



A New Tool For the Shed: Google Sketchup

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Abstract

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Using a combination of technology and situated learning, students can develop skills, knowledge and ways of thinking necessary for becoming effective leaders in organizations and communities.

Strategic Management and Governance is an elective course for graduate students in the Masters of Public Administration (MPA) program at Seton Hall University that stresses the development of managerial and analytical skills as well as the ethical and professional values necessary to take on leadership roles in our civil society. One goal of this course is to show how different social actors within a political system approach problems differently based on the needs of their organization and the complex social processes in the community. As part of a 2007-2008 Faculty Innovation Grant, faculty and design staff partnered together to create a proposed land-battle simulation to help students develop the technical and organizational leadership skills associated with leading community collaboratives.

After attending training sessions in Google Sketchup, student teams were given a case study involving a vacant and unused parcel of land along with a description of the organization they were representing. Working in teams, students throughout the semester created a detailed development plan that represented not only the needs and interests of the role they were playing, but community concerns as well. Students presented their final proposals at a "special magistrate hearing", substantiating their arguments and designs with actual facts and data gained from research. This session will cover the design, assessment and support strategies used to ensure the resulting successful learning outcomes.

