Forecasting and simulation in IR

Brief description: Nowadays decision-makers and opinion leaders often illustrate political decisions as without an alternative ю However, politics is never without an alternative. But to develop alternative approaches independently, decision-making procedures have to be comprehensibleю

Some decision-making procedures are very complex and traditional ways of teaching cannot provide adequate insight. Simulations can help to provide this insight better than sole excathedra teaching and offer alternative ways of thinking and acting. Simulations are a teaching

method to bring students into exceptional learning situations. There are three components: (Social) environment of the system, i.e. the simulated body (e.g. the EU), Interactive simulation component describes a current political problem and offers background information to the participants through a role profile & Rule component i.e. rules of procedure and decision-making processes. 4 basic steps: Preparation, Introduction and Role Distribution, Simulation & Negotiation, Evaluation.

Forecasting may be defined as the process of assessing the future normally using calculations and projections that take account of the past performance, current trends, and anticipated changes in the foreseeable period ahead. The process of forecasting generally involves the following steps: Developing the Basis, Estimation of Future Operations, Regulation of Forecasts, Review of the Forecasting Process

Objectives of the course:

* better understanding of the basic structures of (international) politics;
* illustrate the decision making process between interest and power, but also personal values and political ideals;
* practical introduction to complex multi-dimensional issues
* elaboration of possible future scenarios based on past and present data and most commonly by analysis of trends
* understand sources of demand variability and be able to pick the appropriate forecasting model

Learning outcomes:

1) to strengthen social competences through interaction in a group

2) to train rhetoric skills through formulating own points of view

3) to improve negotiation tactics through implementing own positions

4) to foster creative thinking through building alliances to achiev the own goals

5) to use explanatory variables to predict the future

6) to deepening the knowledge of the nature and trends in the the decision making process in international relations

Study materials, including bibliography:

Obligatory:

1. Meadows, Donella H; Meadows, Dennis L; Randers, Jørgen; Behrens III, William W (1972). The Limits to Growth; A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind (PDF). New York: Universe Books.

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3. Weir, K. and Baranowski, M. (2011) ‘Simulating history to understand international politics’, Simulation and Gaming 42 (4): 441–461.

4. International Simulation and Gaming Yearbook: Research into Simulations in Education Vol 5 Hardcover – 1 Mar 1997

5. Davidovitch, L.; A. Parush & A. Shtub (April 2008). "Simulation-based Learning: The Learning-Forgetting-Relearning Process and Impact of Learning History". Computers & Education. 50 (3): 866–880

6. Jonathan Lean, Jonathan Moizer, Michael Towler, Caroline Abbey. Simulations and games. Active Learning in Higher Education, SAGE Publications, 2006, 7 (3), pp.227-242.

7. (2018). ECMS 2018 Proceedings Edited by: Lars Nolle, Alexandra Burger, Christoph Tholen, Jens Werner, Jens Wellhausen European Council for Modeling and Simulation. doi: 10.7148/2018-0005

Recommended:

1. Schneider, Gerald, Nils Petter Gleditsch, and Sabine Carey. “Forecasting in International Relations: One Quest, Three Approaches.” Conflict Management and Peace Science 28.1 (2011): 5–14.

2. Schrodt, Philip A., James Yonamine, and Benjamin E. Bagozzi. “Data-Based Computational Approaches to Forecasting Political Violence.” In Handbook of Computational Approaches to Counterterrorism. Edited by V. S. Subrahmanian, 129–162. New York: Springer, 2013.

3. Alan Atkisson (2010)"Believing Cassandra: How to be an Optimist in a Pessimist's World"

4. Jackon, Tim; Webster, Robin (April 2016). Limits Revisited: A Review of the Limits to Growth Debate (PDF) (Report). London: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Limits to Growth.

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9. Randers, Jorgen (June 2012). 2052. A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing Co.

10. Brian Hayes (May–June 2012). "Computation and the Human Predicament – The Limits to Growth and the Limits to Computer Modeling"

11. Zeigler, B. P., Praehofer, H., & Kim, T. G. (2000) "Theory of Modeling and Simulation: Integrating Discrete Event and Continuous Complex Dynamic Systems", Elsevier, Amsterdam

6. Craig, J. and Hale, S. (2008) ‘Implementing problem-based learning in politics’, European Political Science 7 (2): 165–174.

7. Hazleton, W.A. and Jacob, J.E. (1983) ‘Simulating international diplomacy: the national model united nations experience’, Teaching Political Science 10 (2): 89–99.

8. Karns, M.P. (1980) ‘Teaching international organization through Model United Nations’, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association; 19–22 March, Los Angeles.

9. Kaunert, C. (2009) ‘The European union simulation: from problem-based learning (PBL) to student interest’, European Political Science 8 (2): 254–265.