



The Teaching-Research Nexus

A guide for academics and policy-makers
in higher education

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Examples from Australian universities

Using Simulations to Effectively Enhance Research Skills in History Students

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Broad discipline area:

Arts and Humanities

- History

Year level:

- Second year undergraduate

TRN strategy:

- Design learning activities around contemporary research issues

Teaching and learning context:

- Small group classes/tutorials
- Research activity
- Group/team work
- Inquiry-based learning

Brief description of the initiative:

The focus of the *Pacific War* course is on simulations of research environments. They are in the second year of the Bachelor of Arts (History) program, with typical enrolment numbers of 45-60. In the simulations, students work in groups of three and must use their research skills in order to resolve a variety of scenarios posed in the simulation. For example, the students are told they will be contract historians who must help prove a case in which the Japanese government are being sued by a group of women allegedly forced into prostitution by the Japanese army during World War II (also known as 'comfort women'). This type of task helps the students to understand that historical research is valuable to a range of professions, and the skills required by research are applicable in a variety of situations. Each student group is marked on their presentation and materials they prepare for the simulation. Feedback indicates that students enjoy the novelty of these simulations:

'Tutorial presentations infinitely better than any other tute I've ever had b/c [it] stimulated thought and people are more likely to listen to these

made up scenarios than some person simply reading an essay answer to a question out loud (as happens in other classes) therefore keeps tutes fun!
Student, HIST 2500, 2002

'Having topics and 'settings' for presentations made them more interesting' Student, HIST 2500, 2004.

For further details:

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Handout/Teaching materials:

From HIST 2500 Course Guide

Collaborative Presentation

History and documentary film

Today our tutorial becomes a Production Meeting for a History Channel documentary on the United States and its entry into World War II. Our first collaborative team will present briefing papers for the meeting on the issue of what the United States did or did not know with regard to Pearl Harbour. The report will explore the theories that have been aired over the years and offer a tentative conclusion on its findings as a recommendation to the producers. The production meeting will then decide how we will present this information.

Collaborative presentation

History and Journalism

Today's tutorial will take place in the newsroom of a major newspaper. The editor has assigned some of her journalists to explore the issue of suicide bombing in light of September 11 and the continuing use of suicide bombers in the Israeli/Palestinian dispute. She wishes you to prepare a draft story on Kamikaze pilots that attempts to give the magazine's readers some understanding of how the practice was commenced, why Japanese pilots were prepared to engage in such activities and its success as a weapon of war. A sub-editors meeting will then debate the veracity of your story and whether it should be printed.