

***Fostering Global Citizenship:
Connecting American Students to Europe and the World***

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A Need for Civic Engagement—National and International

One of the great challenges of being a college-level educator is teaching in such a way that our students become “owners” of the knowledge we try to impart in the classroom. This challenge is made exponentially greater when another potential learning outcome of a particular academic curriculum is to produce life-long, politically active and engaged citizens. This latter outcome has been at the forefront of political science educators’ in recent years, as numerous organizations such as the *Campaign for Young Voters* and CIRCLE (*Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement*) have documented what political scientists have studied since the passage of the 26th Amendment: the relatively low level of political engagement and activity of 18-25 year olds.

Within the past decade, both Sheilah Mann (1999) and Stephen and Linda Bennett (2001) presented disturbing results of surveys conducted about the interest of politics among freshmen in the past seven years. Many of us are familiar with the reality of what these authors discussed six years ago: that many students who enroll in our classes are unlikely to keep up with political affairs; a fair number are also unlikely even discussing any relevant political issues at all. As Bennett and Bennett noted in their assessment of the 2000 survey, one conducted in a presidential election year, “low interest in politics is consistent with research on declining civic engagement in America....and the freshmen in 2000 continue to demonstrate lessened interest in government and public affairs”(298). J. Cherie Strachan (2006) recently pointed out that although “[f]ar more young people voted in 2004” and that “turnout by 18-24 year olds increased from 36% in 2000 to 42% [in 2004]”, such apparent upswing in young voters still did not compare favorably to turnout by previous cohorts of young voters in past generations (911). A September 2006 report by the National Conference on Citizenship indicated that both “youth volunteerism and voting” have increased since the September 11th terrorist attacks, yet “9/11 does not appear to have triggered a broader civic transformation” among this country’s youth (4). If this is the reality, how do we utilize the classroom more effectively so as to encourage students to become owners of politically related knowledge so as to part of an informed, engaged citizenry?

Early on in his path-breaking work on civic education and engagement, Thomas Ehrlich (1999) suggested that we employ pedagogical methods that train students in collaborative problem solving. The foundation of Ehrlich’s conclusion was John Dewey’s vision of education, “a vision of an education that prepares students to develop and enter interactive, collaborative societies in which the process of deciding how to solve a problem is understood to be as important as acting to solve the problem itself” (246). Dewey, he argued, “was adamant that the overarching goal of education should be no less than fostering and maintaining democracy; he believed that schools themselves must be real communities, and that learning in school should be continuous with learning out of schools.” If the “health of democracy” demands “a strong citizenry,” then political science instructors, he says, must help students “integrate classroom learning with experiential learning in the larger world where practical political decision making and democratic deliberations occur” (Ehrlich 199, 246). One could safely conclude, therefore, that the inability of political science instruction to make this crucial connection between academic theory and practical reality may actually contribute to the extension of these statistical trends beyond simply college freshmen, which may very well have equally disturbing implications for the health of American democracy.

As a faculty member in a small Political Science Department at a Jesuit university, the mission of which calls its faculty to foster a sense of civic responsibility and engagement, in its students, this author has employed experiential learning to connect the academic study of political science with the practice of politics. It is difficult enough to connect students, as citizens, to the processes of their own government—local, state, and/or national. An even greater challenge is encouraging students to see themselves as global citizens within a complex, multifarious international system. This paper will explore the challenges of bringing alive for students the current, practical realities of politics and policy makers in the international system, typically the first step in students developing a sense of civic responsibility to the

global arena. Such a step may then lead to longer term, meaningful civic engagement at multiple political levels.

Civic Engagement Skills

There is a wealth of literature, crossing the typical academic affairs-student affairs divide, that highlights the critical role higher education should and does play in student citizenship development. Further, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, CIRCLE, and the University of Minnesota's Center for Democracy and Citizenship are among multiple institutes and non-profit organizations that routinely publish fact sheets, reports, working papers, and literature reviews to assist educators and researchers alike in meeting this challenging task. The American Political Science Association, too, has been an active participant in this endeavor, utilizing a task force on Civic Education from 1996 to 2002, after which it added a standing committee on Civic Education and Engagement to its organizational structure. What most experts typically have suggested is that colleges and universities must provide in their education both the content and skills necessary for engaged citizenship.

As political science teachers, it is not hard for us to understand the emphasis in the literature on “content”—in other words, the governing structures, policies, processes, and organizations of politics and government. Identifying the actual “skills” of citizenship and infusing our students with those skills are much less clear, especially in terms of actual class outcomes. Mary Kirlin (2002) offers particular assistance in this regard. Arguing that “cognitive understanding of democracy is not sufficient” for engaging young adults in active citizenship, Kirlin provides both the basic civic skills and the underlying skills that must be mastered to ensure the former can be met (573-574):

<u>Civic Skill</u>	<u>Underlying skills</u>
* Monitor public events and issues	* Understand distinctions between public, nonprofit, and private sectors of society * Understand context for events and issues (when they happened and why) * Capacity to acquire and thoughtfully review news (read a newspaper)
* Deliberate about public policy issues	* Think critically about issues * Understand multiple perspectives on issues
* Interact with other citizens to promote personal and common interests	* Understand collective decision making as a norm of democratic society * Capacity to articulate individual perspective and interests * Work with others to define common objective * Create and follow a work plan to accomplish a goal
* Influence policy decisions on public issues	* Identify public decision makers and institutions * Understand appropriate vehicles for influencing decisions

In her CIRCLE working paper on civic engagement skills, Kirlin (2003) articulates four specific categories of civic skills: organization skills, communications skills, collective decision making skills, and critical thinking skills (14). Organization skills include such activities as planning and running political meetings and organizing others to take political actions. Communication skills include “writing letters, being proficient in English vocabulary, and making oral presentations and speeches” so that one can contact public officials, make public presentations, and persuade others to do the same. Collective decision making includes “expressing your own opinion [in a group], hearing other’s opinions, and

working towards consensus (usually involving some type of individual compromise) for the common good.” Critical thinking skills typically include “identifying and describing, analyzing and explaining, synthesizing, thinking critically and constructively and formulating positions on public issue” (20-22). Clearly, a range of college-level active and experiential learning activities would help to refine and enhance this multi-layered skill set, thus preparing students for potential civic engagement beyond the classroom door. J. Cherie Strachman (2006) more recently argued that political science faculty should “formally [teach] deliberative communication and collective action skills” to help “address self-described shortcomings of current young people’s political socialization,” which seemingly leads them to “a lack of internal efficacy.” Deliberative civic education, Strachman maintains, may help younger citizens move from an academic interest in and understanding of politics to “an attractive model for wielding political influence” (912).

Civic Education and Engagement in the Classroom: A Case for Active and Experiential Learning

Those of us who teach political science particularly at the undergraduate level are becoming increasingly familiar with the scholarly literature surrounding the use of experiential and active learning pedagogy. The literature is consistently confirming the value of the varied experiential and active learning instructional techniques we have incorporating into our courses. This relatively new pedagogy has emerged from a greater understanding of the Kolb Experiential Learning Model, which introduces four distinct modes of student learning (concrete experience, active experimentation, abstract conceptualization, and reflective observation); further, multiple articles have been published about the applicability of the Kolb model to the political science classroom (see, for example, Fox and Ronkowski 1997; Rosenthal 1999; Brock and Cameron 1999). A range of classroom activities and instructional tools are often listed as supporting active and experiential learning, including (but not limited to): fieldwork, trigger films, case studies, laboratory projects, problems sets, and simulations (Fox and Ronkowski 1999). Active learning techniques are particularly valuable in the lower level introductory course, as one of the goals of such courses is to “interest as many students as possible...in choosing political science as a major, or at least taking greater interest in politics regardless of the career field they choose.” In turn, students are more likely to form “a [more] positive relationship with an academic discipline that they would otherwise find dull, difficult, and uninteresting were it presented through only one [more traditional] method” (736).

Peers throughout all levels and areas of the political science discipline have been using active learning methods in general, and specific experiential learning tools such as simulations, to amplify more clearly the academic theories, principles, and facts associated with a wide range of complex issues within the domestic and international political arenas. Political scientists across the country have made scores of conference presentations and written numerous articles about using particularly simulation and role-playing to teach about: Congress, voting and elections, the National Security Council, Middle East Politics, the European Union, minority and gender politics, international law, humanitarian intervention, foreign policy decision making, comparative and international political theory—and the list goes on. As Smith and Boyer (1996) argued persuasively in their article on in-class simulation design, active learning approaches have multiple, valuable learning outcomes: giving students “a deeper level of insight into the political process;” encouraging an increase in student attentiveness and activity within the learning process; encouraging greater retention of academic information over the long-term; helping students “develop critical thinking and analytical skills through collaborative efforts;” and, enabling “students to develop speaking and presentation skills, simultaneously building their confidence” (690-691). As more of our colleagues discuss their experiences, those of us who embrace experiential learning exercises such as simulations nod in agreement. It also is easy to see the natural connections between discussions about the value of active learning and the conscious goal of colleges and universities in general, and political scientists in particular, to use the classroom as a vehicle for civic education and engagement.

Beth Dougherty (2003) noted that “[b]y putting students in control of their learning, interactive exercises can make the real world both relevant and intellectually exciting” (245). Michael Fowler (2005) maintained that active learning “may be particularly appropriate for those teaching international relations” in that it “encourages students to become engaged in international issues by interacting with one another and grappling with problems as a practitioner might”(156). Simulations and other active learning techniques, such as that which Dougherty uses in her Middle East politics class and Fowler used in classrooms in Vietnam, or the multi-institutional European Union program in which Van Dyke, DeClair, and Loedel (2000) have engaged their students, connect students to political reality in ways not generally found in more traditional political science classrooms. Simulations help the real world of politics come alive and, thus, become relevant, precisely because students “recreate through their own experiences the multiple and often countervailing interests, pressures, and constraints” that political actors—domestic and international—experience in their work everyday (Dougherty 2003, 240).

Some in the discipline have begun to undertake systematic assessment of specific, experiential learning exercises that have been conducted within a semester-long class (see, for example, Krain and Shadle 2006; Krain and Lantis 2007). Yet, as Smith and Boyer (1996) readily admitted at that time, there was a lack of empirical data assessing the long-term impact of simulations, and there has been little headway made in the discipline to undertake such assessment since they published their article. Nonetheless, anecdotal evidence from the vast majority of political science teachers who use experiential learning exercises supports what Smith and Boyer concluded ten years ago: simulations often “motivate students to become involved in real processes that our simulations seek to emulate” (691). Active learning and experiential learning exercises have become critical, legitimate pedagogical tools in the political science discipline, and they may very well be the one of several keys that over time unlocks the door to long-term, active, international civic engagement for our students.

Fostering Global Civic Engagement: The Mid-Atlantic European Union Simulation Program

Formed in 1993 and held in Washington, D.C, each fall, the Mid-Atlantic EU Simulation Consortium (MEUSC) experiential learning program is a three-day, multi-institutional simulation of the European Union (EU) policy making organs and decision making processes, including the EU Commission, Parliament, Council of Ministers, and the European Council. MEUSC consistently endeavors to connect American students and faculty to EU policy makers and policy making in a unique way, utilizing the simulation experience to help bridge the gap between the academic study of the EU and the actual political practices of the European Union. A continual MEUSC goal has been to engage students in discussions and debates about the EU that are both current and topical in EU decision making circles. In that light, MEUSC faculty advisors have, in the past several years, chosen such specific topics as Economic Monetary Union, terrorism, food safety, the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty, and the protection of minorities and asylum seekers to help illuminate and underscore broader EU debates about European Monetary Policy, Common Foreign and Security Policy, EU-US bilateral trade relations, EU immigration and human rights policy, and the deepening of the EU integration movement in general. Such a pedagogical approach can be both extraordinarily exciting as well as daunting. The timing of a topic can help students hone in on actual EU debates at the same time as they are occurring, such as those that unfolded in the wake of the 2001 September 11th terrorist attacks. On the other hand, making sense out of EU policy proposals and EU policy makers often means confronting massive amounts of detailed information without valuable academic analysis and hindsight.

The Challenge of Choosing a Resolution Topic and Preparing the Resolution: Fall 2001

MEUSC faculty advisors often engage in lengthy discussions about possible simulation topics, knowing that the appropriateness of the topic is critical to the overall success of this experiential learning exercise on the European Union. Since the 1993 inception of the MEUSC simulation program, participants have studied and debated the following issues during the various simulations: EU

immigration policy; EU environmental policy; Economic Monetary Union; the Enlargement of the EU; and EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, Food Security and Genetically Modified Organism, and the proposed Constitutional Treaty. Each of these topics has ultimately precipitated lively debate during actual simulation meetings, yet they also engendered substantial discussion among program faculty during the resolution selection process. This latter discussion is directly related to MEUSC's understanding that the simulation topic must lead to a debatable resolution, and that there are potential topics that may not do so as easily as others. In fact, as any simulation planner will admit, several important questions need to be considered in the topic selection debate, whether it be either for a small-scale or large-scale exercise:

- Is a proposed topic significant enough to warrant extensive study?
- Is a proposed topic too overtly technical or difficult so as to hinder even basic understanding by students and, perhaps, even some faculty?
- Is a proposed topic accessible to the broad range of faculty, and thus student, expertise?
- Are there enough English-language research resources available for effective study and analysis of a proposed topic?
- Is a proposed topic precipitating analysis and debate within the academic community to warrant exposure to students?
- Is a proposed topic precipitating analysis and debate among policy makers and within the media to warrant exposure to students?
- Are there significant theoretical lessons, particularly on the broader questions of European integration, that will be learned and underscored by the study of a proposed topic?
- Is a proposed topic timely, as indicated by discussions within sophisticated popular literature, such as *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* (among others)?
- Are embassy and EU-related web sites (such as *Europa* and the official sites of the EU Commission, the Parliament, and the various party groupings) devoting space to a proposed topic, precisely because the topic is being debated within these institutions?
- What actual EU Ministerial Councils and Parliamentary Committees are handling this policy debate within the EU, and, thus, will be utilized by simulation planners for a simulation debate on the proposed resolution topic?¹

Positive answers to most of the above questions certainly spotlights the feasibility of some topics over others and, thus, have assisted MEUSC faculty in narrowing the list of topics to a point that one or another topic becomes the obvious choice for the simulation exercise. MEUSC places the topic rotation and country rotation on an alternating two-year cycle and, in turn, revisits the resolution topic discussion every other Fall semester as it begins planning for the subsequent year's simulation. The decision to use CFSP as the MEUSC's 2001 and 2002 simulation issue was, therefore, made in Fall 2000, nearly a year prior to the September 11th. Faculty advisors agreed that CFSP met virtually all of the tests of a viable simulation topic; they also agreed that European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) would be the focus of 2001 CFSP resolution, while a broader application of CFSP would be the focus of the 2002 resolution. As is typical, the opening of the Fall 2001 semester precipitated a faculty discussion on what more refined elements of ESDP could be used to produce a workable simulation resolution. These questions were quickly answered by the September 11th attacks. There was almost immediate consensus among MEUSC faculty advisors in the days following the terrorist attacks to incorporate the EU's reaction to September 11th into the anticipated resolution on ESDP. Such an educational opportunity could not be neglected or wasted; however, the true nature of this educational challenge could never be anticipated.

¹ This list has been developed informally over time as MEUSC faculty have assessed possible resolution topics. As a result, it has now become a formal part of MEUSC's planning process.

In an email message to MEUSC faculty two weeks after the attack, this author (who is MEUSC faculty advisor at The University of Scranton and who was supervising the simulated Commission's writing of the 2001 resolution) recognized the educational value of incorporating elements of terrorism into the simulation while also giving a hint of the material that was quickly emerging from within EU policy making circles:

[T]he EU has responded quickly and extensively to the issue of terrorism, as you will note in the *Europa* "News/Press Release" site. Look specifically to the report that the European Council put out last week at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/cfsp/doc/concl_21_09_01.htm. It puts a whole new twist on the major issues of ESDP, including the preparation and time line for the development of the rapid deployment force, as well as various uses of such a force as specified by the 1999 European Council in Helsinki (ie., humanitarian/rescue tasks, peace keeping, crisis management/peace making). Further there are clear economic/budgetary questions, as the European Council has specifically recognized that the attacks in New York made "the slowdown of the economy" that much more "pronounced." Italy, in fact, has already asked the Commission for some flexibility in the Stability and Growth Pact to allow it to beef up its own defenses to fight the war on terrorism.... We have a great opportunity here to have a resolution that teaches students about the specific dynamics of ESDP within the immediate international crisis concerning terrorism.

In fact, because of the extensive, rapid EU response to September 11th, *Europa* almost immediately established a special internal sub-site to allow access to various reports, documents, and press releases coming from the individual EU governing bodies.² Interested parties can utilize *Europa's* search engine to get a sense today about how many documents, from multiple EU governmental sources, concern the issue of terrorism, five years after the September 11th attacks. In fact, myriad EU activity actually occurred literally within days and the subsequent weeks that followed those attacks, including an Extraordinary Meeting of the General Affairs Council on September 12th, an Extraordinary Meeting of the Justice and Home Affairs Council on September 20th, and the September 21st Extraordinary European Council Meeting in Brussels. Such major EU actions, among multiple others, would become the foundation upon which to build the ESDP resolution incorporating terrorism, which would mean that MEUSC students and faculty participants would be on the cutting edge of EU policy making concerning terrorism. Nonetheless, keeping up with, and sorting through, these multiple daily activities proved to be a daunting task as well.

In reality, the EU Commission, comprising 25 members for the 25 member states,³ formally introduces to the EU policy making process any policy proposals to be considered by the EU. Thus, MEUSC simulates this element of EU policy making by having students play the role of the Commission and, thus, having student Commissioners write the resolution to be debated during the range of simulation meetings in Washington, D.C. Up until 2006, the Commissioners' Meeting had always been the first step in preparing the simulation resolution. MEUSC had consistently projected the following points as primary goals of the Commissioners' Meeting:

- Allow the Student Commissioners to meet each other at least once prior to the drafting process;
- Allow the Commission to discuss briefly the broad objectives of the resolution;

² As Jim Josefson and Kelly Casey have noted, the World Wide Web can be a valuable pedagogical tool for the political science teacher, and this is especially true for government-related experiential learning activities (2000). In fact, the EU's *Europa* site is MEUSC's primary link to the range of policy discussions and debates occurring within the EU, on any given issue and at any given time.

³ Up until January 2005, each EU member state appointed one Commissioner, with the 5 largest states (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and UK) appointing 2. Since January 2005, at which time the 2000 Nice Treaty agreements concerning enlargement went into effect, no state has had any more than one Commissioner.

- Allow the Commissioners to break into groups and begin formulating the details of various sections of the simulation resolution;
- Allow Commissioners to assign tasks and to establish a time line for completing the resolution.⁴

In the past, the MEUSC institution that represented the country from which the President of the Commission has emerged will organize that meeting. As Romano Prodi, an Italian, had been presiding as President for the past five years, the school that was charged with Italy has handled these duties; in Fall 2001, those responsibilities rested in the hands of two University of Scranton students (the one playing Prodi and the one playing the role of the other Italian on the EU Commission, Mario Monti). To this day, faculty advisors are advised to choose their Commissioner(s) as early as possible and to get these students researching the resolution topic as early as possible. Like many classes across the country, Scranton's three hour EU class was cancelled on the evening of September 11th, which would have been only the 3rd time it had met that semester. Further, MEUSC faculty, like many of their colleagues across the county, faced the challenge of getting students back on track after such a jarring event. While many MESUC faculty had chosen their student Commissioners at the point of September 11th, the faculty made the final decision about incorporating terrorism into ESDP on September 24th, in anticipation of an October 20th simulated Commissioners meeting. In those eleven days, there were approximately 40 speeches, meetings, and reports listed on the new *Europa* site devoted to the EU's response to September 11th, and additions were made in every day following—and, indeed, literally for months. The two Scranton Commissioners scramble to try to make sense out of that deluge of information in order to set a reasonable agenda for the anticipated October 20th meeting.

The basic material on ESDP was no less complicated or prolific. In fact, all MEUSC Commissioners are expected to have a good understanding of the resolution issue in general and to have researched in detail the specific area of the resolution on which they will be working. For ESDP, this meant mastering the following: the various decisions on ESDP made at the Cologne, Helsinki, Feira, and Nice European Councils; the Petersberg Tasks; the establishment of a Rapid Reaction Force and a possible rapid financing mechanisms; the roles of the Standing Political and Security Committee, the Military Committee, and the Military Staff; and, various aspects of civilian and non-military aspects of crisis management (EU police force, judicial and police cooperation, etc.). Students were able to access a significant amount of data on these topics through the CFSP website. The challenge would then become integrating terrorism into the subsequent “whereas” and “be it hereby resolve” clauses that they would be writing as part of the ESDP resolution.

On October 10th, an agenda was sent to all MEUSC faculty and student Commissioners that, among other things, provided five web links to help students and faculty prepare themselves on these topics, both for this specific meeting as well as the actual simulation. MEUSC has found it valuable to circulate a common reading list among the student Commissioners as a way to focus their preparation for the Commissioners' Meeting, and the web links were sent to student Commissioners with that goal in mind. In addition, “President Prodi” proposed a meeting agenda and a tentative resolution outline, and announced a series of working groups to handle individual sections of the resolution, both of which were designed to facilitate effective outcomes for this meeting. The first group would develop both the resolution's preamble as well as construct proposals regarding the rapid reaction force, its proposed funding, and possible adjustments to the 2000 Brussels Capabilities Commitment Conference. The second group would examine and make proposals regarding the various ESDP military organs (the Political Security Committee, Military Committee, etc.) as well as make proposals to increase cooperation between the EU and non-EU entities and to address peacekeeping needs in Afghanistan. Finally, the third group would develop proposals to address various non-military aspects of crisis management, looking

⁴ As is the case with the list of questions used by MEUSC to choose a resolution topic, this list of goals was been developed by MEUSC over a period of time, as the faculty have developed and refined the role of the student Commissioners. In Fall 2006, MEUSC faculty decided, out of necessity because of logistical circumstances, not to have student Commissioners face-to-face but, instead, to communicate entirely on-line.

specifically at such topics as an EU rapid reaction peace force, police and judicial cooperation, civil administration and protection/rescue services, and human rights and economic issues. All three groups would be developing their sections keeping in mind the unfolding EU and international response to the September 11th crisis.

MEUSC faculty advisors always hope that student Commissioners might be able to begin their communication process in advance of the actual Commissioners' meeting. Further, in the best case scenario, faculty would like to see student Commissioners even drafting possible resolution clauses in advance of this early meeting, which in turn would assist in narrowing the focus of discussion during the meeting itself. Not surprisingly, the time constraints and the real world realities facing MEUSC students and faculty alike in the days immediately following the September 11th attack and preceding the October Commissioners meeting necessarily kept those preliminary "hopes" from being realized in Fall 2001. In fact, some MEUSC faculty actually wondered, because of some student and even parental inquiries, whether the organization of a Washington-based exercise was both viable and practical at that point, especially considering the intensified security measures being implemented throughout the capital city—including at all of the EU member state embassies. The MEUSC faculty ultimately decided to go forward with the planning process as usual, and only make adjustments if circumstances demanded doing so. Operating within that train of thought actually helped many faculty bring much needed focus and structure to their students, who were understandably very much in shock about the events in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania.

In the multiple years in which the annual Commissioners meeting was used, an entire resolution never emerged by its end, nor was this anticipated by the faculty advisors. Nonetheless, student Commissioners seemed energized by the topic, especially in terms of its timeliness. As is generally the case each year, by the close of the Fall 2001 Commissioners' Meeting, a leader had been chosen for each working group; that person was then responsible for funneling the group's work to the Commission President. Even the one group (Section 1, the "Preamble Group") that had struggled all morning, in terms of bringing focus to their responsibilities, had been able to coordinate their objectives effectively by the end of the meeting so as to move forward with the actual drafting process. That process, as usual, would continue on-line (via email). Each group left the meeting with weekly deadlines for submitting working drafts of clauses within the group and to President Prodi. Again, as the MEUSC program has evolved, faculty have learned to refine the post-meeting process so as to try to avoid having a handful of students left with the burden of drafting the resolution. Trying to keep individual student Commissioners on task is the responsibility of the individual faculty advisors, with added pressure coming from group leaders. Keeping the groups on task has become the responsibility of the Commission's President, who typically reviews drafts and forwards suggestions back to the working groups—a daunting challenge, indeed, for an undergraduate student.

Within one week of the Fall 2001 Commissioners' Meeting, President Prodi sent to all the Commissioners a copy of the draft Preamble, typically the easiest section of the resolution to write but also critical for setting the stage for the rest of the resolution. The progress on the other sections of the resolution proved to be much slower, especially the second section (Group B) which focused on the EU military structures in crisis management. Initially, Group B started to address questions about the rapid reaction force, issues that, as President Prodi explained to the group leader, had been assigned to Group A; President Prodi also urged the group to base their proposals on work that actually was being done by the Commission in Brussels. Further, Group B thought it had to create a whole series of new structures to respond to terrorism, instead of possibly expanding the existing roles and responsibilities of the established structures to respond to a new terrorist crisis. Again, Prodi tried to steer the group in the proper direction. Nonetheless, Group B struggled for the next couple weeks, in part because it tried to incorporate every element of Prodi's original list of tentative topics into the new resolution. Proposed clauses were coming into Prodi, but few had little connection to the desired focus of the section. On

November 14th, about a week before the projected deadline for releasing the finished resolution, Prodi was still trying to help Group B focus on the key elements of its section.⁵

The challenges that the MEUSC's President Prodi had with this one section is but a microcosm of the multiple challenges faced by the entire simulated Commission in Fall 2001. It was not discovered until too late that each group interpreted each item on the Prodi's meeting agenda as being *the* specific issues for which resolution clauses *had* to be written. After all, each issue on that original list was not only critical to the topic of ESDP in and of itself, but each had also, in some way, entered actual policy making discussions occurring within the EU in the days and weeks following the September 11th terrorist attacks. Moreover, the immediate proliferation of a wide range of material on the *Europa* site as well as in newspapers and important periodicals (such as *The Economist*) proved to be fertile ground for Commissioners looking for creative ideas to present in the actual resolution, even if those ideas were proving to be tangential in actual EU policy making circles. In the course of the resolution drafting process, MEUSC's Prodi was constantly asking individual groups to document clearly the basis for their ideas, at times finding out in the process that a proposal was based on an unidentifiable reference in a recent *Economist* article. Not surprisingly, individual student Commissioners became quite protective and defensive of what they were proposing, and thus they were reluctant to make cuts in the drafting stage. Groups finally submitted what were supposed to be final drafts just prior to the Thanksgiving holiday (Group B) was the last of the three, submitting its work on the Monday before Thanksgiving), a mere ten days preceding the simulation.⁶ Even at that stage, President Prodi was still faced with reorganizing and collapsing over 15 pages of draft resolution clauses into a coherent, reasonably manageable resolution of approximately seven pages. Prodi's work at that point (over the Thanksgiving weekend and the Monday after) delayed the release of the resolution until two days before the simulation's commencement, which reversed a two-year old practice of releasing the resolution about ten days prior to the simulation. Even at seven pages, the resolution was long, dense, and complex, which resulted in almost immediate concern on the part of the MEUSC faculty that the overall effectiveness of the simulated meetings in Washington was in jeopardy.

In the end, most of the faculty's fears about the resolution were unnecessary, as the late November simulation operated reasonably well, with many faculty and students again emphasizing the overall educational value of the simulation experience. The greatest difficulties during the MEUSC's 2001 simulation seemed to come from typical sources: procedural issues in the simulated Parliament; some lack of coherence within individual Parliamentary party groups; a short plenary session of the Parliament that prevented necessary work from being completed; a Conciliation Committee (comprising certain members from the Council of Ministers and Parliament) that did not work as effectively as planners had hoped; and, a Belgian Presidency that could have organized both the European Council meetings and the Council of Minister meetings more effectively.⁷ These problems are not necessarily unique to the 2001 simulation, and they have at times emerged in various forms in other MEUSC exercises.

The delayed release of the resolution, which stemmed from the resolution drafting process itself, precipitated two smaller problems during the simulation—ones that MEUSC typically likes to avoid if possible because they can disturb the seamlessness that MEUSC seeks in the simulation exercise to increase corresponding educational value. Yet, again, these problems were not characteristic simply of the 2001 program. First, the delay decreased the amount of time that student participants had to prepare,

⁵ This section of text is based on October-November, 2001, email correspondence between MEUSC's "President Prodi" (University of Scranton student, Nicole Negowetti) and various members of the simulated Commission, including specific messages on October 25, October 29, November 13, November 14, and November 16.

⁶ In a 16 November 2001 email to all MEUSC faculty advisors, Scranton Faculty Advisor Gretchen Van Dyke explained to the other faculty the challenges that the Commission was facing at that point, and the anticipated delay regarding the release of the document.

⁷ This list is based on email correspondence among MEUSC faculty in the week following the simulation program.

prior to the start of the simulation, specific party positions and proposed amendments on various items in the resolution. This naturally increased the pressure within various meetings, particularly those among the members of the Parliamentary party groupings. Second, the delay prohibited the student Commissioners from reviewing the final draft before it was released to all participants just days before the simulation. Thus, Commissioners had to work through individual complaints and concerns in a working dinner on the first night of the simulation, an event that is usually quite relaxed for Commissioners because the bulk of their work has been completed by that stage—particularly in comparison to the work of the other simulation participants, which is essentially just beginning. In Washington, the Commissioners become the chief lobbyists for the resolution as it stands; effective lobbying demands coherence with the group, which means that any differences within the group need to be resolved ahead of time. Seeing the final draft earlier would have allowed the 2001 student Commissioners to work through their individual concerns prior to their arrival in Washington, and would have ensured greater unity within the Commission in Washington—and element that was not always as readily apparent in the 2001 group as it has been in others.

Civic Skills Development in the Work of the MEUSC Commission

Other simulation years typically, and fortunately, do not include the emotional drama that the MEUSC Commissions—and all of the MEUSC participants—experienced in the wake of the September 11th tragedy. Nonetheless, MEUSC students were able to use a simulation program to harness their emotions and focus their analysis on what policy makers were confronting at the same time. This was not an easy task for undergraduate students, and especially not for MEUSC's student Commissioners, who had to work at an accelerated pace to understand the truly urgent work facing EU-level policy makers. Similar to European policy-makers themselves, MEUSC students had to manage the plethora of information being contemporaneously generated by the enormous and bureaucratic EU governmental apparatus, which reflected the EU-level decision-makers' clear desire to act decisively in the aftermath of September 11th. Students were required to make sense of the actual questions facing the EU policy-makers, including, but not limited to: 1) rendering operational, in a timely manner, (and much more rapidly than originally envisioned) a rapid reaction force to address possible future terrorist crises through the ESDP organs that had just been created; 2) building upon existing multilateral cooperation to assist with international crises; 3) responding to humanitarian needs of Afghanistan and directing ESDP peacekeeping responsibilities to Afghanistan; and, 4) addressing non-military aspects of the new terrorist crisis as they may play out in the European arena. The urgency of the dialogue and the enormity of the September 11th tragedy guaranteed that students were attuned to the issue of terrorism, but the simulation's structure and organization forced them to abandon their emotive mode and asked them to consider the multiple issues surrounding the central topic from a more solidly European perspective.

On a broader level, one naturally notices the various civic skills that clearly permeate the work of the student Commissioners. Virtually at every step of the way, in this specific part of the simulation, these students monitored public events and issues, deliberated about public policy issues, interacted with other "citizens" (their fellow Commissioners!) to promote common interests, and influenced final policy decisions. They inevitably hone their organizational, communication, collective decision making, and critical thinking skills. Further, fulfilling these specific alter egos cause students to come to terms with the problems, pressures, concerns, and questions that EU Commission routinely confronts as it carries out its legislative and executive duties. Moreover, what this faculty advisor has witnessed over her eleven-year involvement with the MEUSC program is that virtually every simulation topic—whether it be Economic Monetary Union, Eastern Enlargement, the proposed Constitutional Treaty, Immigration Policy—have all offered the student Commissioners the same opportunity for skill development as Common Foreign and Security Policy and terrorism provided in the Fall of 2001.

Additional MEUSC Simulation Challenges: A Summary in Anticipation of the Teaching and Learning Conference Discussion

There are two major additional challenges that MEUSC simulation program confronts every year, regardless of the simulation topic: preparation of all student participants, and the impact of a fast pace simulation schedule. By its very nature, a multi-institutional simulation program will see varied student preparation precisely because of the idiosyncratic nature of the individual institutional participants and the faculty advisors responsible for the preparation each school's students. Nonetheless, there are some broader challenges associated with student preparation that are not unlike that which faced the MEUSC Commission in Fall 2001. Specifically, how do students come to terms with, as part of their preparatory process, EU institutional changes, EU party group structures and policies, changes at the member state level (such as member state elections or national referenda), member state governmental decisions, and EU level decisions—any number of which may be occurring during the immediate weeks and months leading up to the MEUSC simulation? Moreover, the MEUSC simulation schedule (see Appendix A, the 2006 MEUSC schedule, which is included below) also poses specific challenges to student participants that test the effectiveness of their organizational, communications, collective decision making, and critical thinking skills. This author, again, maintains that overcoming such challenges allow student participants at the same to refine and enhance civic skills that necessary encourage longer-term civic engagement, particularly at the international level.

APPENDIX A – 2006 MEUSC SIMULATION SCHEDULE**Thursday, November 16, 2006**

10:00 am All Embassy Briefings**België/Belgique • The University of Scranton**

Embassy of Belgium • (202) 333-6900
3330 Garfield Street, NW • Washington, DC 20008

Deutschland • Drexel University

Embassy of Germany • (202) 298-4248
4645 Reservoir Rd., NW • Washington, DC 20007

Eesti • Saint Joseph's University

Embassy of Estonia • (202) 588-0101
2131 Mass. Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20008

España • Elizabethtown College

Embassy of Spain • (202) 728-2340
2375 Pennsylvania Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20037

France • York College of Pennsylvania

Embassy of France • (202) 944-6082
4101 Reservoir Road, NW • Washington, DC 20007

Hellas • Randolph-Macon Woman's College

Embassy of Greece • (202) 332-2727
2211 Mass. Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20008

Ireland • John Carroll University

Embassy of Ireland • (202) 462-3939
2234 Mass. Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20008

Italia • Mount St. Mary's University

Embassy of Italy • (202) 612-4400
3000 Whitehaven Street, NW • Washington, DC 20008

Magyarország • McDaniel College

Embassy of Hungary • (202) 362-6730
3910 Shoemaker St., NW • Washington, DC 20008

Suomi/Finland • West Chester University

Embassy of Finland • (202) 298-5800
3301 Mass. Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20008

Sverige • Susquehanna University

Embassy of Sweden • (202) 467-2600
2900 K St., NW • Washington, DC 20007

United Kingdom • Lynchburg College

British Embassy • (202) 588-6500
3100 Mass. Ave., NW • Washington, DC 20008

- 2:00 pm Plenary Session** (Mirage I & II)
- 3:00 pm Opening Ceremonies & National Government Speeches** (Mirage I & II)
- 4:00 pm Break**
- 4:15 pm Party Group Meetings** (Mirage I & II)
Ministerial Meetings (Various Locations)
- 6:30 pm Depart for Restaurants**
- 7:00 pm Working Dinners**

EU Commission

Paolo's Ristorante • 1303 Wisconsin Avenue, NW • (202) 333-7353

Ministers

Café La Ruche • 1039 31st Street, NW • (202) 965-2684

European Parliament

Old Europe • 2434 Wisconsin Ave., NW • (202) 333-7600

Upstairs Dining Room: PPE, ALDE, EUN, IND-DEM, NI

Downstairs Dining Room: PSE, VERTS, GUE-NGL

- 9:00 pm Rules Briefing** (Mirage Room)
- 9:30 pm Election of European Parliament Committee Leadership** (Mirage I and II)
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Friday, November 17, 2006

8:30 am Simultaneous Sessions

European Council (Tarot Room)

European Commission (Fortune Room)

Justice Ministers Council (Kaleidoscope Room)

Foreign Ministers Council (Kaleidoscope Room)

EP Committee on Foreign Affairs (Mirage I)

EP Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (Mirage II)

10:30 am Coffee Break

10:45 am Resume Deliberations

12 noon Lunch by National Delegations

- 2:00 pm National Ministers Meetings** (Mirage II) and
Party Group Meetings (Mirage I)
- 3:00 pm Resume Simultaneous Council and EP Committee Meetings; Adopt Final Positions in Respective Councils and Committees**

- 5:30 pm** Recess Sessions for the Day
- 7:00 pm** Annual MEUSC Reception (Mirage I & II)
- 8:30 pm** Adjourn for the Day

Saturday, November 18, 2006

- 8:15 am** Simultaneous Sessions
European Council (Tarot Room)
Plenary Session of the European Parliament (Mirage I & II)
Joint Council Meeting (Kaleidoscope Room)
European Commission (Fortune Room)
- 10:00 am** Coffee Break
- 10:15 am** Conciliation Session Between Representatives of Joint Council and Parliament (Kaleidoscope Room); 2nd Ministers Meet with Individual Heads of Government/State (Various Locations); Party Group Meetings (Mirage I & II)
- 11:30 am** Lunch by National Delegation; Ministers and Heads of Government/State Begin Drafting National Statement on Conciliation Session Resolution
- 1:00 pm** European Council Concludes Business Other Than Draft Resolution (Tarot Room); Joint Council Concludes Final Action on Draft Resolution (Kaleidoscope Room); European Parliament Briefed on Conciliation Session and Concludes Final Action on Draft Resolution (Mirage I & II)
- 2:00 pm** Ministers Meet With Heads of Government/State to Finalize National Positions on Draft Resolution (Various Locations); European Parliament Concludes Work (Mirage I & II)
- 2:30 pm** European Council Summit on Draft Resolution (Mirage I & II)
- 3:45 pm** European Parliament Considers Council Action
- 5:00 pm** Adjournment of 2006 Simulation

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