

Fuel for the Future Role Play

ABSTRACT

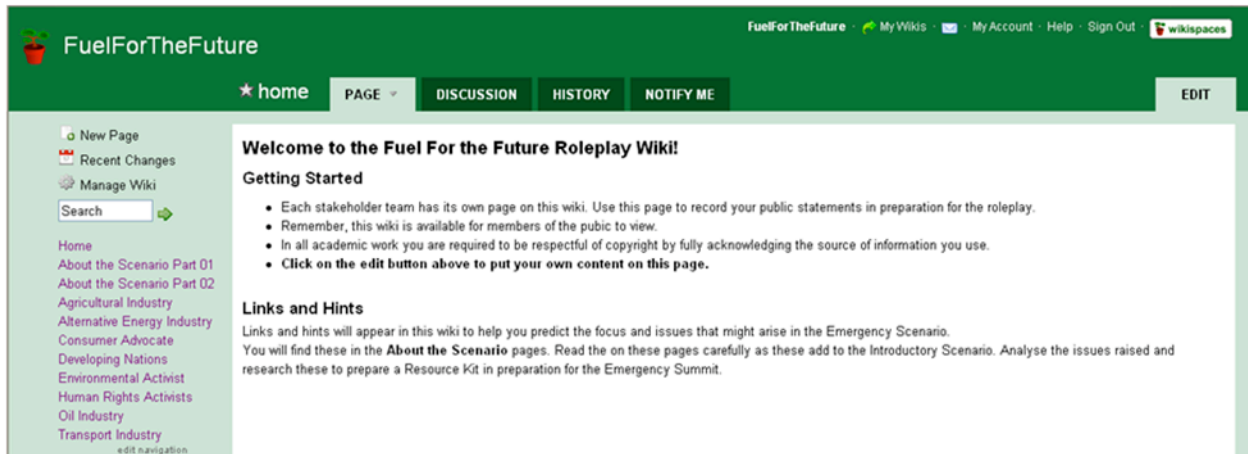
Fuel for the Future is a blended role play in which participants debate the need for the world to transition to a post-oil age. Using a problem-based learning framework, participants work in teams to investigate probable global energy futures from the perspective of one of 8 stakeholder groups. Stakeholders come together in an Emergency Summit through which they attempt to shape a global response to an energy crisis presented in an emergency scenario.

KEYWORDS

Peak oil, sustainability; oil crisis; alternative energy; simulation; foundation studies; international education.

CONTACT

Elizabeth Rosser, UNSW Foundation Year, e.rosser@unsw.edu.au



DESCRIPTION

The introductory scenario positions participants in the centre of a debate between those who think a peak in global oil production is at hand and those who think remaining supplies are plentiful. Participants form teams to represent one of 8 stakeholder groups with particular interests in the shape of the world's energy future.

Industries: Oil; Alternative Energy; Agriculture; Transport

Advocacy: Human Rights; Environment; Developing nations, Consumers

Teams conduct research in preparation for an Emergency Summit at which they must generate an Action Plan in response to an emergency scenario impacting on the world's energy future.

AUDIENCE/GROUP SIZE

- University preparation level course in International Studies
- 32 students divided into 8 stakeholder teams
- Scalable for fewer or more participants with minor modifications to role play design

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Participants are provided with an opportunity to further develop their:

- Understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives which inform debates on energy use, sustainability and globalisation
- Understanding and appreciation of roles played by various actors influencing energy policy
- Skills of academic questioning, research and argument
- Collaborative and reflective learning

TIME AND SETTING

- The role play involves contemporary fictionalized scenarios hypothesizing possible energy futures
- *Fuel for the Future* is played over five weeks in the second semester of the Foundation Studies subject, *International Issues and Perspectives*, including background research, interaction and debriefing. 'In-role' interaction is conducted over four weeks.

RESOURCES

Fuel for the Future is delivered using a mix of face-to-face and online learning activities.

- Online activities are conducted via a LMS, primarily using discussion boards and content files. Private team spaces are provided for information exchange.
- Stakeholder teams publish their response to briefing activities on a role play wiki. An early example can be viewed at <http://fuelforthefuture.wikispaces.com/>
- **Websites** provide support for participants in understanding issues raised in the role play
- **Documentary Film** *A Crude Awakening: The Oil Crash*, Madman Films

ASSESSMENT

Performance in the b-Sim contributes 25% towards the formal course assessment mark.

Team performance at the Emergency Summit is assessed according to the:

- Quality of analysis demonstrated in a stakeholder mind map
- Response to the Emergency Scenario demonstrated in the team Action Plan

Individual performance is assessed through a debriefing report reflecting on:

- International issues relating to energy futures
- Different stakeholder perspectives and how lenses impact on responses
- Personal performance and progress (learner & team member)

ROLE PLAY PROCESSES

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Stage 1 | Briefing Warm-up activities |
| Week 1 | <i>A Crude Awakening: The Oil Crash</i> , Madman Film |
| Stage 2 | Investigation Teams submit via wiki a response to the introductory scenario written through the lens of the stakeholder role they represent. This response includes the challenges and problems that their stakeholder group faces as a result of the events of the scenario, and the questions that arise out of the scenario from the point of view of their stakeholder role. |
| Week 2 & Week 3 | Teams have two weeks to undertake research into issues confronting their stakeholder group in relation to energy for the future as well as strategies for addressing these issues. They prepare a Resource Kit to help them respond to an emergency scenario. |
| Stage 3 | Emergency Summit Teams attend a face-to-face Emergency Summit conducted during which they must respond to the Emergency Scenario through the lens of the stakeholder role they represent. Each team must create a mind map visually representing their response to the scenario. After considering all stakeholder responses there is an opportunity for participants to ask questions of each other before teams develop their Action Plan to address the issues arising out of the Emergency Scenario. Teams have 3 minutes to explain the key points of their Action Plan to the Emergency Summit. At the conclusion of presentations participants de-role and cast dollar votes for the most effective strategies. |
| Week 4 | |
| Stage 4 | Debriefing A formal debriefing meeting is held at which participants discuss their experiences and outcomes of the role play. The role play concludes with the submission of a formal debriefing report through which individuals distill salient lessons they have gained from the role play experiences. |
| Week 5 | |

FACILITATOR ISSUES

Allow 3 hours for the Emergency Summit.

REUSABILITY

Fuel for the Future may be suitable for use in undergraduate courses within a variety of disciplines including Mining, Social Science and International Studies. This role play could be used for cross-disciplinary learning.

LINKS

This role play is a modification of the *Beyond Oil Role Play* conducted at UNSW Foundation Studies. For more details about either of these role plays please contact Elizabeth Rosser e.rosser@unsw.edu.au.

- Fuel For the Future Wiki <http://fuelforthefuture.wikispaces.com/>
- Sydney Peak Oil http://sydneypeakoil.com/peak_oil_clock/
- Wolf at the door <http://wolf.readingliitho.co.uk/>