

Simulation Checklist

While this guide is not prescriptive, it lists practices other instructors have found helpful in working with simulations in their teaching. These are all things to consider BEFORE you've introduced the simulation to the class. For more information about using simulations in the classroom, please email centerforteaching@bc.edu.

1 - Identify Learning Goals

- What knowledge / skills should students gain by participating in this simulation?
- How does the simulation facilitate further engagement with course/discipline specific learning goals?

2 - Design

- Identify a specific scenario that represents an authentic challenge in the discipline, and write it out in a way that fosters student success and engagement.** Simulations allow instructors to eliminate unwieldy or unexpected challenges that may arise in the “real world.”
- Structure the simulation into representative tasks that build toward addressing the challenge.**
- Within this scenario, **create individualized roles** for students that capture the essence of expertise or understanding that you want the students to display within the scenario. Keep a list of specific, attainable tasks expected of each individualized student role. Keeping a list of attainable tasks will assist the instructor facilitate assessment.
- Identify the role of the instructor in the simulation.** Will the instructor be active within the simulation? Will the instructor be available for guidance? If so, will this guidance come from within a fictionalized role or as a “pause” in the flow of the simulation?
- Determine a method of assessment for the simulation.** How will students be assessed for their participation in the simulation? What aspects, if any, of the simulation are graded? Will a final product be required and assessed, or is the process of developing the final product what's being assessed?
- Develop a set of debriefing questions in alignment with your specific learning goals.** Preparing these questions before the simulation runs will help to keep your debriefing process focused on the original learning goals you determined rather than the unexpected outcomes of the simulation.

3 - Assessment

- ❑ **Create guides or rubrics to distribute to students.** This helps assessment, but also benefits student understanding of their role within the simulation.
- ❑ **Determine the vantage point of the assessment.** Does the assessment come from within the simulation or outside of it? Is your assessment process or product focused?
- ❑ **Consider the value of peer-assessment.** Peer assessment can motivate students to remain engaged in their roles in the simulation. By providing students with guidance through the peer review process, in the form of a rubric or a discussion on expectations, students will be able to effectively learn from one another.
- ❑ **Find ways to offer low-stakes feedback.** Offering students feedback not connected to grading encourages students to take risks in their application of new skills.

4 - Debrief

- ❑ **Facilitate your debrief in separate environment from the action of the simulation.** Moving to a new physical space models the metacognition required of the debrief process.
- ❑ **Consider the benefits of different methods of debriefing.** Group discussions, exit interviews, and written reflections are all beneficial modes of processing the simulation and integrating the experience within the course goals. Oftentimes these can all happen in one debrief process to various advantages. The option for written debriefing allows students the time for a sustained reflect on their experience in the simulation. An oral debrief in a group setting
- ❑ **Create a narrative account of the simulation to establish a common ground for student reflection.** This can encourage beneficial student responses that will generate fruitful, reflective discussion. Offering this narrative account can help students to synthesize their experience in relation to simulation learning goals and larger course objectives