Quick Start Guide

Welcome to Model Diplomacy! This Quick Start Guide provides you with the essentials to run a National Security Council (NSC) simulation with your class. Model Diplomacy is free and easy to use. Just register and follow the simple steps below. For a more comprehensive description of the functions, resources, activities, and flexibility Model Diplomacy offers, please refer to the full Instructor Guide.

WHAT DOES A MODEL DIPLOMACY SIMULATION INCLUDE?

• The NSC Guide (section 1) offers a full introduction to the NSC system and the interagency process.
• The cases focus on timely foreign policy issues and include background information, context, policy options, and a hypothetical decision point for the NSC to address. Your chosen case will be featured in the Case section (section 2) of the simulation.
• The Role-play (section 3) and Wrap-up (section 4) include tips on research and preparation for the classroom NSC meeting, templates of memo assignments, a full bibliography on your chosen case, and reflection questions.
• The optional UN Security Council Guide, featuring an introduction to the Council and guidelines for a supplementary role-play to be conducted after the NSC role-play.
• Multimedia content includes expert videos, text, glossaries, timelines, suggested readings, and more.
• The role sheets are comprehensive role descriptions complete with case-specific interests, concerns, and research leads.
• Short-answer questions are available for assessing your students’ knowledge of the NSC and selected case, and position and reflection memos are available for assessment in the Role-play and Wrap-up sections.
• The simulation dashboard includes all you need to administer a simulation and to manage the pace, sequence, assignments, and submissions.
HOW DO I RUN A SIMULATION?

STEP 1: SELECT A CASE FOR YOUR SIMULATION

• Pick the best case for your class using the Case Library and its filters.
• Create a simulation by selecting a class level and entering a name to be shared with your students.
• Create a simulation code that your students will use to register for your simulation.
• Consult the Instructor Guide and Case Prep located under Case Resources on your simulation dashboard for tips on adapting Model Diplomacy to your unique goals and course circumstances.

STEP 2: INVITE STUDENTS TO JOIN & ASSIGN STUDENT ROLES

• Use the Manage Students feature on your simulation dashboard to invite students by email.
• Students with existing Model Diplomacy accounts will appear in your class list. New students will use the link in the registration email to join your simulation.
• Once your students have registered, assign them roles using the edit icon on the Manage Students page. Turn the “Activate Roles” toggle off if you want all students to play the role of General Advisor to the President. Keep the role toggle on if you want to assign specific roles.
• Use the Send Role Assignments function to share the role assignments with your students.

STEP 3: INTRODUCE THE SIMULATION TO YOUR CLASS

• Introduce your simulation framework to your students and ask them to review the Student Guide. Make sure they understand your goals and expectations, especially if they differ from those outlined in the Student Guide.
• Your students should review the text, videos, and other materials in sections 1 and 2 to familiarize themselves with the NSC process and the case.
• You can also encourage your students to explore the additional reading and find other sources of relevant information and analysis.
• Assign the short-answer assessments, or use them for class discussion, to check your students’ understanding. You can make these questions available to students by opening assessments through the Manage Assessments section of the simulation dashboard.

STEP 4: ASSIGN POSITION MEMOS

• In preparation for your classroom NSC meeting, assign students a position memo. The position memo should be written from the perspective of the student’s role and should offer a policy recommendation that adheres to the role’s institutional interest and concerns, as outline in the role sheets.
• Students playing the role of president should complete a presidential directive after the NSC meeting instead of a position memo beforehand.

STEP 5: CONDUCT THE ROLE-PLAY

• Students should use their position memos and role sheets to guide them through a mock NSC meeting in the classroom.
• The role-play comprises three rounds. In round 1, students briefly explain their positions, summarizing their position memos. Round 2 is an open deliberation in which students argue for or against others’ positions while defending, and perhaps adapting, their own. In round 3, students state their final policy recommendations, ideally demonstrating an ability to compromise and take into account the positions presented in the preceding rounds. Finally, the president announces a policy decision. This announcement may occur at the end of the role-play or in a subsequent class session.
Optionally, conduct a UN Security Council role-play as a follow-up to your NSC meeting. In this exercise, students play the roles of representatives from different countries considering action on an issue related to the one they debated as members of the NSC. The UN Security Council Guide and UN Security Council case-specific documents provide background information, guidance on the role-play format, an outline of the issue and possible subjects of debate, and selected readings to jump-start student research.

STEP 6: WRAP-UP

- After the NSC meeting, use the provided questions in section 4 to wrap up with your students.
- Students should shed their assigned roles and discuss their personal perspectives on the simulation experience, the policy debate, and the final direction.
- After wrapping up, assign all students the section 4 policy review memo, which they will use to reflect on the NSC process, the case, and the deliberation. This should come from their personal perspective, not their assigned role.

HOW DO I ASSESS THE SUCCESS OF THE SIMULATION?

Through a successful Model Diplomacy simulation, students will
- better understand how U.S. foreign policy is made and the complexity in creating it, as evident in the particular challenge of the case;
- actively participate in a vigorous discussion and debate and express well-informed positions based on varying interests and perspectives;
- develop and improve skills in research, critical thinking, concise writing, and public speaking; and
- reflect constructively on the policymaking process and its impact on their lives.

To help ensure that your students have benefited from the program, please consult the detailed rubrics provided in the Instructor Guide.

CONTACT US

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