

Mock Climate Negotiation

Objective

Students will simulate international climate negotiations to understand:

- Complexities of policymaking
- Explore the dynamics of global cooperation
- Gain practical skills and insights into the roles of different stakeholders in addressing climate change

Session Structure

Preparation Phase (Pre-Negotiation)

Duration: 1-2 months prior to the simulation

- Topic Assignment: Assign each student or group to represent a specific country or stakeholder group (e.g., industrialized nations, developing nations, small island states, NGOs, or business representatives).
- Background Research: Students will research their assigned country's or group's:
 - Greenhouse gas emissions profile¹
 - Economic priorities and vulnerabilities²
 - Climate commitments under the Paris Agreement³
 - Political and social challenges
 - Negotiation History
- Deliverables:
 - A one-page position paper summarizing their negotiation stance.
 - A brief 2-3 minute opening statement outlining their priorities.

¹Our World in Data

²World Economic Outlook

³NDCs

Simulation Day

Duration: 2-3 hours

Step 1: Opening Statements (10-15 minutes)

Each delegation presents their country's or group's position, highlighting key goals and red lines.

Step 2: Negotiation Rounds (1-1.5 hours)

- Round 1: Regional and Bloc Discussions (30 minutes)

Countries form groups based on alliances or shared interests (e.g., EU, G77, Umbrella Group). Each bloc formulates a unified stance on key negotiation topics such as mitigation targets, financing, and adaptation measures.

- Round 2: Plenary Negotiations (30 minutes)

Delegations present their bloc's positions and negotiate with other blocs to find areas of compromise. Use a moderator (instructor or student volunteer) to guide the discussion and ensure adherence to time limits (3 minutes maximum for each presentation).

Step 3: Final Agreement (30 minutes)

Delegations draft and vote on a final agreement. Achieving consensus is ideal but not mandatory; differing levels of agreement can reflect real-world outcomes.

Debrief and Reflection Phase (Post-Negotiation)

Duration: 30-45 minutes

- Class Discussion:
 - What were the main challenges in reaching an agreement?
 - How did power dynamics and disparities influence the negotiations?
 - What lessons can be applied to real-world climate policymaking?
- Individual Reflection:

Students write a short essay (1-2 pages) discussing their experiences, including what they learned about their assigned role and the overall negotiation process.

Topics and Organization

Key Topics for Negotiation

1. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): Ambition levels and timeline commitments.
2. Climate Finance: Funding mechanisms to support developing nations in mitigation and adaptation.

3. Loss and Damage: Compensation for climate-related damages in vulnerable nations.
4. Technological Transfers: Strategies for sharing clean energy technologies.
5. Global Stocktake: Review and accountability mechanisms.
6. Adaptation: Strategies for responding to climate change.

Logistics and Organization

- Materials:
 - Printed negotiation rules and position guidelines.
 - Nameplates for country/stakeholder delegations.
 - Access to a whiteboard or digital tool for drafting agreements.
- Room Setup: Arrange desks in a U-shaped configuration to encourage discussion and create a formal negotiation atmosphere. Online Zoom virtual negotiation room background.
- Role of Instructor:
 - Act as the Chair to facilitate the simulation and keep time.
 - Intervene only when necessary to ensure productive dialogue.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn:

1. Understand the complexity of international climate negotiations and the importance of consensus-building.
2. Develop skills in public speaking, negotiation, and teamwork.
3. Gain empathy for the diverse perspectives and constraints of global stakeholders.

References

- [C-ROADS Climate Change Policy Simulator](#)
- John Sterman et al. “WORLD CLIMATE: A Role-Play Simulation of Climate Negotiations,” *Simulation & Gaming* 46, no. 3–4 (June 1, 2015): 348–82, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1046878113514935>.