Social Justice

EXERCISE MANUAL
Support for this publication has been provided by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching. The views in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

Partner Universities

Unless otherwise noted, content on this site is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. Information on the creative commons license can be found at: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/
Authors

Susan Banki
Matthew Stubbs
Simon Rice
Paul Duffill
Lisa Hartley
Fiona McGaughey
Paghona Peggy Kerdo
Phil Orchard
Laurie Berg
# Table of Contents

- Introduction .......................... 1
- Brainstorming Data ................. 6
- Tactical Mapping .................... 8
- Fishbowl Interviews ................. 12
- Media and Communication Exercises 16
- Litigation Tactics ................... 19
- Role Plays ............................. 22
- Student Reflection and Debrief Exercises 26
- Appendix: Student Feedback Form 30
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the many colleagues whose invaluable advice, feedback and questions helped shape the Social Justice Exercise Manual and Social Justice Case Studies. The two manuals are the product of numerous engaging discussions we had across Australia and beyond. We particularly would like to thank our colleagues who generously donated their time to serve on the reference group for the project:

- Professor Danielle Celermajer, founder of the Human Rights programme at the University of Sydney
- Dr Annie Pettitt, Manager, Education and Innovation/Business Engagement Teams, Australian Human Rights Commission
- Dr Graham Thom, National Refugee Coordinator, Amnesty International Australia
- Dr John Tobin, Professor in the Melbourne Law School; Director of the Human Rights Tertiary Teachers’ Network; and Coordinator of the Melbourne Law School Human Rights Alumni Network
- Ms Penelope Davie, Assistant Director, Access and Participation Branch, Ministry for the Arts, Australian Commonwealth Government
- Ms Elena Rosenman, Assistant Director, Human Rights Policy Branch, Attorney-General’s Department, Australian Commonwealth Government

We would also like to thank:

- Julie Beesley, Tim Harland and Jonathan Hunter, ICT Learning Media Production Team, University of Sydney, for their invaluable assistance in producing the video deliverables for the project.
- Jonathon Chan, for his attention to detail, patience, and artistic input in carrying out the graphic design for Social Justice Exercise Manual and Social Justice Case Studies.
- Dr Martin Grabert, Director, Chief Executive Officer, Montroix Pty Ltd, our external evaluator for the project.
- The students from all seven universities who participated in the Simulations, whose feedback and comments helped shape our final products. It is to improve the quality of our students’ university experiences that we have dedicated our time.
Thank you for your interest in Social Justice Simulations. Simulations provide a meaningful and innovative way to help higher education students develop analytical and practical skills in a safe learning environment. They enliven the classroom experience and offer concrete ways to encourage students to apply a range of theoretical principles to practical situations.

For teachers who teach social justice-related courses in different disciplines such as political science, sociology, environmental studies, and law, the information included in Social Justice Simulations (Social Justice Exercise Manual and Social Justice Case Studies) serve as a starting point to design and implement simulations in the university classroom.

Social Justice Simulations posit specific social justice problems, such as the detention of a political dissident or the introduction of regressive media laws. Students are divided into groups and assigned to different stakeholders, after which they undergo a series of exercises trying to resolve or respond to the social justice problem.

There are two sets of principles that undergird the teaching of social justice issues through simulations. The first set of principles is about the nature of social justice problems.1

1. Social justice problems have complex structural issues at their source, and responses to them must take into account the varied dimensions that reinforce and maintain social justice problems, including political, economic, and social dynamics.

2. Social justice problems are embedded in a multi-spatial system that includes influences at local, national, regional, and international levels. Therefore, responses to social justice problems are most effective when they consider strategies at all levels.

3. A range of actors are part of this complex and multi-spatial system, and they do

---

not fall into neat categories like ‘the good guys’ and ‘bad guys.’ To analyse social justice problems effectively, it is critical to consider the spectrum of interests that actors hold, and learn how to collaborate and negotiate with many of them.

The second set of principles is about pedagogical principles that inform teaching simulations.

1. Group work is a critical component of simulations. While students are often reluctant to do group work (because they view it as unfair and/or more work), the necessity of learning to collaborate with other people is important not only in the social justice world but in virtually every path that students might choose for their future. Suggested group work assessment activities, presented in various Case Studies in Social Justice Case Studies, have been designed to limit the risks of free riding, the single biggest concern students typically have with this type of exercise.

2. Social justice simulations work best when they start with a Trigger, that is, a specific violation or problematic event to which actors respond. The Trigger may be a specific instance of abuse, such as the arrest of a protestor, or an event that will spark advocates to rally, such as a proposal to build a mine in an indigenous area. If the simulation has an environmental slant, the Trigger may be a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or a cyclone. While problems of social justice are obviously much more complex than that, a specific manifestation of a problem will draw students in and give them a base for understanding dynamics and responses.

3. Students learn best when they receive information through a range of sources, and have numerous opportunities to think through this information. Role Plays offer students a way to put their ideas into practice in a safe learning environment.

4. While students prefer a structured atmosphere, introducing some elements of surprise into a simulation forces students to apply their knowledge more broadly. ‘Wild cards’ consist of additional pieces of information, such as press releases or media stories, that are formulated before the simulation and can be played by the ‘Simulation Control’ – i.e., the teacher running the exercise – at any point. Wild cards can be used to draw attention to specific principles or issues or to serve as a catalyst for more reflection by students. Wild cards can also include events and developments that potentially shift relationships and alliances between stakeholder groups. They do not need to be used, or can be used at different times, giving a significant flexibility element to the simulation. See Social Justice Case Studies pages 72 to 75 in Case Study 6: Responding to mass atrocities: the role of the United Nations Security Council for examples of wild card events.

5. Fishbowl exercises – where students watch each other perform in their roles – have several pedagogical advantages. First, students learn from each other’s performances, and their reflections on each other’s work are likely to benefit both the giver and the receiver. Second, students may work harder and perform better when they know that they will be watched by their peers. Third, being observed by one’s peers is in many instances more difficult than being observed by one’s

---

Thinking About Triggers

Triggers present specific violations or problematic events to which actors respond. Page 2 gives a brief introduction to Triggers. Triggers can take a variety of forms, depending on a range of factors such as the particular topic chosen for a simulation, the disciplinary focus of a course (for example political science, sociology, law, or environmental studies), or students’ level (such as undergraduate versus postgraduate).

Some possible Triggers include:

- The injury or death of a victim of an abuse
- The arrest of a protestor or journalist
- The displacement of a family from a region of conflict
- The destruction of a village by armed forces
- The proposal to build a mine in an indigenous area
- The announcement by a ruling party to cancel or ignore elections
- The pollution of local waters following an oil spill
- An earthquake or cyclone

---

‘Real Life’ and Learning

Bear in mind that at times trade-offs need to be made between ‘real life’ and opportunities for student learning. Some exercises are intentionally designed in a less realistic manner in order to maximise student learning. Fishbowl Interviews are one such example, in that students observe each other carrying out mock interviews, which would in reality be confidential and not open for others to observe. These departures from real life are appropriate as long as the debrief clarifies which elements reflect reality and which do not.
work supervisors or clients, so students who have practiced skills in front of their classmates may be more comfortable performing such tasks later in the ‘real world.’

6. Students will more fully appreciate the multi-spatial nature of social justice problems if the assigned groups are diverse in their regional reach. Some organisations can be local in their outlook, while others may operate on national or international levels. Ideally Case Studies will include actors at these different levels. For example the assigned groups in Case Study 1: Peacemakers and warriors: Self-determination in West Papua, Indonesia include international human rights organisations, regional advocacy groups, and local community organisations. However sometimes a simulation needs to be run in a shorter space of time or needs to focus on a particular field or subject area. In that case student groups may focus more on a particular spatial level or levels, as in Case Study 3: Human rights law and the ‘Northern Territory Emergency Response’ for example, where all groups focus on the community and national level.

7. Simulations can be run in two modes: in real time or in rounds. Real time simulations feature events which unfold over the course of the assigned time. Examples include a media conference or a hearing in which all players interact from beginning to end. Round-based simulations give participants the chance to respond to actions in stages. Rounds have discrete outcomes such as a policy decision or a draft of a resolution. With rounds, participants have an opportunity to respond to individual actions in the subsequent round. The end of the round can also provide for a period of either formal or informal reflexive self-evaluation by the students. Case Study 6: Responding to mass atrocities: the role of the United Nations Security Council in Social Justice Case Studies is an example of a round-based simulation.

8. The Case Study can be real or fictional. Likewise, the Trigger used in a simulation can be real or fictional. Case Studies included in Social Justice Case Studies provide various examples of these. For example Case Study 6: Responding to mass atrocities: the role of the United Nations Security Council is a fictional Case Study (involving the invented country of Zanda) and uses a fictional Trigger. As that scenario is fictional and therefore cannot be compiled from existing resources, information on this scenario has been included in the appendices attached to Case Study 6. On the other hand Case Study 7: Offshore processing of asylum seekers: a multilateral human rights negotiation is focused on a real situation – the Australian government’s transfer of asylum seekers to a detention centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea – but involves a fictional Trigger based around an imaginary asylum seeker named AB who is detained at the Manus Island Detention Centre. Background information included in the appendices attached to Case Study 7 further illustrates how a fictional Trigger can work within a real-life situation. Case Study 1: Peacemakers and warriors: self-determination in West Papua, Indonesia is based on a real situation – the current situation in West Papua, Indonesia, where the indigenous population desires self-determination – as well as the real Trigger event of a university student who was shot dead by the Indonesian military in 2013. A list of resources on this real Case Study is included in Appendix 1A at the end of the West Papua Case Study.

9. Simulations can be run either in conventional face-to-face classes or online. One Case Study in Social Justice Case Studies includes an online simulation: Case Study 9: Women’s rights in Australia: a United Nations’ treaty body simulation. This simulation utilised the software gotomeeting to enable groups of students to interact together using webcams, the microphone on their computer, or

Creating New Simulation Case Studies: Real or Invented?

Teachers and curriculum planners may also wish to create their own simulations. Creating a fictional Case Study for a simulation often requires more work initially but is less work over the longer term as it doesn’t need to be updated every time it is run in response to new developments in the real world. On the other hand basing a simulation around a real Case Study may require less work initially but may require more work when it is run again in the future to keep it up to date with current events as the real-world situation continues to evolve.
by telephone. One of the advantages of online simulations is that both on-campus and distance students are able to take part and interact together. There are technical and logistical challenges to running online simulations, however. Technological challenges include finding the most appropriate software and addressing the barriers that students may face in accessing high speed internet and understanding the technology. Logistical challenges including finding suitable time slots for a diverse student group with differing work and family commitments and in various international time zones.

10. Role Plays that do not allow time for reflection and debrief are incomplete and will concretize neither knowledge nor critical thought. Further, a debrief gives students the emotional space to reflect on their role in the simulation or the real manifestations of social justice problems, because these can emerge quite strongly in Role Plays. Either in the classroom or in reflective assessments, students must have the time and space to reflect on the simulation. Students should be made aware that such reflection is also important outside the classroom, in the ‘real world’, where those working in human rights and social justice benefit from reflection as a tool to maintain their own emotional welling as well as improve outcomes, build and maintain relationships, and design effective strategies.

Simulations have a number of educational benefits. They enable students to develop practice-oriented skills and integrate these skills in real time. They provide insight for students into how groups advocate to protect the interests of vulnerable individuals and they emphasise the care that must be taken in working with other stakeholders.

Finally, simulations have the potential to arm students not only with skills, but with hope; in 2009, the report Courting the Blues brought to light disturbing research into the mental health of those engaging in the study and practice of law. One of the interesting findings was that many students entering into the study of law did so because they ‘wanted to make a difference.’ Eighteen months into their studies, they had lost this idealism. Simulations demonstrate that by engaging in activities aligned to students’ interests and potential professions, they can hope to make a difference.

Adhering to these principles, simulations can be adapted to small or large classes. They can also be broken down into discrete segments such as one-hour tutorial segments or longer lecture periods. They can also be short activities – run over a single week for example – or can be designed to build on students’ learning outcomes over the course of an entire semester.

As part of an inter-university teaching project funded by the Australian Government’s Office for Learning and Teaching, seven university partners developed the materials in this book. These include the Social Justice Exercise Manual, which provides teachers with a step-by-step guide to carrying out some of the simulation exercises we found most effective, and Social Justice Case Studies, which provide detailed explanations of the seven Case Studies we designed ourselves. We encourage you to adapt these simulations and design your own, using these as a guide. You may also find our teaching video, ‘Social Justice Simulations’ (7:47), helpful which you can find on the Filling the Social Justice Gap web page at: http://sydney.edu.au/arts/research/global_social_justice_network/simulation/index.shtml and at the following address: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKP49TmlV6Q&list=PLXSDVg9HvDBqbD-cogz1ef5wyUxuie84AB&index=1.

We hope you enjoy the materials that follow.

### Summary of Key Dimensions for Designing New Simulations

1. Group work
2. Trigger
3. Range of data sources on social justice issue
4. Wild cards (optional)
5. Fishbowl exercises
6. Regional reach
7. Real time or in rounds?
8. Real or fiction Case Study and Trigger?
9. Face-to-face or online?
10. Reflection and Debrief
Brainstorming Data

Overview

Brainstorming Data helps students to think critically about the role of information in understanding and addressing social justice issues. It sharpens students’ powers of epistemological analysis by having students evaluate the utility of different kinds of information as applied to a specific social justice issue. It also has the potential to improve students’ technical skills in information collection and presentation.

The exercise begins by presenting different aspects of data and then having students consider what kinds of data would be useful to collect for a given social justice issue.

Preparation

- Generally this exercise will be more effective if it is run after the presentation of the issue and the Trigger, so that students can apply the concepts to the specific social justice situation they are studying.

- On the day, you will need the following:
  - Examples of data relevant for the particular social justice issue
  - Whiteboard markers/other supplies to record tactical ideas in front of class

Stages of the Exercise

Introduction

- Review different aspects of data (qualitative vs. quantitative, primary vs. secondary) and the advantages/obstacles of using each
Discuss how to establish/assess the credibility of sources in relation to this social justice issue (How do we know what we know about these violations? From where has the information been sourced, and is it credible?)

**Data Types**

Ask students to review the following types of data and consider which would be useful given the social justice issue:

- Interviews: Whom would you interview, and why?
- Direct observation: If you could go to the site of the abuse, what would you look for/record?
- Survey data: What questions would you pose in a written questionnaire or census?
- Advocacy/policy documents: What data might you use from advocacy groups or policy documents? What are the benefits and drawbacks of using this secondary data?
- What national/international datasets might you seek out?
- What local records might you try to obtain, and can you do this without jeopardizing anyone's safety?

**Debrief**

Discuss ideas with the whole class, or in groups.

*Variation: The Brainstorming Data exercise can also be adapted to be carried out after the Tactical Mapping exercise, as shown on page 43 of Social Justice Case Studies in Case Study 4: Women's rights in Australia: a United Nations' treaty body simulation.*

**Useful Resources**

Useful resources for this exercise will depend very much on the topic selected. This may include reports from advocacy organisations such as Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch or datasets from the World Bank. The following book chapter serves as a useful theoretical starting point for students to consider the role of knowledge in shaping how we understand the world:

Tactical Mapping

Overview

Tactical Mapping gives students the opportunity to visually plot the actors and relationships that comprise a specific social justice situation or crisis, facilitating learning outcomes of both a practical and analytical nature. Ideally working in groups and using large pieces of paper, students identify relevant actors, note the important relationships between them, and then analyse appropriate responses.

One drawback of the exercise is its difficulty to assess by academic standards.

Preparation

Materials and Student Instructions

- Students will be presented with the social justice issue and Trigger (written or video). Ideally, students will have received comprehensive information about this issue in advance. See the appendices at the end of Case Study 7: Offshore processing of asylum seekers: a multilateral human rights negotiation in Social Justice Case Studies for an example of a Case Study briefing, including a sample actor briefing paper and actor summaries. The other Case Studies in Social Justice Case Studies also include lists of resources relevant to the specific social justice topic.
- Students are assigned to their roles in different groups (advocacy organisations, media, government, etc.).
- Students will have been assigned material in advance about Tactical Mapping (See Useful Resources, below), including the video: ‘Mapping for Human Rights and Social Justice’ (5:05) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qck9aucjnVk.
- Students will need materials to post/present the maps after they are completed:
  - Large sheets of paper for each group
  - Coloured pens/pencils
  - Sticky notes
  - Tape
- Instructors may want a digital camera to take pictures of each map

Time Frame

1.5 to 3 hours
Logistics
A room with moveable tables and chairs is better so students can work in their groups.

Stages of the Exercise

Introduction

- Present the Trigger, either through written or video materials (See page 2 for more information and a text box about the Trigger)
- Review the principles of Tactical Mapping, drawn from readings and video (see Useful Resources below)
- Distribute large sheets of paper, coloured pens/pencils, and sticky notes

Creating the Maps

Students create Tactical Maps, ideally in groups. Students are instructed:

- Start with a one-on-one relationship at the centre of the map. For example:
  - Torturer and torture victim
  - Police abuser and victim
  - Detention guard and asylum seeker
- Discuss inner circle of relationships – those that have direct, face-to-face contact with the centre relationship. Graphically represent, as described below.
- Discuss local actors next; then national, then regional, and then international. Actors at each level should be drawn in outwardly moving concentric circles.
- For each relationship, think about relevant actors, and then identify the following:
  
  1. What is the nature of the relationship between the two?
     - Is it based on money, love, power, or something else? (Use different colours for different kinds of relationships)
     - In what direction does the power move? (Use arrows to denote this)
     - Is the relationship positive or negative or neutral? (Indicate with symbols)
     - What is the strength of the relationship? (Use thin or thick lines)
  2. What kind of actor is this?
     - Is the actor a legal body, an informal body, a coalition, or an individual? (Indicate by shape)
     - Is the actor powerful? (Indicate by size)
     - Is the actor sympathetic to the cause? (Indicate by colour)
     - Does the actor respond to particular incentives? (Note with symbols)
Showcasing the Maps

Each group puts its map on the wall, and groups have the chance to view each other’s maps. Encourage students to spend some time looking at ‘the whole picture’, paying attention to patterns in shapes, colours, and sizes.

Adding Tactics

1. Students consider strategies in relation to the social justice issue. Strategies may have been discussed in advance, or students may have been asked to come up with potential strategies when they created their maps. This will depend on desired learning outcomes and time. An example of a tactical worksheet that can be used by students can be found in Appendix 1D of Case Study 1: Peacemakers and warriors: self-determination in West Papua, Indonesia, in Social Justice Case Studies.

2. Students are instructed:
   - Choose three ‘target actors’ whose behaviour/policies/actions you want to change
   - Looking at the map, consider the connected relationships to the actors, and discuss which actors might induce that change
   - Decide on up to five tactics to attempt to change that behaviour
   - Place sticky notes on each of the three target actors, and write the tactics on each sticky note

Group Presentations

Each group presents its map to the class (about 5 to 10 minutes per map).

Variation: If time is limited and you have a large number of groups, groups can present to each other instead.

Debrief

Students discuss the process and substance of the exercise.

Possible questions for discussion include:

- What actors were missing, if any, from your group’s map?
- What relationships were easy to understand, and which were more difficult?
- What information on the map proved most useful once you began discussing strategies?
• In this exercise, actors and relationships were foregrounded and strategies determined later. Was this process of formulating responses useful?
• How was working in a group?

Variation: Students can write an individual reflection as an assignment if time is limited.

Useful Resources

Fishbowl Interviews

Overview

Fishbowl Interviews allow students to think about, prepare for, and then practice the art of interviewing people with the purpose of obtaining information that can be useful for human rights and social justice causes. The exercise develops students’ skills in strategic thinking and information analysis, and it prepares students to listen carefully in real time and respond in sensitive ways. Additionally, the exercise can be designed to encourage students to consider a range of ethical issues.

Students are given different characters to interview (such as a victim or local trader), from whom they are expected to obtain information relevant to the social justice issue. Students must prepare questions in advance, and carry out a 10-minute interview in front of their classmates, who observe the interview as in a fishbowl—that is, they can watch and hear, but they cannot participate. The characters to be interviewed will have detailed profiles from which to answer questions, and they can be played by external volunteers or by classmates, but because surprise can be one element of the exercise, it is not ideal for classmates to interview one another.

Fishbowl Interviews take a great deal of preparation, particularly for the teacher, but once the character profiles are fully developed, they can be repeated for future classes with relative ease. Students enjoy the exercise but they often find it stressful because they are expected to perform in front of their classmates.

Requiring students to prepare for and carry out 10-minute interviews is a useful pedagogical tool, but it must be noted that because of its brevity, the exercise does not accurately capture the depth of information gained from an interview or all the stages of a real interview. Allowing students to carry out full-length interviews would be exceptionally time-consuming, however.

Time Frame

Varies depending on the number of interviews to be conducted

Time, ‘Real Life’ and Fishbowl Interviews

In reality, one cannot create a safe interview environment nor obtain important information from interviewees sensitively and effectively in 10 minutes. However, with limited time in the classroom, short interviews are sufficient to accomplish the goals of the exercise because students learn by preparing for the interviews as well as carrying them out. Likewise, conducting the interview fishbowl style is unrealistic, as confidentiality is one of the key aspects of a real interview. Students nevertheless learn from watching each other conduct interviews and carrying out their own under the scrutiny of their classmates.
Preparation

Prior Exercises

Students will have already been presented with the social justice issue and Trigger and will have been assigned to their roles in different groups (advocacy organisations, media, government, etc.).

Materials and Student Instructions

- Character profiles for each role (this should be given to the volunteer who will play the role in advance of the day).
- Props/costumes for each interviewee role, such as a tie or sunglasses (optional, but students appreciate small touches like this)
- Video/audio camera to record interviews (optional)
- Students receive information about how to conduct interviews (See Useful Resources, below)
- Video: ‘How to Interview’ (6:23) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNcMlzHkOvU

Logistics

Prepare the character profiles and share them with the volunteer actors well in advance so that the volunteers have a chance to read through and understand their interviewee roles.

Interviewee Assignment

Each student (or group) is assigned a particular interview for which they have to prepare. Ideally, students are given at least one week to prepare the interview.

Examples of interviewee roles:

- Victim of abuse
- Witness to the abuse
- Medical practitioner who treated/received victims of abuse
- Local trader or townsperson who knows the area well
- Defector from the perpetrator side
- Prison guard who promises to speak on condition of anonymity

Character Profiles

For each interviewee role, the teacher will need to prepare a detailed profile so that the volunteer who plays the role will know how to respond to questions. Character profiles should include a summary of character, the motivation for why the character has agreed to be interviewed, the general message that the character is trying to get across, specific information that the teacher wants the character to share, and possible ‘interventions’ during the interview, i.e., difficult moments that the character creates. These interventions may include a character who: attempts to bribe the interviewer, becomes visibly upset, engages in hyperbole, etc. It may also be useful for profiles to link to ‘real’ sources that would be useful for the volunteer actor.

Interviewees: Beyond Victims and Witnesses

Rather than all the interviewees being victims or witnesses, some variety is suggested to encourage students to consider the many human sources that can be useful in obtaining information.
Volunteers should receive their interviewee profile in advance of the interview, so that they can review it and offer any suggestions or questions to the teacher. See Appendix 1C after Case Study 1: Peacemakers and warriors: self-determination in West Papua, Indonesia in Social Justice Case Studies for an example of an interview profile.

Recruiting Volunteer Interviewees

Volunteers may include former students, research assistants, tutors, friends, or drama students. The most important criteria are that volunteers are reliable, act with sensitivity about the human rights/social justice issue, and remain in character (i.e., refrain from advocating for their own personal human rights/social justice position, as distinct from their character’s). They need not be actors.

Note: teachers can also play the roles themselves, but that will make it difficult to concentrate on marking and assessments.

Stages of the Exercise

Conducting the Interviews

• Each group/student conducts the interview in front of the class with a volunteer playing the role of the interviewee.
• The rest of the class is expected to take notes on the information gleaned in the interview, as well as noting how information is shared/excluded.

Debrief

Teacher engages in a debrief with students after this (often stressful) exercise. Questions to further discussion may include:

• What was realistic in this interview and what wasn’t? (this is important so that students don’t make light of the exercise)
• What was difficult about preparing for the interview?
• What was difficult about conducting the interview?
• What information did you learn and what information do you now wish you had been able to obtain?
• What other steps might you take to confirm or contextualise the information you obtained?
Useful Resources


Media and Communication Exercises

Overview

Media and Communication exercises highlight the importance of framing arguments effectively and presenting information appropriately to target audiences. Students are tasked with preparing an opinion piece for a newspaper and preparing to speak at a news conference. These writing and speaking exercises are primarily non-academic in nature, but they arm students with important media skills that have been positively received by students.

Timing of the Exercises

Elements of the Media and Communication exercises can take part before, during or after the main Role Play meeting (see the Role Plays chapter below). Case Study 1: Peacemakers and warriors: self-determination in West Papua, Indonesia in Social Justice Case Studies shows one example of how media exercises can be arranged around the Role Play meetings.

Preparation

Prior Exercises

Students will have already been presented with the social justice issue and Trigger and will have been assigned to their roles in different groups (advocacy organisations, media, government, etc.).
Materials and Student Instructions

Students receive material about engaging with the media (See Useful Resources, below). Teachers may also consider inviting as a guest lecturer someone who is experienced in writing opinion articles.

- Students receive an assignment (either in groups or individually) to write an opinion piece for a specific news source. The teacher can either assign the targeted newspaper/publisher or allow the students to select their own. If students are permitted to select their own news source to target, their assignment might also require students to analyse why they chose a particular publication. This assignment should be given at least a week in advance.

- Students are told that there will be a (simulated) news conference at which they will be expected to present, and they must prepare a 30-second speech to deliver at the news conference.

Logistics

- Because this exercise has a presentation component and a group collaboration component, it is ideally carried out in a flexible working space, easily changeable from a lecture format to a group work space, and back again.

- On the day, to give the exercise a realistic feel, it may be useful to ask someone to play the role of a cameraman and videotape the speeches. These can be used afterwards by students to critically examine their performance.

Stages of the Exercise

Opinion Piece

Each group/student reads his opinion piece out loud, in the front of the class. The rest of the class is told to note arguments and evidence presented from the opinion piece and write down questions, to be submitted to the teacher. The public presentation of a written piece gives students a chance to understand the power of language as a written and spoken form. Asking students to critically evaluate their classmates’ work engages them throughout the exercise and allows them to learn from one another.

News Conference

At some point during the Role Play, a news conference is scheduled. Groups/students from different groups are instructed to collaborate together to speak at the news conference for a designated period of time. Students then must decide if they will present their original 30-second speech or if they will work together to produce one unified salient message.

Q & A

At the close of the news conference, the teachers (or other volunteers) play the role of journalists attending the news conference and call out tough questions, calling on students to answer in short sound bites.
Useful Resources

While the resources above are useful for general information about media and communication, these are best used in conjunction with media about the specific social justice issue, which can be used as exemplars.


Using the courts is an appealing tactic, for both social justice advocates and lawyers. Its principal attraction lies in its potential to be a transparent and impartial mechanism for accountability of both private and state conduct. That potential is realised in publicised cases, but what is not publicised are the many more occasions when the tactic fails. A decision to use the courts requires critical analysis, and caution.

This exercise exposes students to the realities of litigation as an effective tactic, and alerts them to practical and ethical issues in engaging in litigation for and with victims of social injustice.

Students are briefed on legal causes of action that might arise from the facts of the social justice issue presented. Replicating the lawyer’s process of evaluating possible legal responses, each proposed cause of action is plausible, but none are necessarily certain, or even likely, to succeed. As a first stage – but not one that is necessary to the exercise – students assess the legal merits of the proposed causes of action to arrive at a sense of which, if any, might be pursued, other things being equal. Of course, other things are not equal, and it is here that students – students of other disciplines as readily as law students – must assess the practical and ethical merits of pursuing litigation to achieve a social justice outcome. Tactical considerations will be different for different characters and groups in the simulation, so the exercise can be done in role.
Preparation

Prior Exercises

Students will have already been presented with the social justice issue and Trigger and will have been assigned to their roles in different groups (advocacy organisations, media, government, etc.).

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare an outline of the proposed causes of action. Preparation of this outline and preparation of the proposed causes of action takes time and quite sophisticated legal knowledge, and is best done in consultation with lawyers who are knowledgeable in different areas of law, such as tort, contract, equity, public and administrative law, and in specialist areas of law raised by the social justice issue presented such as environmental and planning law, anti-discrimination and human rights law, criminal law and so on.

- Prepare a projected slide of the Considerations:
  1. Financial cost to the litigant/s
  2. Risk of an adverse costs order
  3. Time and delay in pursuing the case
  4. Personal and emotional demands on the litigant in pursuing the case
  5. Lawyers’ ethical duties (for example client’s best interests; abuse of process; reasonable prospects of success)
  6. Likely outcomes – for the litigant’s and more broadly – if the case is successful
  7. Permanence or transience of likely outcomes
  8. Other measures necessary to achieve, secure and consolidate litigation outcomes.

- Prepare and provide the prescribed reading materials (see Useful Resources below for some examples).

Materials and Student Instructions

- A week before the class, students receive a written briefing – and, in the case of students of other disciplines, an oral in-class explanation – on possible legal causes of action.

- Students read the prescribed materials.

Stages of the Exercise

- In their groups, students discuss and reach agreement on the list of Considerations that have to be addressed before deciding: 1) for victims, whether to pursue a litigation tactic to achieve an outcome, or 2) for defendants and other interests,
how to respond if litigation commenced.

• The Considerations are best displayed on a projected slide as a point of reference for the groups during their discussions.

• Each group presents on their conclusion, identifying competing considerations and, if necessary, any further information they feel they would need to decide.

Useful Resources


Role Plays

Overview

The Role Play is the culminating exercise of a Social Justice Simulation, and gives students the chance to put into practice the principles and skills that they have learned from the simulation thus far (and more broadly, from the course being taught). The setting of the Role Play necessarily varies depending on the social justice issue presented and the time available, but it generally revolves around a meeting/series of meetings where all of the actors and student groups are present and required to interact to negotiate/debate/lobby. Role Plays ideally posit meetings on several multi-spatial levels (local, national, international) and are most effectively carried out in groups.

In general, Role Plays require significant preparation, both for students and for teachers, and are best carried out with several volunteers to play some of the simulated roles. Most students very much enjoy taking on a role and using different parts of their brain, but it can be a stressful part of the simulation for those who don’t like to present publicly and also for students who have concerns about how their performance will be judged or how group work will be assessed. To address the former concern, teachers do not have to require public speaking from all students in a group. To address the latter concern, some careful planning and clear communication about how students will be assessed can be useful. This includes assuring students that they will not be judged on their acting or performance during the Role Play, but on their reflections of the events that take place during it. See the chapter below on Student Reflection and Debrief Exercises for more details.

As Role Plays are most effective when they are designed with a specific topic in mind, the steps described below are skeletal in nature. See the accompanying Social Justice Case Studies for examples of specific Role Plays.

Preparation

Prior Exercises

Students will have already been presented with the social justice issue and Trigger and will have been assigned to their roles in different groups (advocacy organisations, media, government, etc.). Students will have already completed skills exercises, such
as those presented in the previous chapters, to prepare for the Role Play.

**Materials and Student Instructions**

- Students are given information about what the Role Play will entail and exercises for preparation. Such information will depend on the design of specific Role Plays, but generally should include:
  - Information about how the simulated meeting actually runs (this is particularly important if the meeting in question has procedures that would be otherwise unknown to the students, such as the Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council)
  - Detailed instructions for how students should prepare for the Role Play, particularly in relation to assessment tasks and marking

**Logistics**

Logistics will vary widely depending on the topic, but some key points to remember are:

- Try to reserve room that allows for students to move desks around so that a meeting can be simulated easily.
- If the Role Play includes a formal meeting or conference, prepare in advance a seating plan for how to arrange the room, and set up the tables and chairs before the students arrive.
- If the Role Play requires volunteers to play roles, ensure that you have the contact information for all volunteers, and that the volunteers have relevant information: contact information of the teacher, parking information, location of the specific room of the simulation, who will meet them when they arrive, etc.
- If possible, brief volunteers in the days leading up to the Role Play, rather than briefing them on the day itself as you will likely be very busy on the day with other preparation tasks and some volunteers may arrive late and miss the briefing session.
- Prepare name tags and placards for different roles, including for volunteer actors and for assigned spaces/tables in the room. This identification:
  - Enhances the student experience and helps students to stay ‘in role’
  - Helps everyone to remember who is who during the Role Play
  - Assists the groups to quickly organise themselves
  - Will help the teacher to remember details for marking and assessments later on
- Provide simple props/costumes for volunteer actors, even something symbolic such as a gavel, tie, shawl, or hat. This will improve the performative aspect of the event and help both students and volunteers take roles seriously and stay in role throughout the exercise.
- Bring a camera to document the work of the students and if possible ask someone to take photographs during the day.
- Set aside plenty of time for students to debrief and de-role, i.e., to step out of their roles (See the Student Reflection and Debrief Exercises chapter below).
Stages of the Exercise

Multiple Spatial Levels

Role Plays are carried out ideally on multiple spatial levels:

- **Local Role Plays** take place at, or near, the site of the human rights/social justice violation. They encourage students to think quite directly about the local impact of the abuse, and those who locally respond. A good example of a local Role Play is a community consultation, which would include a range of actors trying to make a decision about a particular policy or draft a statement in response to an external event (such as the Trigger).

- **National Role Plays** are often centred on targeting government officials in the capital city, addressing policy decisions and seeking media attention. A good example of a national Role Play is a Senate Inquiry, for which students would have to prepare information for a witness or prepare draft documents for distribution.

- **Regional Role Plays** bring together blocs of countries who address specific issues. They encourage students to delve into the varied motivations and actions of different countries in the region, and to consider how to use these motivations as leverage on an issue. A good example of a regional Role Play is a meeting of consultations between NGOs and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), where government and NGO delegates would be exchanging information on regional political or economic policies.

- **International Role Plays** often mirror United Nations events and in this regard, are commonly simulated in school and university settings (Model United Nations is likely the most well-known example). Other good examples of international Role Plays include annual shareholder meetings of multinational corporations, international civil society conferences such as the Global Social Forum or international trade meetings, such as a simulated repeat of the 1999 World Trade Organisation meeting in Seattle and the associated ‘Battle of Seattle’ protests.

Examples of Case Studies

As noted above, Role Plays are most effective when they are designed with a specific Case Study in mind and the steps described here are skeletal in nature. See the accompanying Social Justice Case Studies for examples of specific Case Studies and their Role Play activities.

Debrief

Following the Role Plays, a debrief will be necessary (See the Student Reflection and Debrief Exercises chapter below).
Useful Resources


Student Reflection and Debrief Exercises

Overview

An important exercise to include in every Social Justice Simulation is a student reflection.

Student reflection and debrief exercises serve several important purposes:

- Reinforcing student learning by giving students the opportunity to articulate their learning, and receive peer and teacher feedback
- Prompting critical reflection and appraisal of the Social Justice Simulation experience and the real social justice context
- Assisting students in discussing the emotional impact of the Social Justice Simulation and making them aware of relevant resources and sources of support
- Providing feedback to the teacher of the simulation
- Assessing student learning

The student reflection exercise is most likely to be beneficial if completed as close in time as possible to the specific simulation exercise to which it relates, or if it relates to the entire Social Justice Simulation experience, then as close in time as possible to the final simulation Role Play.

Time Frame

Varies depending on time available and the type of reflection chosen. A verbal debrief between a teacher and small group of students may be carried out effectively in 15 minutes, while a structured form of reflection that requires input from the entire class may last more than one hour. Written reflections that students complete at home can be assigned to be completed over several days.
Preparation

Teacher Preparation

Whether a Student Reflection and Debrief Exercise is a loosely-structured verbal debrief in small groups, a more structured verbal debrief in a larger group, a written reflection, or a student feedback questionnaire, students need to do more than merely describe their experience in the Social Justice Simulation. Teachers need to prepare prompts/questions that elicit critical thinking, rather than simply a description of what occurred during the simulation.

Further, in any Social Justice Simulation, it is important to be mindful of potential emotional impacts (whether arising from the subject matter covered, the experience of role-playing, or working in groups), and ensure that students are made aware of sources of support that are available to them (see for example Useful Resources below).

Materials: Questions/Prompts for students

A student reflection exercise in a Social Justice Simulation should give students the opportunity to:

- Articulate what they have learned
- Receive teacher and/or peer feedback
- Engage in critical thinking and appraisal of their experience, over and above simply describing events that occurred at the simulation. Thus reflection is an opportunity for students to deepen their awareness of the distinction between analysis and description, and make the link between theory and practice.
- Provide feedback to their teacher
- Discuss any emotional impacts and become aware of relevant resources and sources of support

Teachers should prepare questions/prompts for the students to ensure that their Student Reflection and Debrief Exercise addresses each of these elements.

Other Materials

Handout of resources relating to potential emotional impacts and relevant sources of further information and support (see Useful Resources below for some examples).

- Optional: Student feedback form (see the Appendix for an example)

Stages of the Exercise

The student reflection exercise can take many different forms, depending on the nature of the Social Justice Simulation and the wishes of the teacher. The following are examples of possible formats:
Verbal Debrief

Loosely structured verbal debriefs with small groups of students, where students can discuss the experience at length. These may be appropriate for small class sizes or within tutorials of large classes.

Structured Reflection

A student reflection exercise followed by a verbal debrief may be appropriate for classes that have engaged in several simulation exercises and require a more extensive reflection. At the end of a simulation, students can answer a structured series of questions, prompting students to consider both the substantive issue of the simulation and the process-related issues involved in identifying, hearing, understanding and responding to stakeholder interests and behaviour. This can be combined with a student feedback form (see below). This can be followed by a full class discussion reflecting on the structured questions.

Assessed Written Reflection

Students can be asked to write a reflection, either individually or in groups, on their experience in the Social Justice Simulation. This can be part of the formative or summative evaluation of the course (see the below section on student feedback form for more details of formative and summative evaluation in the context of the Social Justice Simulation). Feedback from the teacher on the written reflections, whether individual or collective, is an important part of the learning process.

Student Feedback Form

The student feedback form can focus on both summative and formative questions. In the context of the Social Justice Simulation summative evaluation generally focuses on how the Social Justice Simulation helped students to meet pre-defined learning objectives of the course (such as the learning outcomes set out in the course outline). Formative evaluation on the other hand generally involves gathering feedback from students about what their own learning priorities are. A standard student feedback form was developed for use by each Case Study of the Social Justice Simulation to help answer these summative and formative questions. This is included for reference in the Appendix.

Variation: The student feedback form can also be combined with the structured reflection (see above).
Useful Resources


- The Faculty of Law, University of Western Australia also has an excellent resource page on resilience with regard to mental illness within the legal profession and law schools in particular: Resilience. Retrieved from [http://www.law.uwa.edu.au/students/resilience](http://www.law.uwa.edu.au/students/resilience)
Appendix: Student Feedback Form

The following standard student feedback form was developed for use by each Case Study of the Social Justice Simulation to help answer both summative and formative evaluation questions.

Human rights/social justice Simulation: Student Feedback Form

Please take a few minutes to provide feedback on the human rights/social justice Simulation that you have undertaken in your class. Your feedback is valuable to us and will contribute to improvement in the design, teaching and materials used for the Simulation in which you participated and others around Australia.

I. Student Information

Age: ........................................ years

Gender: Male □ Female □

University
UTS Adelaide ANU Curtin La Trobe Sydney UQ

Are you an undergraduate or postgraduate student? Undergraduate □ Postgraduate □

What is your degree?

What is your discipline area / major (if applicable)?

Are you an international or domestic student? International □ Domestic □
II. Skills for Responding to Rights Violations

Thinking about the Simulation and the activities that you undertook, please indicate (by circling your preferred choice) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 disagree</th>
<th>3 neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>6 not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>I have a better understanding of the complex nature of the legal, institutional, social and cultural dimensions of rights violations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>The ability to understand these complexities is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>I have a greater awareness of the multi-spatial nature of rights violations (that is, that rights violations can be considered at local, national and international levels).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Awareness of the multi-spatial nature of rights violations is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>I am better able to analyse and productively respond to the different interests and motivations of various actors associated with rights violations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Analysis of the different interests and motivations of various actors is an important skill to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>I have a greater awareness of the sorts of evidence and practical data that are necessary to make a convincing case that a particular rights violation requires action.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>Awareness of the sorts of evidence and practical data necessary to make a convincing case for action is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>I am better able to understand the role public awareness raising plays in responding to rights violations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Understanding this role of public awareness raising is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>I have improved my ability to effectively communicate about human rights/social justice issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Effective communication about human rights/social justice issues is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>I am more aware of the skills that will help me address the complex real-world problems associated with rights violations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>Being aware of skills that help me address the complex real-world problems associated with rights violations is important to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Being involved in a practical Simulation helped me to gain skills relating to human rights and other social justice issues that I could not gain in a conventional academic classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Experience of the Simulation

Please provide feedback on the following questions.

1. What aspects of the Simulation did you find most useful to your learning?

   Insert answer here

2. What exercises were particularly useful or not useful to building your skills?

   Insert answer here
3. Please comment on your personal experience of the group work and on the utility of the group work component of the Simulation.

Insert answer here

4. In what ways would you suggest the Simulation could be improved?

Insert answer here

5. If a friend asked you to sum up your impressions of participating in the Simulation, what would you tell them?

Insert answer here
IV. Personal and Professional Development

Thinking about the Simulation and the activities that you undertook, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I found participation in the Simulation to be personally satisfying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I expect that the skills I was exposed to through participation in the Simulation will be helpful to my future professional and career development.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation in the Simulation helped me to think about my personal values and goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participation in the Simulation stimulated my thinking about my professional goals and future career options.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am more confident that I can find a personally and professionally fulfilling career having participated in the Simulation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Experience of Personal and Professional Development

Please provide feedback on how participation in the Simulation contributed to your personal and professional development.

Insert answer here
VI. Closing Comments

Finally, do you have any other comments about the Simulation?

Insert answer here

Thank you for your feedback!