Simulations in the Political Science Classroom

- Democracy is predicated on an informed and active citizenry. Our founding fathers knew this from the very beginning. You can see it in the writings of Jefferson and Adams etc.
- If you don't have an informed and active citizenry, democracy's tend to lean towards oligarchy or even dictatorship.
- I don't believe you create active citizens by forcing them to memorize a textbook.
- My students don’t learn simply by reading. They learn by doing
- They learn about Congress by being a member of Congress and competing with others to get legislation passed.
- So when you see a student on campus yelling at another student for filibustering their bill.......
Yes, that's my fault.

Seriously, hang around campus long enough and you will see it.

In the cafeteria, the parking lot, the library...

The students take these simulations very seriously.

There can be a lot of drama surrounding the simulations, but I honestly don't believe any other method teaches them how to be an active citizen quite as effectively.

They need to have skin in the game to understand the process.

When they run for the presidency; the debates are heated.

When they have to make snap judgments about how to save political hostages; I give them little time and high-stakes.
Political Science Concluded

- I believe a good teacher should walk what he or she talks.
- I'm involved in politics and activism both in this country and around the world.
- As a political violence specialist I am regularly involved in conflict zones in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. This has included:
  - Terrorism research
  - Protection of civilians from violence
  - Activism
- I often bring these experiences back home with me and incorporate them in the classroom.
- A book I wrote on peace activists whom I've worked with in the Middle East is part of the course reading in classes like International Relations–Political Science 251.
- Thanks for allowing me to give you a taste of some of the ways that we teach civics in the Political Science Department.
Civics Instruction in Adult Education

- Required for English as a Second Language instruction
- Covers topics
  - The Democratic Process
  - Community Resources
  - US School System
  - Health and Wellness
  - Housing
  - Employment
  - Consumer Economics
Student Life & Service Learning

- **Civic Engagement**
  - Campus Election Engagement Project
    - Get Out the Vote initiative
  - Voter Registration & Awareness
    - League of Woman Voters

- **Leadership Development**

- **30 Student Organizations**
  - Student Government
  - College Democrats
  - College Conservatives
  - Student Peace Action Network (SPAN)

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“MCC offers service learning opportunities that involve students, faculty, and staff working together in the community.”

- **Day (s) of Service**
  - 1 held each semester
  - Saturday mornings
  - 4 locations

- **MLK Day of Service**
- **Alternative Spring Break**
- **Silver Cord Award**
Student Life & Service Learning in Action…

- **Student Nursing Organization**
  - Collaborates with Heartland Blood Center to host 2 Blood Drives each academic year

- **Student Government**
  - Collaborates with community organizations to encourage voter registration among MCC students
  - Volunteered with the Salvation Army during the holiday season

- **PRIDE Club**
  - Works with PFLAG of McHenry County

- **Student Peace Action Network**
  - Collects over 200 gifts for students, staff and faculty each season for students in Chicago with their Letters to Santa program

- **Student Veterans of America**
  - Participated in the McHenry County Human Race, donating their race fees to an organization of their choice

- **Multiple Student Organizations**
  - Participate in the annual Fall event, Penny Wars. Winning student organization donating all the funds to a local non-profit organization of their choice.

- **MLK Day of Service**
  - 40 MCC students, staff & faculty volunteered their time on campus, at the Home of the Sparrow, Turning Point, The Pink Door Thrift Shop, & Northwood Middle School

- **Alternative Spring Break**
  - Students have volunteered in several communities in need, including: Cedar Rapids, IA, Nashville, TN, Chicago, IL & Bloomington, IN

- **Day(s) of Service**
  - Providing volunteering students, staff, & faculty to non-profit organizations around McHenry County