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 members. 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 **five periods** (Period 0 is a tutorial period to let students get acquainted with their position in a low stakes environment, period 1 through 4 equate to a four year election cycle with midterms at the end of period 2 and the general election at the end of period 4). 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 the "Get Started" button. Click on "Make a free world" and create a login 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. *Note:* You can create more than one simulation, so if you decide to change your parameters after creating your first simulation, this is not a problem. Tech support can remove the unused world from your account upon request.

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 is 30 for the U.S. Gov Sim. 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. Select time zone: 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. Specify a start date for the simulation: 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. Choose the length of each period: The simulation is divided into four periods. We recommend setting each period to last **between 7 days**. If you want to make the simulation the foal point of your course with no other assignments or lectures you may be able to run the simulation within 3 weeks instead of 5 weeks with **3 to 5 day turns as well**. If you plan to use some class time for each period, make sure a class or zoom session falls during each scheduled period.

10. Select a payment option: 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 statecraft.help@gmail.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.

Grading Recommendations

The system will calculate recommended grades for students' **1. Participation** and **2. Performance** in the simulation. Both of these grades will be on a 0 to 100 scale, and will be broken down into subcategories. It is your decision how to integrate these recommended grades into your course (some options are provided below). *However, we strongly recommend including both participation and performance in students' course grades*. The participation grade incentivizes students to lean , remain active in their simulation, and reflect on their experiences.

The performance grade prompts students to behave like their real-world counterparts (e.g., by caring about their own reelection) and ensures a realistic and pedagogically sound simulation.

1. **Performance (from 0 to 100 points):** This score is based on students' achievement of in-game goals and participation. Grading performance encourages students to behave realistically, increases the intensity of the simulation, and prompts real politics to occur among students. Some examples of these goals are shown in Table 1.

   Table 1. Student Roles and Illustrative Performance Goals

Roles	Performance Goals
President & Members of Congress	Reelection and achievement of policy priorities
Members of the Media	Publication of high-impact, accurate news stories
Members of Interest Groups	Legislative and executive actions favorable to one's cause, expansion of group influence
Members of Executive Branch	Success in military missions, diplomacy, regulatory efforts, or bureaucratic influence

We recommend making participation and performance each count for 5% – 10% of students' course grades. Faculty often use supplementary assignments (e.g., debriefing presentations, papers, or exam questions) that link the simulation to the course material, but these assignments are in addition to the participation and performance scores.

A note on extra credit: We find that the promise of "extra credit" for strong simulation performance heightens students' focus and enjoyment, even if the amounts offered are objectively rather small. Therefore, we offer three models for integrating performance scores into students' course grades. See Table 2.

Table 2. Three Models for Integrating Simulation Performance Scores into Course Grades

Performance Score	Model 1: Performance = 5% of course grade, no extra credit	Model 2: Satisfactory performance = 5% of course grade, extra credit for strong performance	Model 3: Performance = entirely extra credit (% boost to course grade)
0-5	0% earned	0% earned	0% extra
6-10	0.5% earned	0.5% earned	0% extra
11-15	.75% earned	.75% earned	0% extra
16-20	1.0% earned	1.0% earned	0% extra
21-25	1.25% earned	1.25% earned	0% extra
26-30	1.5% earned	1.5% earned	0% extra
31-35	1.75% earned	1.75% earned	0% extra
36-40	2.0% earned	2.0% earned	0% extra
41-45	2.25% earned	2.25% earned	0% extra
46-50	2.5% earned	2.5% earned	0% extra
51-55	2.75% earned	2.75% earned	.5% extra
56-60	3.0% earned	3.0% earned	1.0% extra
61-65	3.25% earned	3.5% earned	1.5% extra
66-70	3.5% earned	4% earned	2.0% extra
71-75	3.75% earned	5% earned	2.5% extra
76-80	4.0% earned	5.5% earned (.5% extra)	3.0% extra
81-85	4.25% earned	6% earned (1% extra)	3.5% extra
86-90	4.5% earned	6.5% earned (1.5% extra)	4.0% extra
91-95	4.75% earned	7% earned (2% extra)	4.5% extra

| 96-100 | 5% earned | 7.5% earned (2.5% extra) | 5.0% extra |

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 class. However, there are steps you can take to maximize student learning and enjoyment.

Use the Instructor Materials: The lecture outlines, discussion questions, debriefing presentation 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.

Devote some Class Time to Each Simulation Period: While the simulation could be used entirely outside of class, we strongly recommend using 30-50 minutes of class time or facilitated zoom breakout sessions 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 0 to begin at 8 am Monday and end at 10 pm Friday, with a single 30-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 0 decisions before that period ends on Friday night. Period 1 would then begin shortly thereafter, at which point students could log in and see fresh news messages and the results of their Period 0 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 Zoom 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. Utilize the zoom breakout session feature to facilitate meetings between key parts of the U.S. Government like Congress and the President, the Executive Branch or Congress, the Media, and the ACLU for example.

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 Sim Events (There is a tab called Sim 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.

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.

Also mention 3-minute rule for instructors contacting Customer Service?*

Contact Info: help@statecraftsims.com