**Reflections on the Flood Resilience Challenge simulation by a 3rd year geography student**

**Dr. Evalyna Bogdan**

**University of Waterloo**

The student has provided approval for sharing his reflections and all University of Waterloo ethics protocols were followed upon receiving ethics clearance. The student’s identity is being protected by using a pseudonym.

Hello, my name is [Bob]. And this is my reflection assignment for week three of geography . . . with Professor Baird. . . . So this is on week three [of the course].

And this was subjectively *the most effective learning* week for me, primarily due to the Flood Resilience Challenge Game.

**Communication and governance structures**

This application of our water resource knowledge was *so effective in enhancing our communication skills.* But furthermore, teaching us the[number] of *differing perspectives* on water management, you know, it's not just municipal, provincial, and federal, there are so many branches, and they're all *interconnected* in their own little ways. And you have to see how these people see this as a *good* thing. And these people say this is a *bad* thing, but they're so *similar*. And it showed the *communication between all these different opinions can be a very tedious process*. Now, for example, I thought, or at least I felt like I was doing the *right thing* by providing funding towards a dike. And I later found out that a lot of people would rather me spent my money elsewhere doing so.

**Experiential learning and tangible objects for facilitating learning, connecting previous and present learning**

Now, on that note, I understand what a dike is. . . but getting to *physically place* it on a map and see how it *affects the surrounding community*. . . not just the dike, but thinking of all of the construction, the mitigation management processes that you could have implemented. You kept looking in your own head, okay, dam here would affect the upstream like this, the downstream like this, okay? And you'd see, okay, there's the fork here. How is that gonna affect this side, this side?

You really doing this is *so much more applicative than sitting and listening to a lecture*, I felt like it got my mind racing. And I was *implementing all that I'd learned* over the past geography courses, obviously, specifically water management courses. And then you'd hear someone else's idea. Completely different than the ideas you had but also a great idea. So not only was it your own mind racing, but everyone else's mind racing, and then you getting to *hear their opinions* as well was really good in *furthering my understanding of previous knowledge* that I've gained from other courses as well as this course.

**Relationships & Interactions**

This game also taught that *when it comes to managing a resource necessary for survival, relationships become volatile*, I had favorable votes to stay in my position for the first two rounds as the federal representative. But in the third round, when some power company decided that they wanted to *portray* me as only wanting to support the wealthy, I barely received enough votes to stay in my position there. Even though my *strategy* wasn't necessarily to help the wealthy it was just to help whomever was *vocal* about wanting my assistance.

**Marginalized voices**

In retrospect, while writing this, I really started to think that *certain peoples shouldn't have to ask for assistance. Rather, it should be willingly given to them*. Some people being shy and not very vocal during this game was quite akin to *certain groups of people not having much of a voice*, when it comes to facing . . . resource issues like this. My personal friend in the real world, [Anne], she's in this class, and she was playing the role of the First Nations community representative. And we were messaging a little bit throughout the game about the game.

And being the federal government, I knew I was her only economic *support system*. I told her . . . that if she wants any flood mitigation instruction, just ask me just say it in the Zoom call, say, “Hey, can I have this?” Or “Hey, the First Nations community is interested in this.” But she refused. And I thought it would have been a little odd to randomly go into the [game] round and say that, but then reading this, I thought to myself, well, would it have been that odd just to at least have gone in and *started discussion* and ask: “Hey, I see you're over here. I'm your primary funding, is there anything I can do for you?” You know, and it ties back to my point of communication from earlier. But luckily, she didn't get affected by any flooding events; however, that was just luck.

**Power**

But it was very interesting looking at that power dynamics and seeing how it played out in the game, but how played in the *game*, potentially carrying over to how it could play out in *real life*? Oh, lastly, I just want to say I decided to make this video as opposed to just a few paragraphs. Just to kind of emphasize that I thought this would be the most engaging form of this assignment. And that's, that was the key to why I learned so much this week three was because I was so *engaged* and I just wanted to kind of reflect that in this journal.