

PANEL SESSION: IMPROVING THE TEACHING OF SIMULATION

organizer and
 moderator: Carl J. Bellas
 Professor of Management Science
 College of Business
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 Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

panelists: - Lewis Corner
 University of Sussex
 Falmer, Brighton

- A. Alan B. Pritsker
 Professor of Industrial Engineering
 Purdue University and
 President, Pritsker & Associates, Inc.
 West Lafayette, Indiana

- Thomas Schriber
 Professor of Management Science
 University of Michigan
 Ann Arbor, Michigan

Position statement of: Carl J. Bellas

The diversity of application areas represented at a typical simulation conference attests to the increased usage of computer simulation, however, increased usage may lead to a decrease in the overall "quality" of simulations. In an effort to improve simulation quality, research continues in methodology areas such as documentation, validity, and statistical techniques.

Another constant concern is the manner in which computer simulation is being taught by educational institutions and private companies. The development of sophisticated simulation languages has made simulation a practical decision making tool, but often the apparent simplicity of a language leads to deficiencies in the teaching of basic methodology. All practitioners of simulation should feel a responsibility to work toward improving the quality of teaching in the field.

This panel brings together several outstanding teachers of simulation who will present their views on the structure and content of simulation courses. Through their presentations and subsequent response to questions raised by the audience, those in attendance can hopefully improve their teaching and more importantly, what their students learn.

Lewis Corner will present a paper entitled, "Teaching Methods for Discrete Event Simulation," in which he takes a critical look at how the needs of the simulation practitioner are catered to by the typical simulation courses offered at universities and colleges. He will also comment on the differences he sees between the teaching of simulation in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

The two other panelists, Tom Schriber and Alan Pritsker are recognized as being among the world's leading teachers of computer simulation. Each teaches university students, as well as employees of private and public organizations. They both have taught courses in general simulation methodology as well as specific simulation languages.

The panel will begin by discussing the points made in Corner's paper, and then Schriber and Pritsker will briefly present what they believe to be the most important factors in teaching simulation. They will also give some examples of how they actually

structure courses based on the learning objectives of the course. There will be time for members of the audience to ask questions and for those who wish to either offer their own views or share techniques they have developed.