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Even as simulations were taking hold across SOE, they were not—and still are not—the only approach our faculty uses. Many of us employ and research other initiatives designed to serve as a bridge between campus-based coursework and fully contextualized practice in K–12 schools, including teacher educator–guided rehearsals by candidates in subject-specific methods courses; critically oriented, project-based field placements that allow faculty, candidates, and certified teachers to serve K–12 students in shared space; and lesson study.<sup>11</sup> We see all of these approaches as theoretically compatible with each other—as all grounded in common assumptions about the need to “turn away from an intense focus on the knowledge needed” for teaching, leading, and counseling and toward the situated use of that knowledge that Pam Grossman and others characterize as “practice-based” preparation.<sup>12</sup> We expect that a range of learning opportunities, including extended student-teaching apprenticeships in schools, will continue to be available to our candidates. But simulations have generated the most unifying traction across SOE as a whole, reaching more candidates and involving more faculty than any other practice-based initiative to date, suggesting that it is not a stretch to apply the signature pedagogy description in this case.

And we are not the only scholars to make strong claims for simulations’ potential in education. As we have deepened our local commitment to this work, we have also interacted, both directly and indirectly, with many others using simulations in their own contexts. Some of these connections are linked to Ben’s research collaborations beyond Syracuse—for instance, to subcontracts from an Arthur Vining Davis grant to colleagues interested in integrating aspects of our model into simulation work at Vanderbilt University and the University of North Carolina. Researchers from institutions as varied as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pittsburgh, and the Technical University of Munich visited our campus to observe simulated encounters. When they did, we learned more about the innovative aspects of their own simulation initiatives. And we read widely in the published simulation literature, to inform both particular research projects and our participation in the simulation study group.

We have been more apt to see simulations as a signature pedagogy as we have expanded our sense of how they might be used. As described above, our initial designs focused on simulations with parents and caregivers, with subsequent efforts exploring other kinds of discipline-specific interpersonal communication that are challenging for novices to navigate in schools. Cross-program discussions in the study group helped us realize it would be productive to focus our attention even more specifically on how such interactions implicate our longstanding, SOE-wide interests in *inclusive schooling*—which we define as schooling designed to support engagement and achievement for heterogeneous groups of learners, including but not limited to students with disabilities—in educative spaces where individual differences are seen as assets and not deficits.<sup>13</sup> This exploration has taken—and continues to take—two forms: (1) reexamination of existing protocol documents and accompanying interaction data with an inclusive lens and (2) design of new simulations that foreground these concerns more explicitly and with more critical and intersectional nuance. Most recently, racially biased police brutality in the United States, disparities related to COVID-19, and consciousness-raising student activism on our own campus have led us to set a new common focus around integrating antiracist principles more systematically in our simulation work. We will be helped in that regard by joint reading and discussion of a new book by Elizabeth A. Self and Barbara S. Stengel, early collaborators of Ben’s from Vanderbilt, who have adapted a number of our procedures to this particular purpose.<sup>14</sup>

We cannot be certain that simulations will become as central to educator preparation as Socratic questioning is to law school. But we hope the many examples of how they’re used at Syracuse will convince you of how generative they might be in offering your candidates opportunities to engage in authentic activity, develop aspects of professional identity and strategy, and recognize that their experiences are grounded within and hold implications for the larger classroom and school culture.

### HOW THIS BOOK MIGHT HELP YOU

While planning, writing, and editing this book, we have found it helpful to envision you, our audience, as potential members of our simulation study group—colleagues like us who are committed to improving practice through experimentation, inquiry, and reflection. Such a stance reminds us to be invitational and candid in tone, as our best group discussions have typically been those in which participants felt welcomed to the table and free to speak directly without judgment. This stance also reminds us to

anticipate and to welcome differences in knowledge and experience related to simulations and other practice-based approaches to educator preparation. That our group has productively included both our newest and our most veteran colleagues across five SOE departments suggests that simulations are an approach with a lot of “flex” to them—a pattern that informs our hunch that readers with varying background knowledge about simulations will find useful insights in the text, even if they’re not the same insights.

What you gain from the book will likely depend on your positioning and your goals for reading it. If you are an individual teacher, leader, or counselor educator interested in integrating simulations into a particular course or sequence of courses you teach, we hope that the book will demonstrate the potential benefits of doing so and spark ideas about the aspects of your course content that might be generative to simulate.

If you are faculty or staff involved in the redesign or expansion of a teacher, leader, or counselor education program, shared reading and discussion of the volume may help you consider new angles on practice-based approaches that can unify the program. We hope the descriptions of collaboration threaded across the volume will also illustrate the value of undertaking simulations as a team.

If you are a graduate student in teacher education, leadership, or counseling, you might be reading this book as part of a course or seminar. We hope that it presents compelling ideas about how you and others may shape preparation of professionals in those fields in the future. Numerous graduate students have contributed to the efforts described in these pages, with several pursuing excellent dissertations about simulations that are themselves worth reading.<sup>15</sup>

And, finally, while we expect that our core audience is likely to be those who work primarily in postsecondary institutions, we see a role for simulations in K–12 contexts as well. Ben Dotger and chapter 7 contributors Joseph Shedd, Leela J. George and Diane Canino-Rispoli have worked with central-office and building leaders from districts in both New York and North Carolina to design and implement simulations that speak to in-service professionals’ pressing concerns and continuous learning needs. If you work in schools rather than higher education, this book may spark ideas about how to support adult learning that will help you avoid the passive pitfalls associated with persistent professional development models such as the one-day workshops led by external experts.

In our view, one of the strengths of this volume is that it presents the simulation experience from multiple perspectives. You will see across the

chapters how faculty working in different programs adapted our common processes to disciplinary and developmental agendas, which we believe will illustrate both the principled core that drives our design work as well as the implementation flexibility it offers. A constraint associated with this strength, however, is that space limitations prevent chapter authors from providing fine-grained details about such topics as funding simulations or training actors. If you desire additional information about what we call the “how to” explanations, we refer you to several of Ben’s texts already in print.<sup>16</sup> If your interest in simulations is ignited, we also encourage you to follow the trail of the notes in individual chapters, as many of the authors have published findings from simulation-focused work in discipline-specific, peer-reviewed journals.

### HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED

We’ve sequenced this book intentionally into three sections where the lens zooms out, then in, and then out again. Section I, Background and Conceptual Underpinnings, includes this chapter you’ve just read and chapter 2. The latter lays out the conceptual foundations that make Syracuse-based simulation work coherent while allowing for disciplinary and programmatic variation. It applies Shulman’s lenses of engagement, uncertainty, and identity formation to various efforts in SOE and offers multiple examples of how these lenses are enacted by our faculty.<sup>17</sup>

Section II, Program-Specific Uses of Simulations, includes five chapters focused on how simulations can address interaction-based problems of practice anchored in varied disciplinary contexts. Each chapter draws on empirical data from one study or multiple studies conducted by the author or author team. Each shares at least one insight or takeaway related to the use of simulations that is discipline-specific and at least one other insight related to an issue of interest to faculty preparing educators in other disciplines.

The first three chapters in section II focus on different dimensions of single-encounter simulations for candidates seeking initial teacher certification. Chapter 3, by Duane T. Graysay and Joanna O. Masingila, focuses on the role of postsimulation group debriefing in developing candidates’ knowledge for mathematics teaching. Chapter 4, by Michael L. Norris, Luis Columna, and Benjamin Dotger, explores how simulations provide practice for candidates in assessing the skills of students with disabilities and considering appropriate modifications to support their participation in physical education. Sharon Dotger and Benjamin Dotger share design tenets

in chapter 5 for simulations requiring elementary education candidates to explore explanations of scientific phenomena, a practice at the center of the influential Next Generation Science Standards.

The last two chapters in section II expand the focus beyond classroom teaching to include other school professionals. These chapters also consider what happens when education faculty design multipart simulations enacted at two or more time intervals, rather than a single sitting. In chapter 6, Sharon L. Bruner and Melissa M. Luke demonstrate how nested simulations—candidates’ multiple encounters with newly unfolding aspects of the same scenario—permit robust and integrated attention to four key domains in counseling. Chapter 7, by Joseph Shedd, Leela J. George and Diane Canino-Rispoli, describes how carefully sequenced, and in some cases linked, simulations across the educational leadership program prepare candidates for what these authors call “difficult conversations,” including feedback and evaluation conferences with underperforming colleagues.

Section III, Cross-Program Perspectives on Clinical Simulations, includes two chapters that return to a wider-angled lens, drawing on data and offering insights that transcend any single SOE program. Chapter 8, by Christine Ashby and Megan E. Cartier, reviews candidate data from five different simulations with a common focus on disability and difference—an analysis that reveals several productive directions for multidisciplinary faculty collaboration around simulations. In chapter 9, Kelly Chandler-Olcott examines the intentions, processes, and outcomes of SOE’s simulations study group to inform recommendations for how you might undertake collaborative design, implementation, and inquiry into simulations in your own contexts.

We hope that this volume inspires you to launch that work soon if you are new to it or deepens your commitment if you have already begun.