

## **POL3410 students participated in the SDGs Game project to promote sustainable development awareness**

On February 7, 2025, as a service-learning event for the Pals3410 class, and a group of students, we took part in the sustainable development goals (SDGs) Game project at UVU. This interactive event was designed to Help Participants understand the United Nations' SDGs and apply them to real-world decision-making scenarios. Through collaboration and strategic planning, we engaged with the global challenges outlined in the SDGs framework.



*Victoria Baird, students, and faculty members after the Games*

At 10 PM, on Friday, February 7, 2025 we gathered at CB213 room at Utah Valley University to take part in the SDGs game project. This initiative was hosted by Victoria Baird an expert in sustainable development and supported by faculty members like Dr Baktybek Abdrisaev who guided us through the experience. The event emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to addressing global issues such as poverty, climate change, and economic inequality. To promote and apply the student Engaged Learning (SEL) model, students in the POLS3410 class were encouraged to actively participate in the game by forming teams, making strategic decisions, and negotiating. The SEL model collectively fosters, students including **Janessa Purcell, Ana Caballero Ferreyro, McKay Jones, Savannah Niemann and Alexander Woltjen** to simulate policy-making and global cooperation.



*Victoria Baird, overall presentation about SDGs*

Before the game began, we all met at the check-in point to receive instructions from... The event was structured into different phases, where participants assumed roles representing different sectors, governments, businesses, NGOs, and citizens. Each of us had to make strategic decisions to achieve specific SDG targets while balancing economic, environmental, and social factors.



*All students, at the table, getting ready for the SDG Games*

During the game, we encountered various challenges such as the need of more resources, and policy trade. This hands-on approach reinforced the complexity of achieving sustainable development and highlighted the importance of international cooperation. For instance, I focused on climate action and economic growth, ensuring that investment in renewable energy did not come at the expense of social welfare programs.



*Louyoko Nianza contribution to the SDGs' Game*

In collaboration with peers like McKay Jones and Ana, I gained more understanding of the interdependencies among the SDGs. Participating in this SDGs Game project was an eye-opening experience, it helped me recognize the practical challenges of policy implementation and the necessity of balancing different interests to create sustainable solutions. The interactive nature of the game made learning more engaging and reinforced the importance of collaboration in tackling global issues.



*Louyoko Nianza at Victoria Baird's table during the SDGs Games.*

One key lesson I took away from this experience is that every decision has effects. Addressing one SDG often impacts multiple others. This realization has strengthened my commitment to promoting sustainability in both my academic studies and future career aspirations.

Overall, the SDG game project provided a valuable opportunity to apply classroom knowledge in a dynamic setting. It reinforced the importance of proactive engagement in global issues and demonstrated how students can contribute to sustainable development in meaningful ways. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this initiative.

#### **About the author**

Louyoko Nianza, hailing from the Congo, is currently pursuing his education in political science in the United States. With a deep commitment to fostering transformative leadership, Louyoko is an author and a proponent of "smart-Africanism," a concept he envisions as the cornerstone for a new era of true leadership in Africa. His academic pursuits and innovative ideas aim to inspire and cultivate a generation of leaders dedicated to the advancement and prosperity of the African continent. Louyoko Nianza is a Visionary Rotaractor.