Developments in Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 12, 1985

SIMULATION AND EXPERIMENTAL PRACTICES OF FACULTY: A DATA-BASED WORKSHOP

Irvin Summers, Indiana State University
Steve Parker, Southwest Missouri State University
Charles W. Boyd, Southwest Missouri State University

ABSTRACT

Most of the responding ABSEL members use computer-based simulations and/or experiential exercises. They have beliefs concerning both the value of these learning tools and student grading importance. They do not, however, utilize these beliefs in determining the student's grade. The workshop will consider the data below plus write-in comments in an open discussion format.

INTRODUCTION

During the past several ABSEL meetings we have perceived a need for a workshop pertaining to the uses and perceptions of Simulations and Experiential materials in both the undergraduate and graduate classrooms.

During August 1984 we mailed a questionnaire to the entire ABSEL membership; 53 were returned, and 49 were usable. This is about 25 percent of the membership and may or may not be representative of the membership.

Findings

1. Teach Policy: Graduate, 15 Yes 25 No; Undergraduate, 25 Yes 21 No.
2. Use Computer Simulation Policy: Graduate, 11 Yes 5 No; Undergraduate, 23 Yes 4 No.
3. Use Computer Simulation in other Courses: Graduate, 10 Yes 24 No; Undergraduate, 12 Yes 25 No.
4. Grade the student's performance: Graduate, 16 Yes 3 No; Undergraduate, 30 Yes 3 No.
5. Percent of student's total grade:
6.

Percent	Number Graduates	Number Undergraduates
0	33	20
10	1	3
15	0	2
20	2	2
25	2	2
30	1	4
35	1	1
40	2	4
45	1	0
50	4	4
55	0	2
75	0	1
85	1	0
100	1	1

6. Use experiential exercises in any course: Graduate, 13 Yes 22 No; Undergraduate 26 Yes 17 No.
7. Grade the experiential exercise:

Percent	Number Graduate	Number Undergraduate
0	41	36
10	2	3
15	1	1
20	1	4
30	2	3
40	1	2
50	1	0

8. Perceived Grading Importance of simulations: (1 high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate x	Undergraduate x
Attendance	3.83	3.67
Analysis of results	2.64	2.52
Firm's financial performance	2.16	2.41
Test game knowledge	3.96	3.80
Reaching objectives	3.16	3.00
Firm function team	3.24	3.27
Peer evaluation	3.41	2.94

9. Negative features of simulations: (1 high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate x	Undergraduate x
Boredom	5.08	5.11
Frustration	4.12	3.74
Not real enough	4.35	4.54
Too real	4.69	4.64
Poor participation	3.78	3.10
Students too involved	4.26	4.36
Difficult to grade	3.89	4.08
Too much class time	4.72	4.79
Not related to course	5.00	5.33
Too much of professors time	4.23	4.15
Processing problems	4.22	4.41

10. Simulations perceived learning value: (1 high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate x	Undergraduate x
Sythesis	1.85	1.84
Learn accounting and finance	2.15	2.10
Learn forecasting	2.63	2.54
Learn written analysis	3.30	3.18
Learn operations management	3.50	3.32
Learn oral presentation	3.37	3.29
Teamwork	2.41	2.40
Learn routine decision making	2.48	2.59

11. Grading importance for experiential exercises:
(1 high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate $\bar{X}$	Undergraduate $\bar{X}$
Attendance	2.96	3.13
Test manual contents	4.26	4.21
Participation	2.39	2.26
Learn to write	2.86	3.00
Peer evaluation	3.22	3.17

12. Learning value of experiential exercises:
(I high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate $\bar{X}$	Undergraduate $\bar{X}$
Synthesis	2.72	2.34
No synthesis	5.00	4.97
Learning obvious	3.12	3.13
Learning not obvious	4.30	4.43
Learning less pain	2.71	2.65
Learning more pain	4.64	4.43
Faster learning	3.76	3.43
slower learning	3.48	3.81
Easier transfer	2.89	2.61
Harder transfer	4.50	4.70
Interaction learned	1.89	1.97
Interaction not learned	5.29	5.11
Knowledge of self	2.42	2.34
No knowledge of self	4.63	4.74

13. Negative about experiential exercises:
(I high, 6 low scale)

	Graduate $\bar{X}$	Undergraduate $\bar{X}$
Can't measure learning	3.39	3.67
Students don't learn	5.16	5.34
Difficult to grade	3.23	3.05
Students just play	4.42	4.39
Colleagues discourage	4.85	4.82
Not perceived as teaching	4.16	4.08

As one might suspect most ABSEL members who teach business policy utilize a computer simulation. Very few, however, utilize the student's performance as a part of the grade. The utilization of experiential exercises appears to be less than simulations and also influences the student's grade less.

The firm's financial results and analysis of those results are rated as the most important grading criteria for simulations. Evidently the respondents perceive nothing as especially negative about simulations. synthesis of business school learning and learning to use accounting and finance are perceived as the most important learning aspects of simulations.

Not surprising is that participation is the most important grading criteria for experiential. exercises and that "Group Interaction Skills" is rated the most valuable learning factor. Again, the respondents do not perceive anything especially negative about experiential exercises.

Summary

While some aspects of learning, from either simulations or experiential exercises are perceived favorably--and some activities are perceived as important to grading--grading of either the student's input to simulations or experiential exercises is rare. Most do not include these factors in their grading scheme.