



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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# **THE OHIO STATE NATIONAL SECURITY SIMULATION**

**Overview Briefing for Prospective Players**

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## What is The Ohio State National Security Simulation?

**Prof. Rudesill's personal Insta page:**

**<https://www.instagram.com/p/BbxWthvFQfP/?igshid=18tr1t0otuhc>**

**Mershon Center story on the 2021 Simulation:**

**<https://mershoncenter.osu.edu/news/five-ways-national-security-simulation-prepares-students-careers-government-and-media>**

**Lantern story on 2017 Simulation:**

**<https://news.osu.edu/students-confront-calamity-in-national-security-crisis-simulation/>**



# **What is The Ohio State National Security Simulation?**

**A large, immersive,  
real-time, multi-day,  
role assumption-focused  
national security simulation,  
at The Ohio State University**



## The Simulation starts with the world as it is

This allows players – both practitioners and students – to draw on all they know

Once the Simulation starts, the real world is modified by injects (media stories, intelligence reports, etc.) created by the Control Team and by player decisions

It is not unlike other simulated worlds from literature and film...







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NEW LINE PLATINUM SERIES

rufus  
sewell

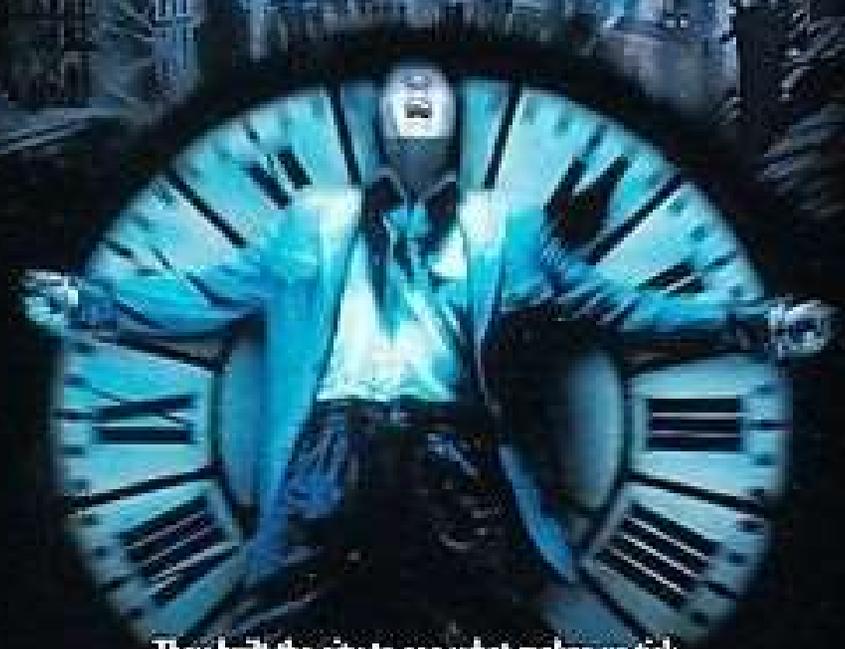
kiefer  
sutherland

jennifer  
connelly

william  
hurt

# DARK CITY

from the director of "The Crow"



They built the city to see what makes us tick.  
Last night one of us went off.



"Sets a bold new standard for science fiction!"



KEANU  
REEVES

LAURENCE  
FISHBURNE

# MATRIX







## Simulation Pedagogical Theory

- **Universities are not doing enough training for practice – in role assumption, use of decision processes, cross-profession collaboration, advisement of senior leaders, “briefing short,” and working with ethical courage and integrity**
- **Learning-by-doing – i.e., experience – is the best teacher of transferable practice skills**
- **Practitioners must be able to use both formal and informal decision-making processes**
- **Knowledge as-applied is facilitated through engagement with current issues**



# Simulation Pedagogical Theory

## Simulation:

- **Places students in-role, working with practitioner players**
- **Fosters reflection, and provides summative and formative feedback to students**
- **Requires players to use a combination of formal and informal processes to problem-solve**
- **Control Team uses injects (media, intel, in-person) to drive players toward instructive decisions and dilemmas, based on real world circumstances and historical analogies**



# Transferrable Practice Skills Taught

- A. Role assumption (understanding and playing one's position)
- B. Serving the needs of one's principal and institution, while also serving the public interest
- C. Spotting and analyzing key issues, and recognizing and working to manage multiple dynamically intersecting governance processes (agency-level, inter-agency, inter-branch, federal-state-local, and international, together with the daily news cycle and intelligence cycle).
- D. Advising and problem solving for principals and colleagues, including developing options (including not just giving Y/N answers)
- E. Communication (especially short-form written and oral, and with senior leaders)
- F. Interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork across professional and institutional boundaries
- G. The ability to prioritize and decide, with sub-optimal information and not much time
- H. Ethics, integrity, and professionalism under pressures of time, personality, and (simulated) national security consequence
- I. Information management (processing information, and protecting confidential and classified information)
- J. Integrating all of these skills, and being resilient, flexible, and adaptive



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# Simulation Pedagogical Theory





# Simulation Pedagogical Theory

- ***1. The Simulation trains students in interdisciplinary, multi-institution, and multi-profession work***
  - Reflects the realities of the real world
  - Facilitates role assumption and ethical development
  - Facilitates trans-profession communication and teamwork

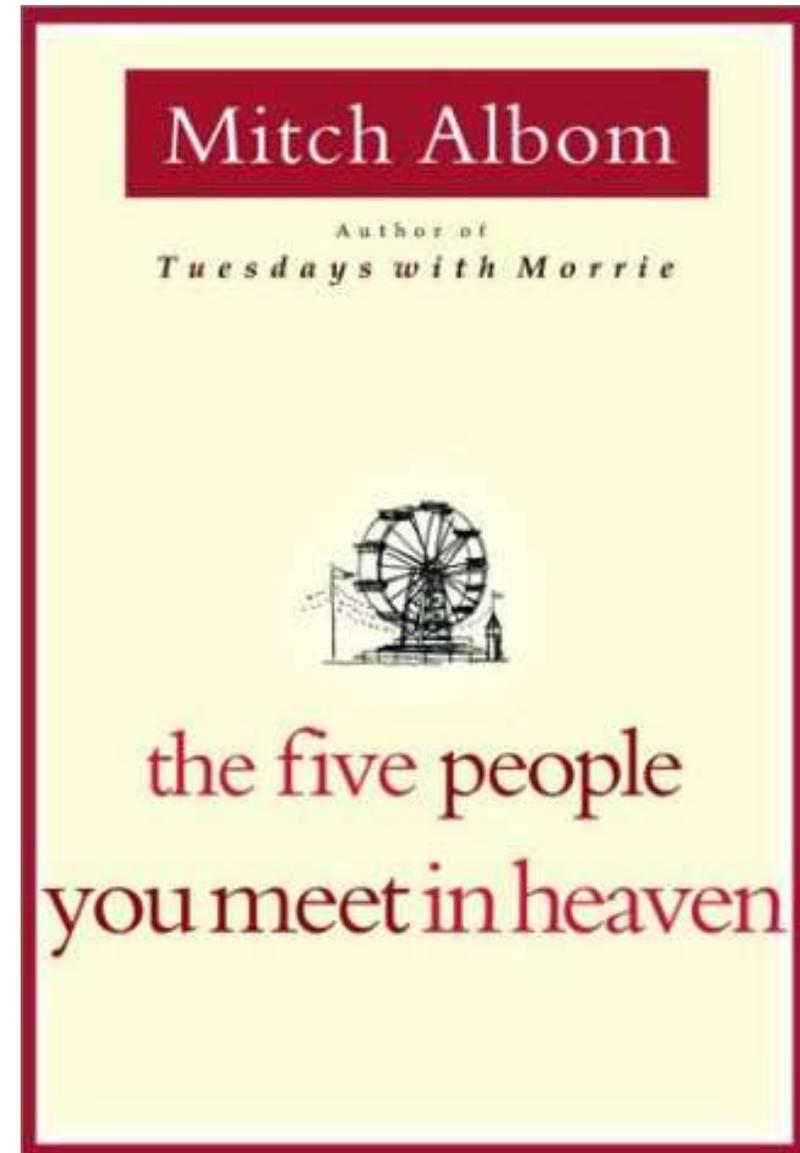


## The five advisors you meet (in national security) in government:

- **Policy**
- **Law**
- **Intelligence**
- **Military**
- **Communications**

## And outside government:

- **Business Management**





## Role assumption by students:

- **Policy roles** – graduate & undergraduate students (BA, MA, & PhD)
- **Law roles** – law students
- **Intelligence roles** – students in Security & Intelligence undergraduate major
- **Military roles** – students with military backgrounds
- **Communications roles** (reporters and press secretaries) – communications students from Ohio State and five other universities
- **Business Management roles** – MBA students





## Student and practitioner players assume roles in:

- All three branches of the federal government
- State and local government
- Press corps
- Private sector



## Participants: 180 approximately

- Players: 130
- Control Team: 40
- Logistics Team: 5
- Observers: 5





## Dynamic, interacting processes:

- **Executive Branch agency-level decision-making**
- **Executive Branch inter-agency process, focused on the National Security Council (NSC) and the President**
- **Legislative process**
- **Judicial process**
- **Lateral federalism: interaction among the federal Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches**
- **Vertical federalism: federal, state, and local interaction**
- **State and local decision-making**
- **International processes: inter-state relations and US participation in international organizations (UN, NATO)**
- **Media cycle**
- **Intelligence cycle**
- **Business decision-making**





**Example staffing of  
Simulation office (2016):**

**Senate Majority Leader Office**

- **Principal – U.S. Senator Kent Conrad (ret.)**
- **Counsel – law student**
- **Intelligence or Policy Advisor – Security & Intelligence major**
- **Press Secretary – communications student**



# Simulation Pedagogical Theory

## The Value of *Non-National Security* Backgrounds

You do not need to be a national security or foreign affairs junkie to get a great deal out of this simulation. Our players – both student and practitioner – typically have a wide variety of backgrounds and widely differing levels of familiarity with national security, international affairs, government processes, and other matters they will encounter during the exercise. Everyone will be mindful of this. And indeed, **our participants who are *not* national security junkies do everyone involved in the Simulation a favor. They reflect the important contribution to national security governance in our country of people who are not specialists in the field and yet importantly have a voice and a role to play**, be they legislators, communications professionals, business executives, or regular citizens. In real life people learn as they go, do their best, and consult the specialists as time permits – and it is exactly that way in the Simulation, too. Participants who do bring particular expertise – on policy, law, intelligence, military matters, communications, business management, or anything else – get to hone their skills in presenting what they know in a way that is useful to sharp, busy people who are new to an issue.



# Simulation Pedagogical Theory

- ***2. The Simulation provides quick and deep learning from working alongside practitioners***
  - Students have experience of working with busy senior leaders in the safety of an academic environment
  - Practitioners model how to be a professional
  - Students see firsthand the importance of “briefing short”



## Practitioners

- **In top roles in all three branches of US government, state and local government, press, private sector**
- **Are in the arena, figuring out what to do alongside the students, without advanced knowledge of the Simulation's scenarios**
- **Provide mentorship & formative feedback in real-time...and networking for jobs**



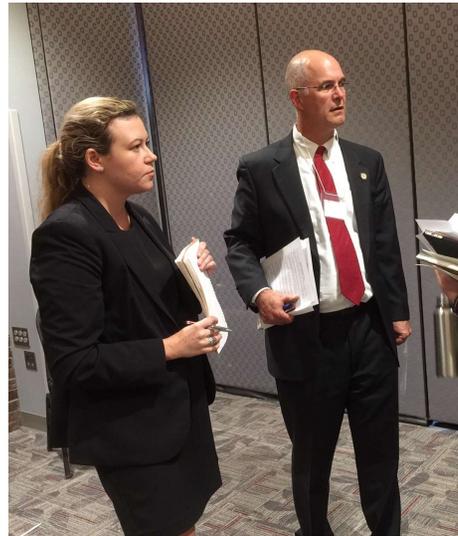
# Practitioners at Ohio State Simulation (Some):



Madelyn Creedon  
former Assistant  
Secretary of Defense



Larry Obhof  
former President of  
the Ohio Senate



Bill Pohlman  
Vorys LLC



Judge Colleen McMahon  
(SDNY)



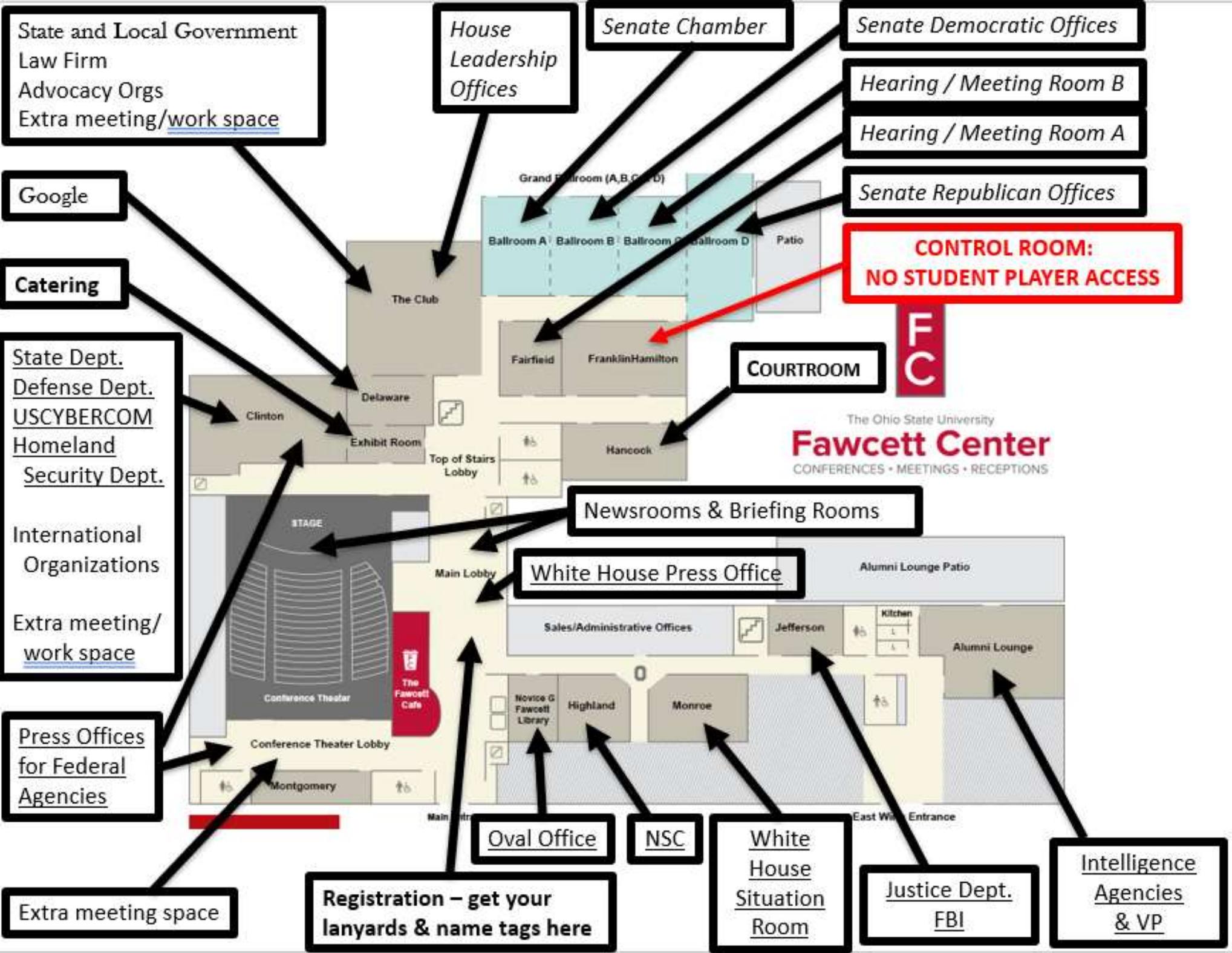
## Practitioners and keynoters in recent simulations (Some):

- **U.S. Sen. Kent Conrad (ret.) – Senate Majority Leader (2016)**
- **U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (ret.) – Senate Minority Leader (2021)**
- **U.S. Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy (ret.) – Senate Minority Leader (2016)**
- **U.S. District Judge Colleen McMahon (SDNY) – federal judge (2016, 2017, 2021)**
- **Michael Morell, former Acting & Deputy CIA Director – Keynoter (2021)**
- **Corin Stone, former Deputy Director of National Intelligence (DNI) – DNI (2021)**
- **Madelyn Creedon, Asst. Secretary of Defense (ret.) – Vice President (2017)**
- **Philip Bump, *Washington Post* – newspaper editor & reporter (2017, 2021)**
- **Ohio Senate President Larry Obhof (ret.) – Senate Majority Leader (2017, 2021)**
- **Ed Daniels, VP of Cardinal Health – Chairman, Cardinal Health (2017)**
- **Lt. Gen. Greg Biscione (USAF, ret.) – Combatant Commander, U.S. Central Command**
- **Maj. Gen. Tim McMahon (USAF, ret.) – Combatant Commander, U.S. Strategic Command**

**YOU WILL BE ASSIMILATED.**



**RESISTANCE IS FUTILE.**



State and Local Government  
Law Firm  
Advocacy Orgs  
Extra meeting/work space

Google

Catering

State Dept.  
Defense Dept.  
USCYBERCOM  
Homeland Security Dept.  
International Organizations  
Extra meeting/work space

Press Offices for Federal Agencies

Extra meeting space

House Leadership Offices

Senate Chamber

Senate Democratic Offices

Hearing / Meeting Room B

Hearing / Meeting Room A

Senate Republican Offices

**CONTROL ROOM:  
NO STUDENT PLAYER ACCESS**

COURTROOM

Newsrooms & Briefing Rooms

White House Press Office

Oval Office

NSC

White House Situation Room

Justice Dept. FBI

Intelligence Agencies & VP

Registration – get your lanyards & name tags here



# Simulation Pedagogical Theory

- **3. *Uses the full range of tech modalities***
  - **Email**
  - **Phones – calls and texts**
  - **Slack – used as social media**
  - **SimOffices – site with the websites of the organizations represented in the Simulation. Players here post statements, legislation, and other information, viewable by the Simulation's public (everyone in the Simulation)**
  - **SimNews – site that runs two news sites, one with stories written by the Control Team (The Wire) and one with stories written during the Simulation by the journalist players (The Torch)**



- All Posts
- International
- National
- Cyber
- Ohio
- Space
- Terrorism
- White House
- Pentagon
- Military
- Intelligence
- Congress
- Courts
- Civil Unrest
- Politics



## Who's the New Speaker: The Honorable Stacey Hauff

November 6, 2021 8:59 AM by Jerome Bettis for The Colloquial Courier

Effective immediately, Speaker Sean O'Brien has decided to resign his post due to illness in his family. During the roll call vote held late last night, first-term House Representative Stacey Hauff (D-OH) was elected as the new Speaker of the House. ...

## 911 Outage Linked to Google Web-based Services, Not Phones

November 6, 2021 9:51 AM by Madison Moore and Danny Fogarty

Google confirmed its web-based services are down for 911 calls in Columbus, Ohio. Ajay Shah, Google spokesperson, said the tech-giant is aware and working to resolve the situation. Columbus Mayor Rebecca Frazer said phone services are still operating ...



## Thunberg Missing

November 6, 2021 8:57 AM by Brick Tamland for The New York Times

Date: 06 NOV 21, 0900 Reports out of Norway this morning that famous climate activist Greta Thunberg has gone missing. Thunberg had been on the island of ...



## Columbus Protests Over Immigration Continue 45





# Simulation Rules

- **(1) All real world law, policy, and fact existing as of the start of the simulation apply**, unless in conflict with new law or fact that the Control Team injects, in which case the Control Team's stipulations pertain. The simulation begins with the world as it is. If you seek information beyond the simulation injects you have, think about who might have information you need, and – as appropriate – ask another player and/or *make a request to the Control Team*.
- **(2) The simulation moves in real time**, unless otherwise stipulated by the Control Team.
- **(3) Players may -- and should -- sink into their role-playing and show initiative in creating policy and law using government processes, but players cannot create facts or outcomes** (Ok: “As Secretary of Defense, I order the Navy to Antarctica.” Not Ok: “the Navy went to Antarctica at my order and saved the day.”)



# Simulation Rules

- **(4) Players can read anything** on the internet, bring any materials or information to the simulation, etc.
- **(5) Simulation play is strictly off the record.** That means you may not share simulation materials (injects, etc.) with anyone outside the simulation, nor discuss actions or decisions made by simulation players with anyone outside the simulation, without the permission of Prof. Rudesill or another professor involved in the simulation. The fact of involvement of our participants and their roles may be discussed (e.g., you can say that you role played the Secretary of State, or that former Ohio Senate President Obhof played the U.S. Senate Majority Leader), and you may discuss the simulation experience in general terms, without violating the other guidelines here.
- **(6) Dishonorable or disreputable conduct will not be tolerated** (e.g., not simulated but real hacking of passwords, posting on pages on SimOffices that are not yours, entering or listening near the Control Room, trying to get copies of injects in advance, etc.). Any such activity represents academic misconduct as severe as cheating on a final exam (indeed, the simulation is the final for many players). Abusive behavior will not be tolerated.
- **(7) All emails must have the disclaimer** mentioned immediately below. Just drop it into the signature bloc in your email when you start Sim play on Friday, Nov. 5.



## Scenario Planning: a look behind the curtain



Because the Simulation always starts with the world as it is, new scenarios are written for each Simulation

For each Simulation our Control Team prepares 2-3 major storylines, 5-10 secondary storylines, plus contextual noise and distractions

Players during the Simulation always take the scenarios in unexpected directions, and spontaneously generate new storylines

A small number of secondary storylines are re-run each time



## Example past scenarios:

- Global pandemic (2013)
- Massive Russian invasion of Ukraine (2014)
- Counter-terror strike decision against suspected terrorist leader
- Cyber attacks on US nuclear reactor
- Ohio company hacked by foreign intelligence service
- Foreign spies operating in Ohio
- Domestic terror attack in Ohio
- Secret foreign government payments to a US Senator
- UN Security Council emergency meetings
- National Guard deployments
- Civil unrest, militia activity, Insurrection Act
- North Korean nuclear threat
- Nuclear terrorism
- Legislation on national security and domestic topics (every time)
- Surveillance decisions by federal agencies and court (every time)
- Intelligence analysis and briefings (every time)
- Foreign propaganda and disinformation
- Illegal domestic surveillance program leaked to press
- CIA officer overseas in jeopardy
- Russian and Chinese naval activity triggers maritime law disagreements
- Missing submarine
- American mercenaries go to war





***Next simulation:***

***November 3-4  
(Friday-Saturday) 2023***