



*International Simulation and Gaming Association
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www.isaga.info

By Nina McGarry and Thomas Eberle, Editors

Report on 37th ISAGA Conference, St. Petersburg, RUSSIA

The State University of Engineering and Economics in St. Petersburg, RUSSIA hosted the 37th Annual ISAGA Conference. The theme for the 37th conference was *Global Interdependence of the Uniform Educational Space*. Professor, Dr.

Alexander I. Mikhaylushkin, Rector of the State University of Engineering and Economics welcomed conference attendees. Conference attendees were made aware that in addition to hosting the 37th ISAGA Conference, the University celebrates its 100th anniversary.



From July 3 to July 7 the ISAGA Annual Conference engaged research papers, games, and concepts all during

the beautiful White Nights of RUSSIA. It was difficult to concentrate with the spectacular surroundings, but conference presenters kept participants engaged. Conference organizers intermixed completed research with research in progress and interactive games. Several interactive games were presented by Joan Teach, Jan Geert Hofstede, and Nina Nemicheva and Tatiana Neshceret. More than 50 papers and games we presented, discussed, and enjoyed.

St. Petersburg, called the Venice of the North, is a beautiful cultural city with many opportunities. The conference



organizers, hosts Yuli Porkhovnik, and his organizing team members took full advantage of the water and extensive array of historical buildings. The

traditional mid-Conference event included a boat ride on the Neva River to a sumptuous dinner at one of the many castles found in St. Petersburg.



Sadly, the conference attendees left St. Petersburg, but not without enlisting membership of the future.

Nijmegen – The Netherlands, Location for ISAGA’s 38th Conference



Organizing Learning through Gaming and Simulation: Learning by Doing
 Each day of the conference schedule includes five activities. The five identified activities consist of the following: plenary start-up of the day; a game building sessions intended to last throughout the entire conference, thematic sessions, single paper sessions, and open space sessions are planned for each day of the conference.

Organizing and Learning through Gaming and Simulation

Learning by doing: the conference will provide a week-long learning experience for participants, involving them actively in a variety of activities

Adjusted deadlines

The deadlines for submitting proposals for thematic sessions and for papers have been adjusted. The deadlines are as follows:

- **Proposals for thematic sessions**
 - February 1, 2007 proposal for organizing a thematic session
 - February 15, 2007 notification about acceptance of your proposal
 - May 1, 2007 final program of the thematic session
- **Proposals for papers / contributions**
 - March 1, 2007 paper proposal
 - April 1, 2007 notification about acceptance of your contribution
 - May 1, 2007 final paper
- **Proposals for open space activities**
 - (June 1, 2007) For Open Space Activities there is no deadline; participants organize such activities themselves (before and during the conference). However, if you have special requirements for your initiative (e.g. room, equipment), please inform us before 1-06-2007.

Registration

After February 1st the fee (for members) is €545. After June 1st a surcharge of €50 is due.

Please note: before you can register you will be asked to fill in the personal data form.

After you have done this you will receive a password, which enables you to register, to propose a thematic session or a paper, and to change your information in the databases. Filling in the personal data form does not mean you are automatically registered for the conference.

On www.isaga2007.nl 'forms and overviews' you can find which thematic sessions and papers have already been proposed.

Promotion and sponsoring

An international conference like Isaga 2007 is a great opportunity for your organization to promote itself to the international simulation and gaming community. Organizers have drawn up a variety of possibilities. Or maybe you want to support the conference in an other way. For more information, please take a look at the website www.isaga2007.nl/sponsoring or contact sponsoring@isaga2007.nl.

Information and contact

Information on the conference, contributions, the program, registration, and venue can be obtained from the Isaga 2007 website www.isaga2007.nl. The general email

address for questions and remarks for this conference is info@isaga2007.nl.

Organizing Committee

Vincent Peters, Marleen van de Westelaken, Marc de Roos, Hanneke Mastik, Véronique Meffert, and Lennart Quispel.

International Summer School in Gaming Simulation



Diversity as an asset to Art and Science of Simulation and Gaming Design – report from the 3rd International ISAGA Summer School in Gaming Simulation
By Joanna Wozniakiewicz



The third International ISAGA Summer School, 19-26 August 2006, was held in perhaps one of the most beautiful corners of Austria, the region of Vorarlberg, at the University of Applied Sciences in Dornbirn. The theme of the meeting this year was “Art and Science of Simulation & Gaming Design”. The teachers at this year summers school were: Prof. Dr.

Jan Klabbers (the Netherlands), Prof. Dr. Elysebeth Leigh (Australia), Prof. Dr. Vincent Peters (the Netherlands), Prof. Dr. Paola Rizzi (Italy) and Dr. Markus Ulrich (Switzerland).

When on the first working day the participants were asked to come up with a list of what they wanted to learn and of possible problems in achieving their goal, the key word that appeared on the problem list of each group was: ***diversity***. It may not sound surprising



The mountains of Dornbirn are a spectacular backdrop to the modern buildings of the Fachhochschule Vorarlberg, University of Applied Sciences - host of the 2006 Summer School

if we consider that among the participants there were people from fourteen countries, from different parts of the world, as distant as Europe, Asia and Australia. Moreover each participant had a different background, starting from environmental studies, engineering, architecture and to end with psychology and educational and social studies. Also our previous experiences with the use of gaming and simulation were very different, as different as various areas of application, approaches and working styles. This translated of course in different expectations and different visions of our work in the project groups. Thus the preoccupation that rose from the discussions on that Sunday morning was: how can we possibly reconcile the needs,

aspirations and particular interests of every one of us.

The concept underlying the ISAGA Summer School was the metaphor of the renaissance “officina”. It was ideated as a “place and time where beginners and experts, students and researchers can (...) exchange experience, share knowledge and embark on their voyage of discovery.”¹ This proves that our first day worries were, and later proved to be, unfounded as they were calculated into the very concept of this summer school.

Over the next seven days our time passed between the morning plenary sessions and the work on game design in the afternoon groups. During the lectures in the morning we could have a grasp of theory of gaming and simulation design, learn about the right steps and procedures – learn its art and science. Our task in the afternoon groups was to design a gaming simulation. Here again the factor of diversity comes into play as we could see a range of attitudes to the process of design. Each of our teachers represented different working styles and different views of the process of design from very structured ones to a pretty relaxed manner. Thanks to the “open door” policy, which we implemented on the first working day, we could also see the work of other groups and exchange ideas more freely.

¹ Paola Rizzi, „Officina” – a different concept for the ISAGA Summer School, [online:] <http://www.isaga-summer-school.org/index.php?inhalt=concept>

We also had some evening events like a gaming session of NewWave (a game on Venice) or Market Place. Market Place was a very interesting initiative. The idea was to create a place and time where people could exchange the games which they created, use or consider worth sharing with others.

Nevertheless the Summer School was not only learning and hard work. The organisers provided us with a range of excursions and social events which allowed us to explore the region and try dishes from the local cuisine. There was a dinner in a restaurant on top of a mountain overlooking Dornbirn, a trip up the mount of Pfänder, where we could enjoy a wild bird show with falcons, eagles and enormous vultures, a boat cruise on the lake on Konstanz and a walk along Rappenloch-Schlucht Canyon.

The result of a week-long work was creation of a few games. “Square dance”, presented by Vincent Peters’s group, is a game on the flow of information in a company and it was based on the concept of the beer game. Marcus Ulrich’s group designed a game on ecosystem. Its purpose was to make young people understand that the actions which they take now, will have their effects in the future and to make them feel responsible for the environment. The group facilitated by Paola Rizzi prepared “Democracy”, a game with the objective of teaching young people about democratic values. Elysabeth Leigh’s group prepared what was called G-game. The letter G stood for the word *Gestalt* as the purpose of the game was to help non-German speakers to get more

acquainted with this concept. Jan Klabbers’ group designed a prototype game called “The Blue Ocean”, a strategic management game about innovation and breakthrough of a company, shaping a completely new market.

On the final days of the Summer School the groups presented the games which they developed and the presentations were followed by vivid and fruitful discussions.

At the closing session of the Summer School one more game, *Ichiba* (jap. market place) was played. The participants were walking around and discussing what in their opinion was the best experience of the summer school and what they liked about it.



Vincent Peters leads the team across the acid swamp

They joined in groups each time they found something in common. At the end of the exercise one big group formed a big circle of people holding each others hands who all agreed that the best experience of the Summer School was diversity.

Proposed locations for future ISAGA/SAGSAGA Summer School events include the following venues:

Year	Location	Theme
2007, August 20 - 27 t	IUAV University Venezia, Italy	Design of Gaming Simulation for Urban Management and Urban Planning
2008	University of New Delhi New Delhi, India	Excellence in Gaming and Simulation (Design and Facilitation)

For additional information on ISAGA/SAGSAGA Summer School please contact Paola Rizzi (rizzi@uniss.it) or Willy Kriz (willy.kriz@fhv.at).

ISAGA/SAGSAGA Summer School Funding

Funds were approved for supporting or augmenting finances for students from developing countries to attend Summer Schools. The Steering Committee at the 37th Annual ISAGA meeting approved 600 € to be distributed at the discretion of Summer School leadership. Student or students receiving funding will deliver to ISAGA General Secretary a 3,000 word report expressing observations from Summer School attendance. These reports may be included in future newsletter postings.

For information on obtaining funding support to attend ISAGA/ SAGSAGA Summer School, contact Paola Rizzi (rizzi@uniss.it) or Willy Kriz (willy.kriz@fhv.at).

New ISAGA Website

A proposal submitted by Pieter van der Hijden to improve and enhance the ISAGA web page was approved. During website development and migration, Pieter will place ISAGA material on a separate location where members can view material. Upon acceptance by Steering Committee members the former ISAGA address and website will be removed, replaced with the new details.

Pieter is enthusiastically working to achieve this goal before the conclusion of the 2006. Additionally discussion



needs to occur regarding membership fees. Until membership fee issue is resolved, the website will operate as in the past with full

access to Steering Committee membership and partial access to persons interested in ISAGA. A sneak preview of the new website is possible on <http://moodle.isaga.info>.

Bell Committee

ISAGA as an international organization with several meetings during conferences is changing a little. As the period of meetings once a year is too long for a vivid organization, a committee was founded to coordinate activities during the year. The so called Bell Committee is working together via Moodle – an e-learning platform – and via telephone conferences. Members of Bell Committee are Elysebeth Leigh, Richard Teach,

Vincent Peters, Willy Kriz, Laraine
Spindler, Markus Ulrich, Matthias
Puschert, Marieke van Heeswijk, Arata
Ichikawa, Vinod Dumblekar.

Elysabeth Leigh, general secretary of Isaga, about the BELL Committee

Designing the structure for an organisation like ISAGA occurred as a result of events that were almost happenstance – according to Dick Duke and those other gamers who began our journey all those years ago. Yet that initial design has proved to be both robust and long lasting. So it is with great care that the BELL committee is taking its initial steps towards revising the structure of ISAGA. In St Petersburg the BELL committee was created to consider how to bring into existence ISAGA as

-
- A legally registered organization, with
- A constitution all Steering Committee members all agree on, and
- The old constitution & bylaws in the archive – after providing the core for all thinking in regard to the new structure

The committee was due to report in October and January – however the first meetings were unavoidably delayed and this is the first report. We have now met twice via skype and despite some technical problems on the second call are finding it a very effective way to discuss and plan our actions.

At this stage we have discussed where ISAGA might be registered as a not-for-profit organization and narrowed the choices to two countries – the Netherlands or Switzerland. The next stage is about to begin, as we focus our attention on the requirements for a constitution of a registered organization in each country and begin to consider what will be involved in preparing the changes for Steering Committee consideration in Nijmegen in July, 2007.

Your help is needed

We would like all SC members to contribute your ideas about the values, principles, and directions for inclusion in our considerations. As directed by the SC, these must be included as much as possible, as we prepare our recommendations for presentation to the SC this year.

The BELL committee members are meeting monthly via skype and invite all SC members to contribute your ideas via the web site – where Pieter has provided us with an excellent means of sharing ideas.

ISAGA Constitutions and Bylaws

For those who are interested in ISAGA constitutions and bylaws. They can be downloaded

http://www.isaga.info/file.php/1/downloads/meta/ISAGA_C_B.doc.