2il Gynhadledd Dysgu ac Addysgu

2nd Annual Learning and Teaching Conference

16 Mis Medi – 18 Mis Medi| 16 September – 18 September 2014

# Crynoldebau / abstracts

Learning through Role Plays: Lessons from Intelligence Studies

Dr. Claudia Hillebrand

Active learning puts student engagement and meaningful interactive exercises at the core of students’ learning experience. In order to convey the complexity of political decision-making and historical events, role plays are considered to be a particularly useful teaching method. They are widely seen to facilitate independent learning and to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. This paper will explore the use of role-plays in the context of teaching intelligence and security studies, drawing on past experience. Putting their minds into the role of an Israeli Mossad officer during a covert operation, or stepping into the shoes of a US intelligence officer in the context of the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, students study intelligence-related events in a deeper way. Preparation and conduct of role plays can be technologically enhanced, for example through the use of Twitter, online available material and possibilities for e-group discussions. In big classrooms, role-plays can be used as group exercises in order to strengthen team-building skills. The paper will reflect on how role plays contribute to student learning and what the limits are. It will be argued that the use of active learning methods enhances student employability. Though focusing on the study of intelligence, international politics and history, the aim is to facilitate a discussion about the extent to which role plays might be applied in other subject areas.