Managing and Assessing an Intercollegiate Student Organized Simulation: The SUNY Model European Union

School of Education and Applied Professions
Buffalo State • The State University of New York

Presenters: Olayeni Abimbola, Lucas Meyer & Julianna Steinberg

Mentor: Dr. Laurie Buonanno | Department of Business, Economics & Public Administration

Abstract

This poster documents the work of SUNYMEU student directors and the (intercollegiate) SUNYMEU Student Leadership Team (SLT), who together oversee the pre-simulation proposal phase and run the simulation itself. This presentation also includes the results of the post-evaluation survey, a survey students write, administer, and analyze. The results of this survey are used to help improve the learning experience for future SUNYMEU attendees and gain retrospective knowledge of what participants enjoyed.

Background

The SUNY Model European Union (SUNYMEU) is an intercollegiate, three-day student-organized, and student-run learning activity sponsored by the Institute for European Studies at SUNY (IEUSS); the SUNY Office of Global Affairs (with which IEUSS is affiliated), and SUNY campuses. SUNYMEU was started at SUNY Brockport in 1988 and is currently hosted by SUNY Buffalo State University. Students who are enrolled at participating institutions write and submit the agenda items, unlike other MUNs and MEUs, making sure they debate topics that interest them. At Sunday lunchtime, the final day of the simulation, the student participants cast a secret ballot to choose the SUNYMEU award winners, but the primary focus is achieving consensus through debate and collaboration on contemporary issues facing the EU. 71 students participated in SUNYMEU 2026 (10-12 April), coming from seven universities from as far away as Long Island (Hofstra) and Canton (St. Lawrence University).

SUNYMEU'S Objective

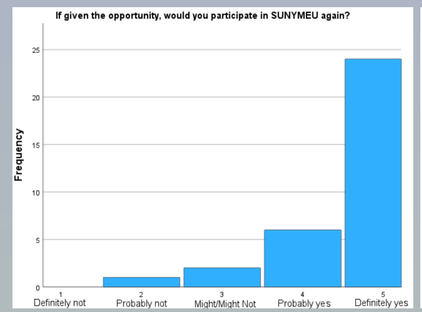
The overall purpose of SUNYMEU is to provide a framework for a simulation of the EU's decision-making processes in the European Council and the Council of the European Union. Students also learn about the interconnectivity of the 27 EU member states and the EU's organization and structure while networking with like-minded peers, and practicing parliamentary procedure, expository writing, conflict resolution, small group dynamics, problem solving, and public speaking.

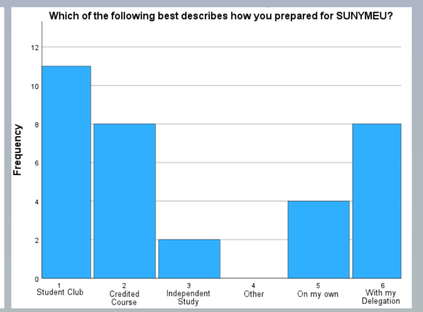


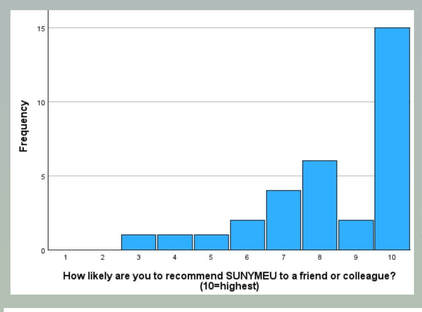
Data Collection & Analysis

Data was collected through anonymous responses on the Qualtrics survey platform and analyzed using SPSS. The survey response rate of 46% (33/71) is preliminary as we continue to receive surveys.

		If given the opportunity, would you participate in SUNYMEU again?				
		Probably not	Might or might not	Probably yes	Definitely yes	Total
I liked the idea that SUNYMEU is student-directed (rather than faculty-led).	Strongly disagree	0	1	0	2	3
	Somewhat disagree	0	0	1	1	2
	Neither agree nor disagree	0	0	1	3	4
	Somewhat agree	1	1	1	4	7
	Strongly agree	0	0	3	14	17
Total		1	2	6	24	33







		Did your campus delegation submit an agenda item to the General Secretariat?			
		No	Not Sure	Yes	Total
How likely are you to recommend SUNYMEU to a friend or colleague? (10=highest)	0	0	0	1	1
	3	0	0	1	1
	4	0	0	1	1
	5	0	1	0	1
	6	0	0	2	2
	7	1	0	2	3
	8	4	1	1	6
	9	1	0	1	2
	10	6	3	5	14
Total		12	5	14	31

		Did your campus delegation submit an agenda item to the General Secretariat?			
		No	Not Sure	Yes	Total
If given the opportunity, would you participate in SUNYMEU again?	Probably not	0	0	1	1
	Might or might not	0	0	2	2
	Probably yes	3	1	1	5
	Definitely yes	9	4	10	23
Total		12	5	14	31

Scan to access: Guide to SUNYMEU, SUNYMEU Program & Social Media

Discussion

Students prepare for SUNYMEU in various ways, with the plurality preparing as part of a student club.

Most of the students who attended SUNYMEU report being satisfied on all measures. Attendees especially appreciated the student-led nature of the simulation and the additional activities (Buffalo City Hall, Canal Side, Niagara Falls) that complemented the main simulation.

While some metrics are not statistically significant because of the overall positive skew of the data, contrary to the prior belief of the STL Team, whether a Delegation submitted an agenda item or not did not have any effect on the subsequent enjoyment of SUNYMEU.

Implications for the Future

The survey results are valuable in helping the SLT and IEUSS in preparing for subsequent conferences and to reflect attendees' tastes/preferences covering the simulation itself, amenities, and venue.

Acknowledgements

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