

BRINGING DIPLOMACY INTO THE CLASSROOM: STIMULATING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH A SIMULATED TREATY NEGOTIATION

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ABSTRACT

This article carefully critiques existing educational literature in relation to simulations, identifying some methodological flaws in the relevant empirical studies, but also pointing to a strong correlation between simulations and student engagement in studies involving a range of methodologies. The article builds on this literature by reporting the findings of empirical research relating to a treaty simulation based on the Paris climate agreement. These findings support the value of treaty simulations in enhancing student engagement. The value of simulations as an effective method to assess both skills and conceptual knowledge is also analysed using a model based on Biggs' 'constructive alignment' approach. The article provides a complete set of materials for running an international treaty negotiation simulation exercise which can be utilized in international law, international relations, international environmental law and negotiation subjects at university. This exercise places an emphasis on the teaching of negotiation skills and developing conceptual knowledge through stimulating student engagement. The simulation is designed to be time-effective, to mitigate any trade-offs with respect to the coverage of other course content. It is also largely free-standing and can be easily adapted to any subjects in which negotiation skills are relevant, including those suggested above.