▲ White nationalism in the United States
- ▲ Global migration
- ▲ Great power competition
- ▲ Climate change and water scarcity
- ▲ Misinformation & Disinformation
- ▲ Regulating Big Tech



Shiraz Maher



@ShirazMaher

Sep 15



Rebel forces seem to control the town of Beni Suef and are attacking Egyptian military in surrounding areas. With food and water scarcity already having a devastating impact, these attacks could lead to a breaking point for the government's attempts to control the area.



273



17



67



286



Colin P. Clarke



@ColinPClarke

Sep 15



The situation in Beni Suef is serious. Already plagued with locusts and resource scarcity, the region is not fit to withstand rebel attacks. This is not looking good.



19



26



98



513





Grenada Mayor Retires, Forcing Special Election

August 15, 2028 – Franklin Sampson, the mayor of Grenada, has announced that he is retiring, effective immediately. Sampson's replacement will be selected through a special election that former Army captain Christopher Walsh appears poised to win.

Walsh announced his candidacy immediately after Sampson's announcement and is currently unopposed.

Citing the need for a fresh start, Walsh has stated that if he wins, he plans on implementing elections for all major city council positions. Part of Walsh's goals involve expanding the city government of the rapidly growing town. Walsh has named his proposed appointees for various non-elected positions. Most are newcomers to Grenada.



Snappy Jack, the People's Critic: Wickman's Oeuvre
[Click to play]

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Class sessions

- ** 2.5-hour weekly work sessions
- ** Strategize with team members
- ** Negotiate with other teams
- ** Faculty interactions with each team

Course Assignments

- ** Participate in weekly class work sessions
- ** Develop weekly “moves” with team members
- ** Deliver one short “strategic briefing” for course instructor & teammates
- ** Two peer assessments
- ** Post-simulation strategic briefing memo

Student demographics (Spring 2024)

- 22 Women, 21 Men
- 31 Undergraduates, 12 Graduate Students (MPPs)
- Age Range: 18-34
- Undergrad Majors:
 - 13 Public Policy & Political Science
 - 13 Other
 - 5 Undeclared

Evaluation & Assessment Methods

- Pre/post course survey
 - Self-reported knowledge/attitude questions
 - Performance tasks
 - Course experience questions (post-only)
- Qualitative focus group
- Course activities/records
 - Causal thinking assignment, ungraded & used for course assessment
 - Team moves
 - Course admin. data (e.g., team/world assignments)

Outcomes: National Security Knowledge, Teamwork Skills, Causal Thinking, Perspective Taking

- Students reported greatest gains in national security knowledge
- Women experienced greater gains in most outcomes
- “Working as a team to develop policy” is the course component that make the greatest contribution to the outcomes

Preliminary Findings: Impact on personal development

- 87% (at least "some")
- 34% (a "lot" or "a great deal")

"This class helped me become more comfortable with verbal discussion, negotiation, and presentation. In other classes, I have been able to prepare, but this class requires instantaneous decision making and response. I was nervous about exercising this skill at first but have found it to be enjoyable."

Preliminary Findings: Impact on academic interests

- 74% (at least "some")
- 24% (a "lot" or "a great deal")

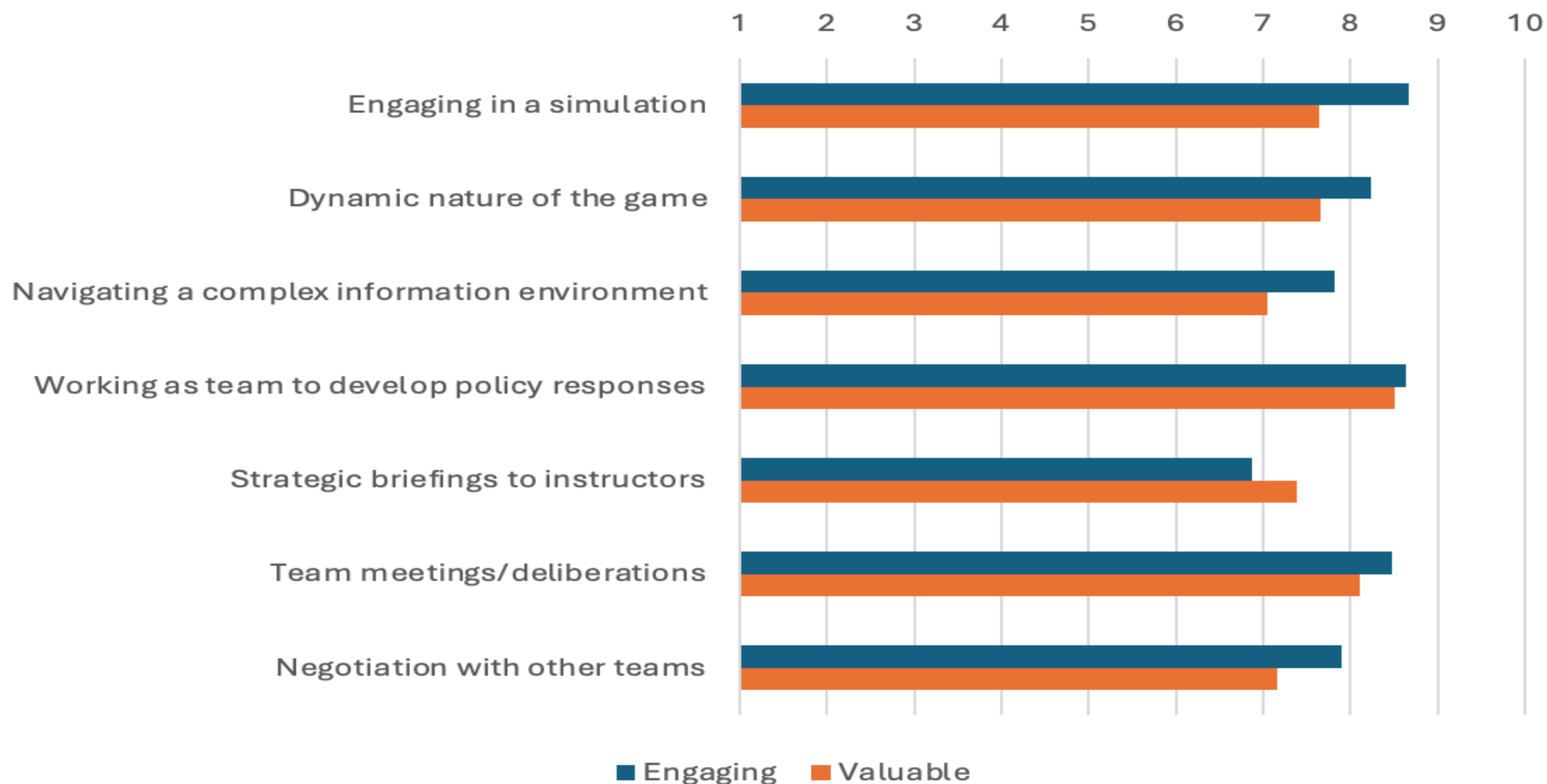
"I took this class as a fun and challenging side plot and learned so much about myself, developing strategies, and different policies. Now, I feel as though I am more willing to take untraditional, slightly scary classes."

Preliminary Findings: Impact on career interest

- 71% (at least "some")
- 13% (a "lot" or "a great deal")

"It has broadened the potential career plans I am considering, specifically pushing me to a position in security."

Participant ratings of course components (engaging and valuable)



Thank you,
NCITE.

Questions?