A typical schedule for a single semester detailed in table 4.1 devotes at least two weeks for in-class preparation and solitary learning and another two weeks for intrateam consolidation and policy formation on the social network, at a flexible login time. Next comes the first round of world politics interactions, for a two-hour meeting on the social network at a fixed login time. After the first round ends, at least a week should be devoted for the teams to debrief, reevaluate their achievements, and adjust policy plans. This reassessment can be done on social networks, in class, or both.

The second round, a daylong on-campus face-to-face event, continues the first round. The simulation ends with a full debriefing and an evaluation of both rounds and the simulation as a whole on the platforms you decide. A detailed discussion of the postsimulation activities is found in the third part of the book on feedback, debriefing, and assessment.

Table 4.2 offers a plan for a yearlong course with a hybrid simulation of four rounds. It can follow developments in a single empirical case with three consecutive cyber rounds and a final face-to-face round. Alternatively, it can focus on one case in the first two rounds and shift to another case in time or region, but related in teams, topics, or theories in the other two.

The advantage of consecutive rounds on the same topic is in a gradual disclosure of information on policy changes, choices of actors, uncertainty, pressure, coalition buildup, negotiation management, and the promotion of desirable policy options. Often in a short simulation, some feeling is gained of what the politics are about, but due to a shortage of time the negotiated outcomes are not fully developed and some participants are left frustrated.

The benefit of shifting the interactions to a new scenario in the last two rounds is in advancing a comparative perspective that helps students understand the differences and similarities between cases, with some basic features common to both. For example, in the first semester the class can play the Arab-Israel conflict in 1947 with UN Resolution 181 as a major focal point. Then, in the second semester, the focus can shift to the Palestinian quest for statehood in 2012, with the major actors remaining the same and many of the issues raised in Resolution 181 still valid, but with new and important developments to consider. Though the schedule we present for a yearlong course suggests four rounds, you can easily adjust it to your preferences, with fewer rounds and a longer break between them. Too many rounds in a single course may impose an impossible workload on students and make the excitement related to the simulation project disappear. So plan your schedule carefully to maintain study efficiency and ensure the momentum.

All in all, a single semester course requires a tighter schedule than a yearlong course, with fewer rounds, a shorter duration for each round, and breaks between them. But the schedule is also dependent on the type of simulation you choose. Face-to-face simulations are mostly short events compared to cyber or hybrid encounters. This does not mean that in a single semester course you should only run a face-to-face simulation but rather that cyber or hybrid simulations give you more options for effective time management.

Assignments

The fifth and last setup decision you need to make concerns the assignments for your students to prepare before, during, and after the simulation. Most assignments described herein are an integral part of the simulation and are necessary for the simulation to proceed effectively. Others are suggested for undergraduate seminar courses or for graduate courses with an emphasis on individual research.