

# Developments in Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 13, 1986

## THE ABSEL RESEARCH CONSORTIUM: PRELIMINARY STEPS AND POSITION PAPERS

Joseph Wolfe  
University of Tulsa

It has been observed that much of the research in the business gaming field has been limited, non-cumulative and counter-productive. This evaluation has been based on the literature's use of discursive and often unsound methodological approaches, unique applications and small sample sizes, poor instrumentation, and ill-defined criteria. While ABSEL, through Conference-related collegial involvement and the normal review process associated with both its paper selection process for its annual Conference and its official journal, *Simulation & Games*, encourages strong research efforts, this encouragement appears to be annual and sporadic.

It is possible that an ABSEL-sponsored Consortium of scholars could do much to relieve this situation. A nucleus probably exists within our Association for the accomplishment of the many tasks required for the production of the more well-formulated, and coordinated inter-university studies that could emanate from such research activities. With this belief in mind, a number of individuals in the business gaming/experiential field were contacted last April, 1985 and each was asked to create a position paper in an area considered to be important for the creation of a productive research consortium of the type proposed here. Eleven position papers were created covering ABSEL's past research efforts and emergent trends, a number of potential research topics with propositions and working hypotheses, methodological issues regarding instrumentation and statistical tests, and three papers outlining administrative aspects necessary for the conduct of the Consortium itself.

If the Consortium is successful it will help all those interested in business gaming and experiential learning to produce more rigorous, more creative, and more meaningful research. It is also hoped that the Consortium will not stifle individual efforts nor set an overall agenda for all to follow but will instead act as only one of many repositories of knowledge regarding the effective uses of experiential tools and techniques.