

Gamification in Higher (Military) Education: Military Education Working Group (WG9) Panel

The AI revolution has prompted a profound paradigm shift in education: from knowledge transmission to skill development. Especially soft skills, such as critical thinking, analysis, collaborative work, and agile thinking. These skills, while essential for academic or professional success, hold special significance for officers and decision-makers who need to function effectively in an ever-changing world, navigate complex scenarios, make high-stakes decisions, and lead teams in dynamic environments.

Educational simulations have emerged as a key tool in this shift, providing an immersive environment for skill development and practical application of learned material. When it comes to military education, the simulations unlock various opportunities, such as the ability to recreate past events, allowing cadets to engage with history in a hands-on, experiential manner. They can examine predecessors' actions and consequences within a safe, virtual environment. These simulations foster collaboration and teamwork, demanding participants to think on their feet, rapidly respond to evolving situations, and adapt to the continuous flux of battlefield conditions, thereby preparing them for the challenges of tomorrow.

Yet, arguably the most striking aspect of educational simulations is the blend of learning and engagement they offer. They transform education into a continuous learning experience, full of interaction and excitement, especially for the younger generation of learners, who often have shorter attention spans and constantly seek novel stimuli. In this interactive, game-like environment, learning is not a chore, but an adventure, encouraging continuous exploration and growth.

In the past year, Wikistrat conducted educational simulations for over 200 students at leading academic institutions worldwide, covering a diverse range of topics. Among these were a risk prediction simulation in collaboration with New York University, where International Relations students teamed up with leading experts to forecast risks to global stability in the upcoming year, and a negotiation simulation involving Israeli and Emirati students, centered around ongoing events in Russia.

In November 2022, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Wikistrat produced a role-playing simulation as part of the "Studies in American Defence Policy" course in the graduate program in War Studies at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC). Participants, including graduate students, RMC alumni, and Wikistrat analysts,

assumed the roles of historical decision-makers, to better understand what happened in the 13 days that analysts often describe as “the most dangerous moment in human history.”

Wikistrat CEO Oren Kesler and CMO Tali Stambulchik propose to participate in a panel on innovative educational methods. In this, they will introduce the crowd to the ever-growing field of educational simulations, provide an overview of the different simulation methods, including the educational benefits of each, and present various case studies, drawing on Wikistrat's extensive experience in this domain.