Instructor Manual for Statecraft: U.S. Government

Overview of the Simulation

In the *Statecraft: U.S. Government* simulation, students take on the roles of (1) executive branch officials, (2) members of Congress, (3) leaders of interest groups, and (4) media elites. They are given goals, tools, and dilemmas that correspond to the experience of these real-world actors, and will vividly experience concepts that span the U.S. Government curriculum.

The simulation is divided into **four periods** (think of it like a sports game, with four quarters). Students will be interacting and making decisions during all four periods, but some predetermined events will occur during certain periods, and some choices must be made before a certain period ends. Once the fourth period ends, the game is over and all of the results – such as election outcomes and performance grades – will be calculated and revealed.

Simulation Setup

Setting up your simulation is very easy. Here are the steps you will take:

1. Create your account: Creating a faculty account is simple and free. Go to http:// statecraftsims.com/ and click on Login/Signup and Click American Government. Click on Professor Account and "Not Registered" by providing your contact information, setting a password, and signing up. *Note*: You do not need to create an account to see a preview of Statecraft. You can sign up for a live demo session before you even create an account.

2. Select "Create a Simulation": Once logged in you will need to "Create a Simulation". Read the options and recommendations below to set the parameters that will fit your class.

3. Enter basic course information: your school name, course name (e.g., U.S. Government) and course number (e.g., POSC 201).

4. Choose a simulation code: This is a unique code that allows your students to enroll in the correct simulation. You might want to write this down so you give the correct code to your students (although it is also visible in your control panel).

5. Enter your number of students: To maintain game balance and ensure that students are all playing important roles, the simulation will split larger classes into multiple smaller simulation "worlds". For example, the maximum class size for the *American Government Simulation* is 25. With 41 students, you would have two worlds of 20 and 21 students each.

6. Choose method of student assignment: You have two options here:

a. ***Automated assignment (recommended)***: students are assigned to roles based on their self-reported (1) levels of introversion/extraversion and (2) interest in playing a role that involves significant responsibility.
b. ***Instructor assignment***: you decide which student plays which role.

7. <u>Select time zone</u>: This ensures that each new period of the simulation will start at the appropriate designated time based on your location. If you have students who are participating from different time zones (i.e., in an online class), make sure they know what zone the game is set to.

8. <u>Specify a start date for the simulation:</u> Typically the start date would be at least 2-3 weeks into the semester, to give students time to read the manual and give you time to introduce some key U.S. Government concepts that they will be experiencing in the simulation.

9. <u>Choose the length of each period</u>: The simulation is divided into four periods. We recommend setting each period to last **between 3 days (for a compressed simulation) and 7 days (for a more leisurely simulation)**. If you plan to use some class time for each period, make sure a class session falls during each scheduled period.

10. <u>Select a payment option:</u> Students can pay or the organization/institution can pay. If you choose Organization Pay, you will be taken to a PayPal website to provide credit card information. If you would rather pay by check, you can request an invoice from help@statecraftsims.com If you choose the Student Pay option, students will be asked to provide a credit or debit card for payment when they create their own accounts.

Integrating the Simulation into Your Class

Because the simulation covers major U.S. Government concepts that students will be learning about in readings and lectures, it should fit smoothly into any U.S. Government lass. However, there are steps you can take to maximize student learning and enjoyment.

<u>*Use the Instructor Materials*</u>: The lecture outlines, discussion questions, and paper assignments are designed to illuminate the links between key U.S. Government concepts and the events of the simulation. Using these will facilitate critical thinking and reflection.

<u>*Devote some Class Time to Each Simulation Period*</u>: While the simulation could be used entirely outside of class, we strongly recommend using 40-50 minutes of class time for each period of the simulation. This gives students the opportunity to interact, exchange views, and bargain, which is crucial for helping them understand the core political dynamics of the simulation. Students will also be checking news, making decisions, and interacting with other players outside of class time, so keep in mind that each period should last significantly longer than the class session

devoted to that period. For example, suppose you schedule Period 1 to begin at 8 am Monday and end at 10 pm Friday, with a single 50-minute class session devoted to the simulation on Wednesday. Starting Monday morning, students will be able to read news messages and acquaint themselves with the interface before the first in-class simulation session on Wednesday, and students will then follow up on their in-class discussions with additional decisions (and even meetings) outside of class, with a deadline of making all of their Period 1 decisions before that period ends on Friday night. Period 2 would then begin shortly thereafter, at which point students could log in and see fresh news messages and the results of their Period 1 choices. See the sample syllabus for an example of how to schedule these simulation periods for a typical semester-long U.S. Government course.

If Using the Simulation Entirely Online, Follow These Guidelines: Since interaction among students is important to the proper functioning of the simulation, encourage students to use Google Hangouts, Skype, or other methods of voice or video chat if no class time will be devoted to the simulation. Also, we recommend extending the length of the periods (to at least 7 days) since communication and collaboration will be slower without in-class opportunities for everyone to meet and talk together.

Stay Informed on How Your Simulation is Unfolding: Your ability to connect students' simulation experiences to class material will be enhanced as you gain a greater understanding of what's occurring in the simulation. The lecture outlines provide an overview of ways the simulation teaches key concepts, but this is only the beginning. We also recommend that you (1) use the tracking tools in your instructor account to follow major events as they unfold in your simulation, (2) walk around the classroom during days that you have set aside for simulation interactions, to observe what is going on, and (3) have some discussion on non-simulation days about interactions occurring behind the scenes.

Schedule The Simulation to Coincide with Relevant Topics: If you are using the *American Government Simulation*, you might schedule the simulation to coincide with those weeks when you plan to cover civil liberties, Government, political parties, or presidential vs. Congressional powers. If you are using the *Climate Change Politics* simulation, you could schedule it to coincide with those weeks when you cover federalism, interest groups, or executive regulatory agencies. However, since both of these simulation "chapters" are designed to cover most major U.S. Government concepts, you can't go wrong plugging the simulation in whenever it is most convenient for you in the semester. (In short, there may be some marginal benefit to scheduling it to coincide with certain topics, but this is not essential).

Customer Service

During the simulation (especially early on) students may contact you with questions. You may have answers to many of their questions, but it is part of our job to provide you with your own

virtual Statecraft teaching assistant. Please tell your students from day one to click on the Contact Us button on the website for any and all questions they have.

Don't forget the 3 minute rule! If it is taking you longer than 3 minutes to find the information you're looking for then simply email customer support instead to help!

Contact Info: help@statecraftsims.com