Civilization V – How This is Going to Work

Greetings, historians. As we get ready to launch our *Civilization V* unit, it's important for us all to be on the same page about why we are using this game as a learning tool, how our classroom sessions with the game are going to work, and what your scholarly responsibilities will be.

Objectives

After our work with this game, you will be able to clearly communicate:

1. The "cause and effect" of the actions of your civilization, the advancement of your technologies and knowledge, and your relations with other civilizations.

2. Your civilization's particular "path to success" (or failure) based on the decisions your group made and the strategies your group used during the course of the game.

3. An understanding of the complexities of the balance of trade, military strength, knowledge and civics required in managing a thriving society.

4. How your individual communication and group work skills impacted your group.

Those are the things that you will need to focus on while we engage with this game. Note that nowhere in those four points does it say totally annihilate all other groups/trap other groups so that all they can do is press "wait" on their turn/bribe other groups into giving up, etc.

While the game is a ton of fun, and hopefully that sense of fun will transfer into our work in class, the game is also based in solid historical research, and our main purpose here is to learn about the complexities governing the emergence and sustainability of a civilization. Game play is a tool through which we will gain a deep and thorough understanding of our year-long inquiry question, "Is our civilization on the rise or the fall?" Hopefully, as we go along, you will be able to develop your own definition of what a civilization is, and you will notice the factors that contributed to your group's (and other groups') shift from unstructured collective to civilization, and what the factors were that led to your fall, if indeed your civilization does fall.

A shorter way of saying the above is, Don't get so carried away with the game that you forget to pay attention to the above learning outcomes.

Responsibilities

Before we start, your group will need to decide which member will take on which role, keeping in mind that these roles can change hands as we go along, so long as that change is done purposefully and with the agreement of all involved.

Leader
Your job is to coordinate the efforts of your group, as the President/Prime Minister/Empress/King/Grand Poobah/Big Cheese of your civilization. You will take advice from your ministers and lead discussions in aid of decision-making. How do you balance the potentially conflicting interests of your ministers while driving your civilization toward success? How do you resolve conflict and find agreement? How do you make short-term decisions while also keeping the long-term survival of your civilization in mind?

You are also responsible for making sure your group completes its log during each session, and for making sure you and your ministers are noticing the developments in other civilizations.

Minister of Defense
Your job is to advocate for the military defenses (and/or offence) your civilization needs in order to survive and expand. How do you protect what you have from potential dangers while also promoting expansion of territory? How does your civilization acquire the knowledge and resources you need in order to achieve these goals?

Minister of Science
You job is to advocate for the technological advancements your civilization needs in order to achieve its short-term and long-term goals. What resources do you need to acquire in order to do this? What other avenues are available to your civilization in aid of making technological advances? What do you believe it the right path through the technology tree to achieve your long-term goals?

Minister of Culture
You are an advocate for the civilian population of your civilization. How do you meet their needs and increase their sense of comfort and happiness? What resources do you need to achieve these goals, and what avenues are available to you to meet these needs?

You will also serve as Diplomat in communications with other civilizations. This can be done in writing (to other Diplomats) or orally (during times of open diplomacy announced by the Mighty Prof. Wu Wei), *once your civilization and theirs have both unlocked Writing as a technology*. If and when your group makes formal offers to other societies, you will take over the computer console, if you are not already in control of it.

You may change roles during the course of this unit, but you need to let me know **before** you do so.

Your group will also need to decide who is responsible for the log during each game session, and who will be on Data Control (in control of the computer console). You will need to plan your moves *before* you come to the console, in order to speed up game play.

It is important that all group members have turns as Data Control, so that if groupmates are absent, anyone can comfortably perform that role.

Game-play

At the beginning of each game-play block, groups will meet to review their logs from previous sessions and then plot their course of actions for the day. Depending on how we manage transitions, each group will hopefully have several turns during each game-play block.

During those planning sessions, you are responsible to doing your job (advocating for your area of interest).

At the beginning of each game-play session, remind yourself:

- What are the responsibilities of your role (Leader, Minister)?

- What is your goal for **group work** with this project? What do you need to do today in order to get closer to achieving that goal?

While groups are planning their actions, your group is free to talk, remembering that you probably don't want other groups to hear what you are planning. This means you need to regulate your voices.

When a group's Data Control comes up to enter in that group's actions, talk will need to stop so that we can all observe the impact of each group's choices. How we manage this will determine if we can actually continue to use this game as a learning tool. It will also determine how many rounds we get through each day.

There will be a brief period of planning between each group's entry of actions. It is important that you are alert to other group's actions, as they may impact your future planning.

Although you will take turns scribing your group's log, **all group members are responsible for making sure the log is complete.**

Depending on time, we may not always be able to be fair about giving every team the same number of turns each session. If this occurs, we will try to pick up where we left off, starting with the group or groups that did not receive equal game-play in the previous session.

We will do periodic group assessment, in which you will assess yourself and your teammates on how you worked as a team, and how you performed your individual roles.

We will also do periodic reflections, in which you will write or draw or talk about how you are doing in relation to group work; and there will be written reflections about the "cause and effect" of decisions your group made—**your group's logs will be important tools to this end**.

Your performance and development as a group member will make up a large part of your assessment in Career Education.