

Joint Master's Programme in
International Humanitarian Action
Simulation Exercise
Semester 2

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Event coordinators:

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Facilitators:

Adjunct Prof. Roy Williams, *University Swiss-Italia & Columbia University*
Dr. ir. Leonard Van Duijn, *Consultant*
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Role Players

Dr. Bruno Haghebaert, *Belgium Red Cross Flanders*

Mr. Jules Pieters, *former Manager Operations and Coordinator Emergency support WHO, Geneva.*

Period: Third semester

Hours: See time schedule below

Venue: TBA, Brussels, Belgium

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Paradoxia Simulation Exercise. The simulation exercise is designed to provide students with an interactive educational experience: consolidating and building upon their academic achievements during this academic year.

The overall objectives of the SE module are twofold. The first objective of the SE is to build on, and consolidate, the knowledge and insights gained from the NOHA MA programme, in particular on how to approach disaster preparedness and response operations. The second objective is to enable students to gain an appreciation of the challenges connected with disaster preparedness, response and conflict. Aiming at presenting actionable outcomes will enhance their ability to assess and manage the demands of achieving effective cooperation among a range of actors. As a platform for this outcome, the simulation creates an environment, which gives students a flavour of what could be expected when involved in disaster preparedness and response interlinked with outbursts of ethnic and socially motivated conflict.

The simulation exercise is based on a major disaster creating circumstances turning long-simmering political and social issues into an outbreak of active conflict. It takes place in the fictional country, Paradoxia and the surrounding region. The exercise begins with a brief introduction discussion, and question and answer session building on previously circulated materials. Participants, divided into teams representing elements of the social, political, and governmental structure will be challenged to function in relation to assigned roles. Subsequently, having worked through the conflict period, students are tasked to move beyond preparedness and immediate response and to cite the issues facing long-term recovery.

An overarching platform for the exercise requires looking at the humanitarian system, as now constituted, in the face of the situation in the region of Paradoxia.

In terms of **themes**, the module explores the demands of effective disaster preparedness and crisis response vis-à-vis the vulnerabilities, capacities, and needs of the communities under review. How their perspective, in terms of protection and security, can be acknowledged is an important element in the exercise.

As regards to **relevance**, this module helps participants to combine and put in practice the learning experience gained from the other NOHA modules. In that sense, the simulation exercise adds an additional dimension to the ability to function effectively in differing disaster settings.

2. Learning outcomes

In conformity with the objectives set out by the NOHA network, this module should contribute the following elements to the students' learning experience:

- further their understanding of the roles of individual humanitarian actors and their inter-relationships;
- enhance their recognition of the difficulties associated with working in an inter-cultural environment;
- augment their understanding of the challenges involved in achieving effective coordination and cooperation among a range of humanitarian actors.
- build the capacity to make decisions based on relevant and time-sensitive information.
- strengthen their ability to develop strategies and operational plans that will improve immediate response without impeding future recovery.

3. Course material

Required readings will be distributed in advance. The readings will be made available via e-mail based on the schedule below, or in advance of your arrival in Brussels. Some reading material will be accompanied by questions to be discussed at the opening session. In addition, you will receive relevant updates on a non-scheduled basis.

Tentative schedule

November 18 Course Syllabus

November 21-27 Readings related to:

- The humanitarian system including the IFRC/ ICRC
- Paradoxia and its region
- Essential Tools

November 28 Announcement of breakout groups and role assignments

4. Teaching and learning methodology

The Paradoxia Simulation Exercise The simulation exercise will incorporate elements of the NOHA program, and will allow students to apply the concepts learned during the NOHA program, in particular related to practical disaster preparedness and response situations. For example, conducting assessments, programming activities, accessing funding, establishing workable forms of intra- and inter-agency cooperation at various levels, and anticipating and responding to uncertain and changing circumstances.

The students will be assigned to teams representing the various actors preparing for, impacted by, and responding to a catastrophic event. Each team will be asked to develop a common plan of action. After facilitated group discussions and plenary feedback facilitated by the facilitators of the Paradoxia game, the groups will reflect on their learning and draw conclusions vis-à-vis their functioning in disaster preparedness and response operations. Class sessions combine mainly interactive exercises and discussions.

Within this context, to finish the module successfully, it is important that students identify with the mission and role of 'their' agency and contribute accordingly. Moreover, to enhance learning, the importance of understanding other humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors involved is emphasised.

5. Workload

Contact hours with facilitators & group work	25 hours
Individual preparation, & self-study	10 hours
Total	35 hours

6. Assessment

Attendance during all sessions of the SE is compulsory. All students will receive a certificate upon successful completion of the module.

7. Supporting Documents

The simulation exercise is based upon the experiences of the international humanitarian community using the occurrence of elements of various humanitarian settings as a platform. However, the simulation exercise is not a one-on-one re-enactment of these humanitarian settings. They function as the backdrop to reflect on 'differences' and 'similarities' between different moments of a crisis. Therefore, it is expected that the simulation exercise will acquire its own dynamic and direction, which may be at variance with actual events.

Group assignments, specific information, and further supporting documents will be provided on the first day of the simulation exercise or later during the exercise.

8. Roles to play

Participants of the simulation exercise will be equally divided into different groups, each group playing one particular roles. Group divisions and subsequent roles will be clarified prior to start of the simulation exercise.

9. The role of the SE team

During the simulation exercise, the SE team plays a dual role in facilitating the administrative side of the exercise and acting as a resource, both for information and for substantive consultation. The SE team will endeavour to facilitate reflection and learning during individual group work and plenary sessions. The SE team does this in different ways, such as observing groups and raising provocative questions. During the process of group work, it will also respond to queries from individual participants or groups and provide feedback during plenary sessions. Participants are encouraged to feel free to contact the SE team.

10. Programme - DRAFT

Paradoxia Simulation Exercise - June 2016			
Day	Time	Topic	Who
Day 1	09:00	Welcome & Introductions Topic 1: The humanitarian system	Prof. Dr. J. Herman & SE team
Day 1	10:00	Start: Preparing for a disaster in Paradoxia Plenary Feedback	SE team & students
	17:00	Day closure	
Day 2	09:00	Continuation: Preparing for a disaster in Paradoxia Plenary feedback	SE team & students
	13.30	Paradoxia moving towards a humanitarian abyss Plenary feedback	
	17:00	Day closure	
Day 3	9:00	Continuation: Paradoxia moving towards a humanitarian abyss Plenary Feedback	SE team & students
	13.30	Group work: beyond preparedness and immediate response: exploring long-term recovery Topic 2: The complexity of recovery Plenary Feedback	
	17:00	Simulation exercise closure	

11. Group meetings¹

Ensuring that group meetings run well is a shared responsibility. Please note the following steps:

1) Select team leader and scribe. The role of the team leader is to facilitate discussion, and that of the scribe is to note conclusions reached or other salient points.

¹ Text taken and adapted from Community Toolbox, <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation/main>, retrieved on 21/04/2014.

2) Agree on agenda and procedures. Have a clear agenda and emphasize the importance of substantive and concise exchanges.

3) Be aware of the time constraints! Remember, during this simulation, each session requires a consensual output, which needs to be reached within a limited time.

4) Summarise discussion points regularly. The scribe should summarize conclusions or points for further action. Use flip charts if perceived necessary.

5) Encourage active participation from all in the group and rotate other group members to lead. The simulation has various group sessions; if you consider this appropriate consider rotating team leader and scribe responsibility.

12. Format to report back in plenary sessions

The plenary provides an opportunity to report group findings as a way to facilitate a wider discussion:

- Summarize key findings using power point, clearly visible flip charts, or one-page handouts.
- Appoint one presenter and be prepared to conduct presentations ranging from 5 to 10 minutes maximum.
- Be prepared, as a group, to respond to questions from the plenary.

13. Venue

The simulation exercise will be held at the International Auditorium in Brussels, Belgium. TO BE CONFIRMED!!!

The International Auditorium

International Trade Union House

Boulevard du Roi Albert II, No. 5 / 2

