WHY GAME-PLAY?

Promotes engagement and explanation through active learning.

Active learning involves being engaged in the instructional process by means of such activities as exploring, analyzing, communicating, creating, reflecting, or actually using new information or experience.

Gaming involves strategic interactions which is how the practice of law works.

Strategic interactions occur when one bases their own strategy on the beliefs about the strategy of another.

Excitement captivates the students.

Begin with a strategic situation, toss in some multi-media elements, introduce some experiment, offer rewards.

Develops analysis for greater understanding.

Legal research is as much analysis of the law as it is understanding where to find primary and secondary materials.

INCORPORATING GAME-PLAY

The Clinic: Co-op Game Play

One big topic all semester touching on every possible legal issue helps students see the big picture.

Example: Client wants to open a tattoo parlor in town. Issues covered:
- Transactional law (forming corporation)
- Administrative law (licensure)
- Contract law & real estate finance (lease for the location)
- Insurance (obtaining insurance)
- Statutory
- Municipal (zoning)

In-class competition: Shooter Game Play

Give a problem and set parameters. Have students compete alone or in groups. The first one done gets to explain how they attained the answer.

Example: Your client would like to sell and market an oil for beards and wants to know what trademarks are in use that contain variations of the word “beard.” He does not want you to use any proprietary databases being that he’s cheap. You have 30 minutes to come up with as many marks as possible.

Final presentation: Strategy Game

The students pick topics of choice to analyze using the strategies discussed in class. They present these strategies to the rest of the class at the end of the semester.

WINNERS AND LOSERS?

Physical Prizes

- Stickers. Everyone loves stickers and they can be found cheap at the Dollar Store.
- Small toys. Again, cheap and easy to find. Keep them topical and humorous.
- Vendor swag. Westlaw. Lexis, and Bloomberg are always happy to help.
- Candy. Perhaps the best motivator of law students. And perhaps all humans.

Choice Prizes

- Pick next week’s topic. Choose from a list or even their own, assuming reasonableness. Take 15-20 minutes out of next class to cover.
- Multi-media. Start class a few minutes early and let the winner pick a song or short video to play before class starts.

Awards

Best done at the end of the semester with each student winning a “Best Of” or “Most” award. Either choose or have students nominate and vote.