

ISAGA

*International Simulation and Gaming Association
May 2004*

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ISAGA 2004 Conference

Bridging the Gap: Transforming knowledge into action through gaming and simulation
35th Annual Conference of the International Simulation and Gaming Association (ISAGA) and Joint Conference of SAGSAGA.
6.-10. September 2004.
Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, Germany.
Contact: isaga2004@sagsaga.org



There will be three **Special Sessions:**

Simulation / gaming for Technological Infrastructures and Utilities;
session organizers: Dr. Ivo Wenzler (Accenture; Delft University of Technology)
and Dr. Igor Mayer (Delft University of Technology).

The art & science of design: the interplay between design-in-the-large and design-in-the small;

session organizer: Prof. Dr. Jan H.G. Klabbers (KMPC – NL; Department of Information & Media Science, University of Bergen, Norway)

Gaming Simulation for Urban Management and Urban Planning;

session organizers: Prof. Dr. Paola Rizzi (wid, Italy), Professor Toshiyuki Kaneda (University of Nagoya, Japan)

When visiting the web site, look at the variety and volume of activities that the conference hosts have assembled for a pleasurable and informative visit to the wonderful city of Munich. The section for Venue currently informs the reader of planned events and will shortly alert participants of hotel accommodations. The city is filled to the brim with countless historic treasures and a variety of activity. Participants have already begun to register for the conference. Do not be left out, or pay higher fees by procrastinating beyond the deadline. Set www.sagsaga.org/isaga2004 as a web site favorite.

See you in Munich!

ISAGA 2004 Summer School: The art and science of simulation and gaming design.

30. August - 4. September 2004.

Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, Germany .

There is a price reduction by 10% for SAGSAGA/ ISAGA Members.

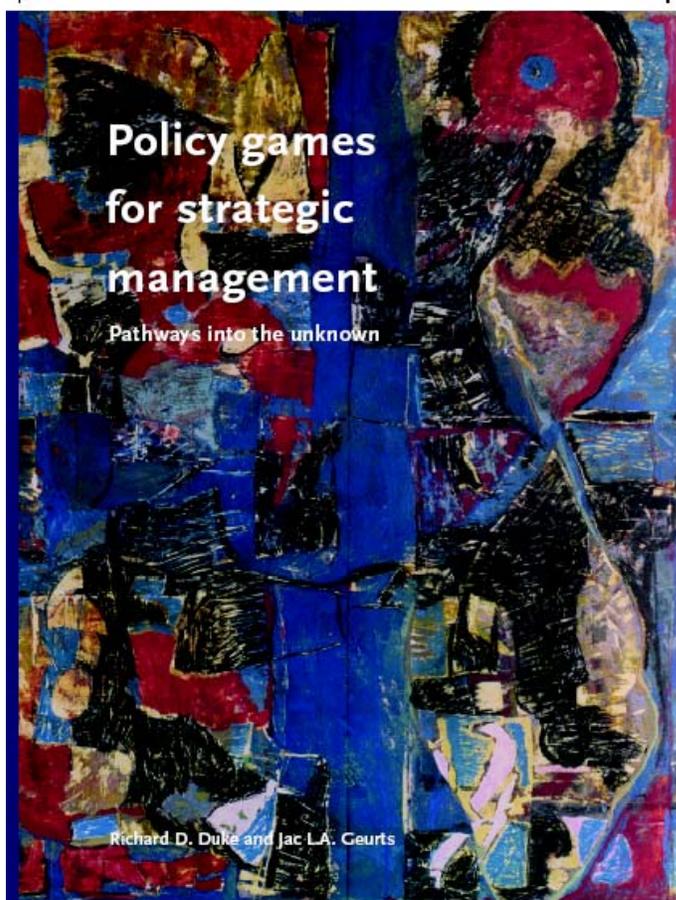
Contact: isaga2004@sagsaga.org

SAGSAGA Cooperation: Simulation and Gaming Platform at Learntec 2004.

SAGSAGA in cooperation with Learntec held a Platform for Simulation and Gaming at the Learntec 2004 <http://www.learntec.de/> at Karlsruhe on 11 February. There was also a member's meeting. SAGSAGA Members paid a reduced entrance fee of 50 Euro instead of 405 Euro. There are plans for having this cooperation again in 2005.

There will be a SAGSAGA Networking Meeting in Zürich/Switzerland on Friday/ Saturday 14-15 Mai 2004. It is free of charge for Persons interested in SAGSAGA and its work.

For more Information please contact SAGSAGA website www.sagsaga.org.



Members in Print

Rickard Duke and Jac Geurts recently released a new strategic management policy text “Policy Games for Strategic Management: Pathways into the Unknown.” In this book, Duke and Geurts argue for integrating gaming-simulation into traditional management approaches to ensure that decision makers can attest to delivering the best decision derived from optimum information for successful execution. The authors frame their research as identifying ‘macro-problem characteristics’ approach. The approach ‘must

be faster, employ many different persons, be reasonable in cost, be flexible and be capable of assimilating a very larger number of variables’ from both internal and external sources.

Richard Duke is Professor Emeritus of the University of Michigan’s College of Architecture and Urban Planning, and former Chairman of the Certificate Program in Gaming/Simulation of the Rockham Graduate School at the University of Michigan.

Jac L. Geurts is Professor of Policy Science at the Social Science Department of Tilburg University in the Netherlands. He teaches strategic management at the TIAS Business School at Tilburg University. Dutch University Press offers the text. Please see the ISAGA website for complete ordering information.

Dutch University Press offers the text. Please see the ISAGA website for complete ordering information.

New Simulation and Gaming Association Initiated in The Netherlands

The next meeting of the ISAGA Steering Committee will be filled with activity. One piece of activity is the introduction of a newly organized simulation and gaming association in The Netherlands. Pieter van der Hijden offered to ISAGA newsletter, “After meeting about 10 years on an informal basis, the Dutch gaming professionals decided on March 18th to raise their own association.”

Pieter is the webmaster for ISAGA website and is actively involved in simulation and gaming. Pieter continued “SAGANET will be [the associations] name: the Simulation and Gaming Association – The Netherlands.”

Jan Klabbers reminds ISAGA steering committee members that at the next meeting of the ISAGA Steering Committee SAGANET will apply for ISAGA affiliation. More information will be available at the time of the annual ISAGA meeting in September.

For the moment the SAGANET contacts are: Vincent Peters (vincent.peters@planet.nl), Richard Scalzo (scalzo@fsw.eur.nl), Igor Mayer (i.s.mayer@tbm.tudelft.nl), and Pieter van der Hijden (pvdh@sofos.nl). Or, if you prefer, visit the SAGANET website using the following link www.saganet.nl.

News from the Executive Committee

Jan Klabbers is actively engaged in building collaboration between ISAGA and DiGRA. DiGRA, the Digital Gaming Research Association is an international association that focuses on digital games and activities. The association is a non-profit, interdisciplinary group that studies digital games. November 2003, DiGRA held its first conference titled "Level Up." More than 300 participants attended the conference. Participants were mainly from humanities and faculties of art. The primary stated objective was interest in studying video gaming ("digital gaming") as part of new media. This new media extends to new features of cultural expression. Additionally, several video game designers participated in Level Up. While it is expected that young people in the 30-35 years of age engage in digital gaming, Level Up participants were mostly younger people. DiGRA anticipates conducting annual conferences on digital gaming.

Drs. Frans Mäyrä and Bob Appelman provide the following regarding DiGRA's direction, goal, and objectives.

What Is DiGRA?

Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA) is

- a non-profit, international association dedicated to the study of digital games
- a network for academics and practitioners whose work focuses on digital games and associated activities.

DiGRA Is An Interdisciplinary Association:

- DiGRA proposes that theory of games should both be informed by, and inform, contemporary game development, production and retail.
- The association promotes collaboration between academic and other research institutions, as well as with commercial organisations, trade associations, independent members of the games industry and policy makers.

Interdisciplinary Agenda

DiGRA aims to support and promote the academic study of digital games and develop its recognition as a field of enquiry with, and raising, distinct questions relating to:

- theory and aesthetics of games and gaming
- gaming and information technologies
- production, demand and consumption of games
- social, political and ethical issues related to digital games and gaming
- interactive media, gaming cultures and globalisation processes, among others.

Serving The Needs Of The Research Community

The association encourages high-quality research on digital games and promotes the dissemination of work by its members through research, development, commercial, practitioner and policy communities, networks and organisations. Practical means of achieving this will include:

- annual conference: see www.gamesconference.org
- online resources: www.digra.org
- a series of association publications on current digital games research.

Elysabeth Leigh has agreed to become the "Affiliate Member Seat DiGRA representing ISAGA". She was the candidate that responded positively to a request for candidates for that job.

For further information on DiGRA, please visit DiGRA website at www.digra.org.

Are you – Researching or Writing About Facilitation

As invited guest editors for a 2005 edition of S&G we seek contributions on the topic of facilitation in simulations and games. In this context, the term ‘facilitation’ refers to the skills and capabilities for managing simulations and games for learning. Both the term and relevant skills, have received little attention in journals or conferences in the field. Yet they contribute far more to the achievement of intended outcomes than is suggested by this lack of attention, and evaluation of facilitation receives even less. We aim to publish a coherent set of resources to support skill improvement, research and awareness of this critical component of the field.

As guest editors, researching facilitation, we hold the following propositions –

1. Effective facilitation contributes to achieving relevant learning outcomes, but if done poorly, can destabilise even the best designs (there are no facilitator-proof designs).
2. Facilitation requires an understanding of participants as complex human beings. You are facilitating far more than the sequence of events.
3. Good facilitation may appear effortless but is highly conceptual, deeply analytical (even if not consciously so at any particular moment) and the result of extended reflective experience

4. Identifying opportunities to support - rather than control - learning is the basis of good facilitation
5. The facilitator's style and the design parameters of an activity must be congruent
6. Different people have different approaches depending on their understanding of education, its various purposes and the ways that learning occurs, which influences their choices of activity
7. Where there is incongruence between facilitation style and activity design the learning potential is seriously weakened, and there is a higher potential for negative emotional responses to the experience. These in turn require an even more skilled response.
8. The ability to facilitate can be learned – experience is vital, reading can only give conceptual awareness, not skilled ability

We are seeking articles that take up (or challenge) any of these issues and/or explore any of the following themes (or ones of similar intent if you wish to propose a variation or alternate)

1. What basic group dynamics frameworks and theories about the human factors do facilitators need to know to be able to operationalise the role effectively?
2. What are the skills and capabilities of an effective facilitator? To what extent are these context specific?
3. How do you learn to be a good facilitator? How do you help others to do so?
4. What are appropriate ways to research and evaluate facilitation and enactments of the role of facilitator?
5. How do you appropriately construct and manage the experience of a simulation or game where the intent is research as well as (or rather than) learning?
6. What are useful recovery strategies – how to bring a group back into focus after an event that disorients or otherwise inhibits the learning?

To be considered for inclusion we'd like to receive a brief (approximately 500 word) outline of your theme or area of interest. This does not need to be formally referenced. It is a guide to your thinking and an aid for us in planning the final format. We would like to keep authors in touch with each other and with the overall project.

Please see the journal web site at <http://www.unice.fr/sg/authors/index.html> for a guide to preparing the final manuscript.

Please direct all responses and enquiries to Elysebeth Leigh (Elysebeth.leigh@uts.edu.au) or Laraine Spindler (laraine.spindler@uts.edu.au)

Research Project About Aspects Of Facilitating Learning In Simulations And Games

Dear Reader,

We are seeking your help with a research project about aspects of facilitating learning in simulations and games. Accompanying this note is a two-page questionnaire. It takes only a few minutes to complete and we would like you to read the following information and instructions and then complete the questionnaire.

Our research concerns perceptions of the nature of ‘good facilitation’ of learning in the context of using simulations and games. At present we have a number of propositions and are developing ways to test them. Three propositions are that:

1. There must be congruence between a facilitator’s style of operation and the design parameters of an activity
2. Approaches to facilitation vary depending on an individual’s understanding of the purposes of education and ways in which learning may occur. The nature of this understanding influences the form of learning strategies chosen.
3. Where there is incongruence between the facilitation style and the nature of a learning activity the learning potential is seriously weakened. At such times there is potential for learners to respond negatively to the experience. This in turn may require an even more skilled response.
- 4.

To begin the process we are using a revised version of the work of Christopher and Smith (Christopher and Smith 1987*) who developed a ‘spectrum’ approach to describing the very different nature of simulations and games.

Their spectrum is represented in the questionnaire as a number of statements set in contrast to each other. You are invited to read each ‘pair’ of statements (reading across the page) and then select the number – on *either* the right *or* left of the centre line – that most nearly reflects the strength of your preference for activities having one or other of the characteristics described by the pair. Place a tick (✓) in the column below the number that best represents the strength of your preference. If you are interested in seeing the overall pattern of your preferences you can complete the “Totals” column at the end of page 2.

Please fax your response to Elysebeth Leigh at +61 2 9514 3939 or email Elysebeth (Elysebeth.leigh@uts.edu.au) or Laraine (laraine.spindler@uts.edu.au) for a Rich Text Format version that can be completed and returned as an attachment.

We plan to publish the results of this survey in a future edition of the newsletter, as well as expanding on the research in an edition of Simulation and Gaming that we are guest editing. Please see the separate message calling for expressions of interest in providing an article for this edition of the journal.

*Christopher, E. M. and L. E. Smith (1987). Leadership Training Through Gaming: Power, People and Problem Solving. London, UK, Kogan Page.

Survey Instrument

Thinking about your preferences for teaching / learning environments

For each of the paired statements below

First identify whether the statement to the left or the right of the 'greyed out' column best describes the kind of activity you prefer to use when training.

Then indicate the strength of your preference for this mode, by circling the appropriate number. '1' indicates a small level of agreement and '3' indicates a strong agreement.

'This is the problem: how will we solve it?'	3	2	1		1	2	3	'This is the situation: what will you do?'
(1) Players are encouraged by facilitator's briefing to share general assumptions about the game and develop 'togetherness'.								(1) Briefing is aimed to reveal diversity of group and disparity among members' views
(2) The facilitator is perceived as a benevolent authority figure.								(2) Players are not encouraged to look to the facilitator for direction.
(3) Differences among players are shown to be functional - encouraging division of labour								(3) Differences among players is not assumed to relate to tasks – may create conflict.
(4) Facilitator forms teams, gives instructions, sets the scene; answers questions; is seen to be in control								(4) Leader says and does as little as possible.
(5) The setting of the game and the characters have a 'past'. Players are asked to imagine events that happened prior to the action of the game. They begin at a point of crisis.								(5) The game setting has no 'past' all the action takes place 'on stage'. Players face a 'situation to explore' not a 'crisis to solve'.

'This is the problem: how will we solve it?'	3	2	1		1	2	3	'This is the situation: what will you do?'
(6) The characters are constrained by detailed information and specific role instructions.								(6) There are few rules, little detail is provided. There are opportunities for chance happenings on the whims of the players.
(7) Players are organized into teams or sub-groups. They all play by the same rules.								(7) Number and arrangement of players are comparatively unimportant. Groups may have uneven numbers, or individuals may work alone. Some interpret the rules differently from others.
(8) The players' point of attack is a moment of crisis.								(8) The players embark on a journey rather than grapple with a crisis. Thus there are multiple plots and diffuse action.
(9) There are distinct steps or stages in the game, directed by the leader and occurring at fairly regular intervals with the aim and effect of progressing the action along specific lines. There is a sense of order and regular pace.								(9) Stages in the game are not clearly marked. Some seem more important than others. Changes occur because of the activities of the players and are due to general causes. Pace and rhythm vary. There is no sense or order and balance.
(10) Each step proceeds logically from the one before. The action is goal-oriented and forward looking								(10) Minor actions spin off from major ones in an apparently illogical manner. The characters are process-minded and present-oriented
(11) There is a single line of mounting pressure, with stimulus towards cooperative problem-solving and emphasis on outcome.								(11) Emphasis on players' reactions to situation as it develops; less compression of events, more chance happenings. Events are diverse - emphasis is on behaviour, not outcome.
(12) Players' choices become increasingly limited as events close in to constrain them.								(12) There are multiple lines of action, a need for individual decisions. Events do not accumulate to confine the players.

'This is the problem: how will we solve it?'	3	2	1		1	2	3	'This is the situation: what will you do?'
(13) Observers' interest focuses on how the players will solve the problem rather than what they are doing, which tends to predetermine the nature of the outcomes; there is a sense of inevitability								(13) Players act autonomously. constrained only by their real-life restraints. There is room for 'deviant' (minority) opinion and behaviour.
(14) Players derive pleasure from shared experience. Conflict is seen as reconciliatory. There are problems and answers								(14) Players find themselves more thoughtful than pleased. There is a lack of certainty and an awareness of new possibilities.
Overall total for this side								Overall total for this side

When you have indicated your preferences please add the scores on either side of the *black column* to get a score for each side of the line. To do this, use the number at the top of each column as the value of each 'X'. Thus each 'X' in a column headed 2 is worth 2 points.

ISAGA General Secretary Search Committee

The General Secretary Transition Subcommittee reports that work continues on the ISAGA's General Secretary duties/responsibilities. This task is to develop the duties and responsibilities of the ISAGA General Secretary, a key position to the continued development and expansion of simulation and gaming worldwide network. In addition to identifying duties and responsibilities, the Subcommittee is pursuing candidate proposals for General Secretary as Jan Klabbers will relinquish this position he has held for many years.

Calendar of Events 2004

Date	Event	Contact/Website
7-9 July	SAGSET, UCO Campus, Angers, France. IPSA, ESEO.	Fred Percival www.ms.ic.ac.uk/sagset/
30 Aug - 4 Sept	ISAGA 2004 Summer School: The art and science of simulation and gaming design. Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich,	Willy Kriz www.sagsaga.org isaga2004@sagsaga.org

	Germany.	
6-10 Sept	35th Annual Conference of ISAGA and SAGSAGA, Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, Germany.	Willy Kriz www.sagsaga.org isaga2004@sagsaga.org
3-6 Nov	NASAGA 2004 Washington, DC	Charles Petranek www.nasaga.org

Do you have news for the Newsletter?

If you have an item of interest to the ISAGA community, and you want to reach a wide audience, send your information to one of the ISAGA newsletter editors for inclusion in the next issue of ISAGA News. ISAGA News is published four times a year in the N&N Journal. Additionally, the newsletter is posted to the ISAGA web page assuring wide distribution of your news item.

Newsletter editors: Nina McGarry, nmcgarry@gwu.edu ; Thomas Eberle, office@thomas-eberle.de; and Fumitoshi Kato, fk@sfc.keio.ac.jp

Expect to read the next newsletter December, 2005.

Contributors to this Newsletter:

Robert Appelman
Richard Duke
Thomas Eberle
Jac Guerts
Jan Klabbers
Willy Kriz
Elysebeth Leigh
Laraine Spindler

Newsletter Editors:

Nina McGarry
George Washington University
Thomas Eberle
University of Passau, Germany
Fumitoshi Kato
Keio University