



THE POLYMORPHISM OF MODEL UNITED NATIONS: STUDENTS' GUIDE

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ABSTRACT

This guide serves as a comprehensive introduction to Model United Nations (MUN), an educational simulation designed to immerse students in the dynamics of international diplomacy and decision-making. MUN conferences allow participants to assume the roles of UN delegates, representing various member states and engaging in debates to address global issues. The guide outlines the foundational aspects of MUN, including the significance of representing assigned countries, the preparation process involving research and position papers, and the practical skills gained such as public speaking and teamwork. It provides a detailed overview of MUN procedures, highlighting the importance of parliamentary rules, points, motions, and the quorum necessary for procedural decisions. The guide also explains the structure of debate, which includes formal and informal phases, moderated and unmoderated caucuses, and the role of the Dais in managing discussions. By offering insights into the operational framework of MUN and the procedural nuances that govern debates, this guide aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate and excel in MUN conferences.

Keywords: Model UN, Model United Nations, MUN, Students' Diplomacy, Students' Leadership

PROLOGUE

Model United Nations (MUN) is an educational simulation where participants role-play as delegates to the United Nations, engaging in debates and discussions to address global issues.¹ The goal is to learn about the UN's decision-making processes by experiencing them firsthand.² Participants represent specific UN Member States, researching their assigned country's perspectives and policies beforehand.³ MUNs can vary widely, from international conferences organized by UN associations to shorter sessions in school classrooms. The main aim is to create a realistic UN environment, with participants staying in

character and working within a framework to find solutions to real-world problems. MUNs are popular among high school and college students, providing a platform to develop skills like research, public speaking, debating, and teamwork.⁴ Participants prepare for conferences by researching,⁵ writing position papers, and crafting policy proposals. At the conference, they collaborate with others to pass resolutions addressing global challenges. MUN conferences cater to students of all ages, with many schools incorporating them into their curriculum to deepen students' understanding of global issues. While MUN is primarily academic, it also offers social opportunities,

¹ United Nations, 'MODEL UN GUIDE' (*United Nations*) <<https://www.un.org/en/mun/model-un-guide>> accessed 17 February 2024.

² '1st Model United Nation at University of Mysore' <<https://www.lawctopus.com/mun-at-university-of-mysore/>> accessed 25 August 2024.

³ LawBhoomi, 'IMUN on Impact of War on the Environment by School of Law, University of Mysore [Online]: Register Now!' (*LawBhoomi*, 29 March 2024) <<https://lawbhoomi.com/international-mun-impact-of-war-on-the-environment-byuniversity-of-mysore/>> accessed 25 August 2024.

⁴ *International Model UN Conference on Global Eco-Aviation Practices* (Directed by Institute of Legal and Policy Research, 2024) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q89MGVb90ps>> accessed 25 August 2024.

⁵ *Model UN Strategy: How to Research Your Country Policy* (Directed by Model United Nations Institute By Best Delegate, 2017) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJoxVQTc32w>> accessed 25 August 2024.



fostering friendships and connections among participants.⁶

In Model United Nations (MUN), procedures are crucial for maintaining order and facilitating productive debates.⁷ Most MUN committees follow parliamentary procedures based on Robert's Rules of Order or similar rules used by the actual UN, but rules can vary between conferences due to the lack of a central governing body. Points and Motions are fundamental to the flow of debate in MUN. Points are used for discussions outside substantive debate and do not require a vote, while motions are used for procedural matters and require a vote for approval. The number of votes required for motions is determined by the Quorum, which is the minimum number of delegates needed to make decisions in a committee. Debate in MUN typically follows a structured process, starting with a speakers list, followed by formal or informal debate, and then the voting procedure.⁸ A Dais, consisting of a chair and possibly vice-chairs, maintains the speakers list and oversees the debate process. Delegates can request to speak by raising their placards or sending a note to the chair. Formal and informal debate includes moderated and unmoderated caucuses. Moderated caucuses are more formal and are led by the committee chair, while unmoderated caucuses are more informal and allow delegates to move around the room for discussions. During a caucus, the rules of procedure are suspended, and anyone recognized by the chair may speak.

Resolutions are key outcomes of MUN debates, expressing the committee's opinions and recommendations on a given topic. Resolutions go through a drafting process, approval by the

dais, and debate and modification by the committee before being passed. MUN societies and conferences are managed by a group of administrators known as the secretariat, led by a Secretary-General.⁹ The secretariat also includes the Director-General, Under-Secretaries-General, and President of the General Assembly. Each committee has a dais, which includes a chair (or moderator/director), vice-chairs, and note-passers. Crisis committees may also have a crisis staff responsible for managing crisis scenarios.

Delegates are typically required to wear Western business attire, such as suits or formal dresses, to show respect for the nation, organization, or individual they are representing, and for the committee as a whole.

MUN committees simulate various bodies, including the United Nations, the European Union, government cabinets, regional bodies like ASEAN, corporate boards, NGOs, and Press Corps. Some conferences also feature idiosyncratic or fictional committees, such as the 'Crisis Committee,' which deals with crisis scenarios. Crisis committees are a specialized form of MUN where delegates must respond to rapidly evolving crisis situations, passing directives instead of resolutions. Crisis committees allow for more variation in rules and experimentation compared to regular committees.

GENESIS OF MODEL UN

Model United Nations (MUN) has a rich history that can be traced back to the early 20th century when students began organizing simulations of the League of Nations. The concept first took shape in 1921 at Oxford University in England, where the inaugural role-play of the League of Nations was conducted. This pioneering event was followed by the first

⁶ 'MUN Made Easy: How to Get Started with Model United Nations - 5 Simple Steps from the Best Delegate MUN Experts - Best Delegate Model United Nations' <<https://bestdelegate.com/mun-made-easy-how-to-get-started-with-model-united-nations/>> accessed 17 February 2024.

⁷ 'International Model United Nations Conference at University of Mysore [March 2]: Register by Feb 20' (<http://legaljunction.co.in>) <<http://legaljunction.co.in/newsdetails.php?newsid=126>> accessed 25 August 2024.

⁸ Aditya Aryan, 'International MUN on Harmonizing Trade for Peace [Free; Online; March 15]: Register by March 13' (*Lawctopus*, 5 March 2024) <<https://www.lawctopus.com/international-mun-harmonizing-trade-peace/>> accessed 25 August 2024.

⁹ 'What Is Model United Nations? - MUN Explained - WiseMee' (9 July 2019) <<https://www.wisemee.com/what-is-mun/>> accessed 17 February 2024.



Model League of Nations at Harvard University in the United States in 1923.¹⁰

After the devastation of the Second World War, universities worldwide continued the tradition of organizing Model United Nations and historical simulations of the League of Nations.¹¹ These events served as educational tools, allowing students to immerse themselves in the complexities of international diplomacy and decision-making. Today, Model United Nations has evolved into a global phenomenon, with conferences held in numerous countries around the world. While primarily an extracurricular activity, in some educational systems, Model United Nations is integrated into the curriculum as a standalone subject. This highlights the significant impact and educational value that MUN provides, shaping the understanding and engagement of students with international affairs and diplomacy.

UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization comprised of sovereign states from around the world, with nearly every country in the world being a member. Established in 1945 in the aftermath of World War II, the UN was founded by 51 states, including the United Kingdom, who signed the UN Charter, becoming its founding members.¹² Over the years, the number of independent countries has increased due to the end of colonialism and the breakup of countries like the USSR and Yugoslavia, and currently, the UN has 193 member states. The primary purpose of the UN is to provide a forum for member states to discuss global issues that affect them individually and collectively. It seeks to address issues, conflicts, and crises in a peaceful manner. The UN Charter outlines the rights and responsibilities of member states and serves as a guiding document for the organization.

¹⁰ 'The History of the First MUN - WiseMee' (15 October 2019) <<https://www.wisemee.com/history-of-the-first-mun/>> accessed 17 February 2024.

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² United Nations, 'Introduction' (*United Nations*) <<https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/introduction>> accessed 17 February 2024.

The UN has four main purposes, as stated in Article 1 of the UN Charter:¹³

- i. To maintain international peace and security by taking collective measures to prevent and remove threats to peace, suppress acts of aggression, and settle disputes peacefully.
- ii. To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to strengthen universal peace.
- iii. To achieve international cooperation in solving economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian problems, and to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- iv. To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in achieving these common goals.

These purposes are guided by principles outlined in Article 2 of the UN Charter, which include sovereign equality of all members, peaceful settlement of disputes, refraining from the threat or use of force, assisting the UN in its actions, and ensuring that non-member states act in accordance with these principles.

The UN Charter also provides for the suspension or expulsion of member states that do not adhere to its principles, highlighting the importance of upholding the values of the organization.

UNITED NATIONS MAIN ORGANS

The United Nations (UN) is composed of several main bodies, each with specific roles and responsibilities:

General Assembly

The General Assembly is the primary deliberative organ of the UN, consisting of representatives from all member states,¹⁴ each

¹³ United Nations, 'Chapter I: Purposes and Principles (Articles 1-2)' (*United Nations*) <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-1>> accessed 25 August 2024.

¹⁴ United Nations, 'Chapter IV: The General Assembly (Articles 9-22)' (*United Nations*) <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-4>> accessed 25 August 2024.



with one vote. Important decisions, such as those regarding peace and security, admission of new members, and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority, while other decisions are made by a simple majority. The General Assembly also has various subsidiary organs, including the Disarmament Commission, the Peacebuilding Commission, and the Human Rights Council.

Secretariat

The Secretariat is an international staff that works in duty stations worldwide to carry out the day-to-day work of the UN.¹⁵ It services the other principal organs of the UN and administers the programs and policies set by them. The Secretariat's duties range from administering peacekeeping operations to mediating international disputes, and from surveying economic and social trends to preparing studies on human rights and sustainable development. Additionally, the Secretariat informs the media about the UN's work, organizes international conferences, and translates documents into the UN's official languages.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

ECOSOC coordinates the economic and social work of the UN and its operational arms. It is serviced by the Department for Economic and Social Affairs.¹⁶ The Council's 54 member governments are elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms. Seats on the Council are allocated based on geographical representation. ECOSOC's work is carried out through Functional and Regional Commissions, which address specific topics and geographic areas, respectively. These commissions include working groups and other sections composed of member countries' representatives and independent experts.

International Court of Justice (ICJ)

The ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the UN, established in 1945 by the UN Charter.¹⁷ It settles legal disputes submitted by states in accordance with international law and provides advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized UN organs and specialized agencies. The Court is composed of 15 judges elected by the General Assembly and the Security Council for nine-year terms. It is headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands, and is assisted by a Registry, its administrative organ. It is important to note that the ICJ is distinct from the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is not a UN court and hears cases against individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MODEL UN

Model United Nations (MUN) offers a transformative educational experience for students, equipping them with valuable skills and knowledge essential for success in high school, college, and beyond.¹⁸ Through MUN, students engage in public speaking, delivering speeches to audiences, and honing their research skills by synthesizing information from diverse sources worldwide. They also learn how to write policies and gain insights into different cultures, broadening their perspectives.¹⁹ Moreover, MUN cultivates critical social skills that are invaluable in life. Students learn to discuss complex issues, negotiate, and compromise, fostering leadership skills and social adaptability. Many students discover their voice and leadership potential through MUN, building the confidence to succeed in various endeavors.²⁰

¹⁵ United Nations, 'Secretariat' (*United Nations*) <<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/secretariat>> accessed 25 August 2024.

¹⁶ 'Introduction - UN Economic and Social Council Documentation - Research Guides at United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library' <<https://research.un.org/en/docs/ecosoc>> accessed 25 August 2024.

¹⁷ 'The Court | INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE' <<https://www.icj-cij.org/court>> accessed 25 August 2024.

¹⁸ 'value_of_MUN.Pdf' <https://www.wichita.edu/academics/fairmount_las/polisci/modelun/wa-mun/documents/value_of_MUN.pdf> accessed 17 February 2024.

¹⁹ Hritika Malhotra, 'STUDENTS' G77 SUMMIT! Register Now!' (6 May 2024) <<https://knowledgesteez.com/2024/05/registrations-are-invited-for-the-upcoming-students-g77-summit-organised-by-the-school-of-law-at-the-university-of-mysore-in-association-with-the-institute-of-legal-and-policy-research-virtual/>> accessed 25 August 2024.

²⁰ 'Why Parents Should Support an Education with Model United Nations' (*All-American Model United Nations*, 6 February 2023)

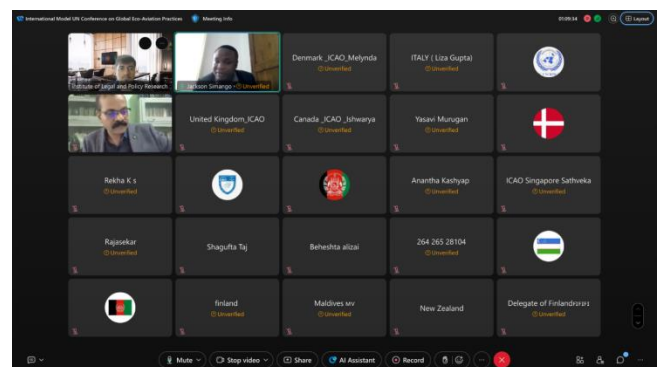
Participating in MUN provides students with access to influential figures and organizations. With over half a million students participating annually, MUN attracts attention from UN officials, NGOs, business leaders, and public figures. These entities actively engage with students, providing guidance on paths to college, internships, and careers. MUN introduces students to a global community of leaders, expanding their networks and perspectives.²¹



Furthermore, MUN serves as a stepping stone to college and careers. Many MUN participants have gone on to attend Ivy League universities and become the youngest generation of employees at the UN and Foreign Services worldwide. The skills and experiences gained through MUN open doors to prestigious careers around the world, empowering students to make meaningful contributions and drive real change.²²

At an in-person Model UN conference, delegates typically experience a structured agenda that mimics the United Nations' proceedings. Lasting from 1 to 4 days, these conferences involve various activities. Before the conference, students are assigned a country and topic, conducting research and possibly submitting a "Position Paper." During the morning session, delegates meet their committee and deliver speeches, often

participating in moderated and unmoderated caucuses for focused discussions. In the afternoon, delegates collaborate to write resolutions, which are then presented, debated, and voted upon. The conference concludes with a formal voting procedure, where resolutions are approved or rejected, and a closing ceremony. Through this process, students develop essential skills in research, public speaking, negotiation, and diplomacy, gaining a deeper understanding of global issues and the UN's role in addressing them.²³ The advancement of technology has significantly transformed various aspects of our lives, including educational and professional activities. One notable example is the Model United Nations (MUN) conferences, which have traditionally required physical attendance and in-person participation. However, with recent technological developments, MUN conferences can now be conducted in a virtual mode.²⁴



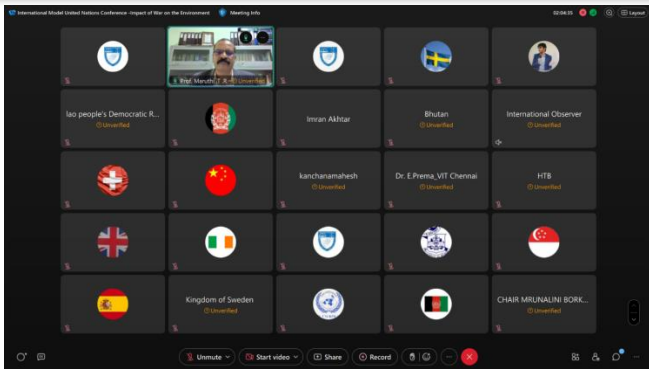
<<https://www.allamericanmun.com/why-parents-should-support-an-education-with-model-united-nations/>> accessed 17 February 2024.

²¹ Carol Geldart and Peter Lyon, 'The Group of 77: A Perspective View' (1980) 57 International Affairs 79.

²² 'Why Parents Should Support an Education with Model United Nations' (n 22).

²³ 'International Foreign Ministers' Model on Reforming the United Nations Security Council (27 April): Register Now!' <<https://www.latestlaws.com/conferences-seminars/international-foreign-ministers-model-on-reforming-the-united-nations-security-council-27-april-214586>> accessed 25 August 2024.

²⁴ 'International Virtual Model United Nations Conference 2024 on Sustainable Futures, Integrating Environmental Stewardship and Public Health: Register Now' <<https://www.latestlaws.com/conferences-seminars/international-virtual-model-united-nations-conference-2024-on-sustainable-futures-integrating-environmental-stewardship-and-public-health-214223>> accessed 25 August 2024; 'International MUN on Rights of Persons with Disabilities [March 2]' <<https://www.lawctopus.com/international-mun-rights-persons-disabilities/>> accessed 25 August 2024.



Participating in caucuses in Model United Nations (MUN) is a significant aspect of the learning experience for students. Caucuses offer a unique opportunity for delegates to deviate from the formal Rules of Procedure and engage in more dynamic and interactive discussions. Through caucuses, students learn valuable skills such as public speaking, negotiation, collaboration, and critical thinking. Moderated caucuses, for example, allow delegates to delve deeper into specific aspects of the main topic and present their ideas in a more conversational format. This helps students develop their ability to articulate their thoughts clearly and persuasively, as well as to respond effectively to opposing viewpoints. Unmoderated caucuses, on the other hand, provide students with the opportunity to collaborate with their peers in a more informal setting. By moving freely around the room and forming groups to draft resolutions, students learn the importance of teamwork, compromise, and consensus-building. The



process of motioning for a caucus and gaining approval through a simple majority vote also teaches students about the democratic decision-making process. It encourages them to take initiative, advocate for

their ideas, and work within the established rules and procedures of the conference.

MOTIONS AND POINTS

In Model UN, the chairs ensure compliance with rules, but the real power lies with delegations, expressed through motions and points. These are crucial for moving the debate forward and ensuring smooth proceedings.



Motions

Definition: Proposals made by delegates to transition between different forms of debate.

Procedure: Raise placard and say, 'The delegation of (name of country) would like to motion for (desired proposal).'²⁵

Types

Include motions such as Motion to Set the Agenda, Motion to Open the Speakers' List, etc.

Points

Definition: Observations or requests for information that do not affect the debate process.

Procedure: Raise hand; no placards used.

Types

Point of Personal Privilege: Requests related to personal comfort or needs.

Point of Order: Used to address breaches of procedure.

²⁵ 'Model United Nations High School | Emerald Heights' (*The Emerald Heights International School Indore*) <<https://emeraldheights.edu.in/mun/>> accessed 17 February 2024.



Point of Parliamentary Inquiry: Used for clarification on rules or procedures.

Point of Information: Used to ask for information not directly related to the debate.

SETTING THE AGENDA

In a Model UN conference, the procedure is crucial for the effective conduct of debates and decision-making. After roll call, delegates can submit motions, such as the Motion to Set the Agenda, which requires a 2/3 majority vote.²⁶ Once the agenda is set, delegates can propose the Motion to Open the Speakers' List, typically approved unanimously, followed by setting the Speaker's Time, usually between 60 and 90 seconds per delegate.

Resolutions and voting are key aspects of the conference. Draft resolutions must include lists of supporters and signatories, preamble and operative clauses. A formal debate ensues, including speeches for and against the resolution, with the opportunity for amendments to be tabled.²⁷ These amendments can be "Friendly" or "Unfriendly," with the latter requiring a motion for introduction.

The final vote is initiated by a motion to Close the Debate, requiring a 2/3 majority. Delegates can propose a Motion to Re-Order Draft Resolutions or Motion to Divide the Question. A Roll Call Vote or Vote by Secret Ballot may be requested. The adoption of a resolution is signaled by applause, and the resolution is forwarded to the General Assembly for approval. Finally, the closure of the sitting is marked by a motion to Adjourn, which requires an absolute majority to pass, with longer breaks requiring a second motion to Suspend the Session, typically requiring a simple majority.



Understanding these procedures is vital for effective participation in Model UN conferences and contributing to resolving global issues.²⁸

How to Write a Resolution

A resolution is the primary outcome of a committee's work in a Model UN conference, aiming to "resolve" the problem at hand. It serves as the UN's decision-making document, crafted collaboratively by Member States. Resolutions serve two main purposes: to determine the UN's actions regarding the issue and to recommend or request actions from individual Member States to address the problem. Resolutions adhere to a specific format, consisting of three main sections: the header, the preamble, and the operative section.²⁹

The Header

Committee: Identifies the committee you represent.

Topic: States the topic under discussion.

Sponsors: Lists the main authors who wrote the resolution.

Signatories: Includes delegates who want the resolution introduced for debate, though they may not support its content.

The Preamble

Sets the scene for the resolution, explaining why it's being written and the issue's significance.

Can reference past UN resolutions, treaties, and international actions related to the topic.

Begins each paragraph with "preambular phrases," italicized in the resolution and ending in a comma.

The Operatives

Determine the UN's action on the issue, such as funding solutions or requesting actions from Member States. Start with italicized operative phrases, are numbered, and end in a semicolon, except the final operative, which ends in a

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ 'Model United Nations High School | Emerald Heights' (n 27).



period. If an operative is broken into sub-operatives, use a colon to introduce them, starting with lowercase letters.³⁰

Operative Phrases

Begin operative paragraphs, should be italicized, and include phrases like:

- Acknowledging
- Affirming
- Alarmed by
- Bearing in mind
- Deploring
- Emphasizing
- Expressing concern
- Expressing its appreciation
- Fully aware
- Guided by
- Having considered
- Mindful of
- Noting
- Reaffirming
- Recalling
- Recognizing
- Regretting
- Taking into consideration
- Acknowledges
- Adopts
- Affirms
- Approves
- Authorizes
- Believes that
- Calls attention to
- Calls upon Member States
- Condemns
- Confirms
- Decides
- Demands
- Determines that
- Emphasizes
- Endorses the Declaration
- Establishes
- Expresses its appreciation
- Expresses its concern
- Insists that
- Instructs
- Invites

- Notes that
- Demands
- Determines that
- Realizes
- Recalls
- Recognizes
- Recommends
- Reminds
- Requests
- Resolves
- Suggests that
- Supports
- Takes note
- Urges
- Welcomes

Understanding these components is crucial for drafting effective resolutions in Model UN conferences, as they outline the actions and recommendations to address global issues effectively.

EVALUATING DELEGATE PERFORMANCE

Evaluating delegate performance in Model United Nations (MUN) can be a comprehensive process that requires a structured framework to ensure fairness and accuracy. Here is the evaluation framework for delegates in general committees:

Position Paper (20%)

The position paper should be evaluated based on the clarity of the delegate's position, the depth of research evident in the paper, the feasibility of proposed solutions, and the overall organization and presentation of the paper. Deductions should be made for poor formatting, lack of originality, or excessive plagiarism.

General Speakers List Speech (10%)

This speech is often the first opportunity for delegates to make an impression. Evaluate the speech based on the delegate's ability to engage the committee, address key issues, and demonstrate a solid understanding of their country's position.

³⁰ *ibid.*



Involvement in Moderated Caucuses and Overall Input (15%)

Assess the delegate's participation in moderated caucuses, including their ability to contribute constructively to discussions, ask insightful questions, and collaborate effectively with other delegates.

Lobbying (15%)

Evaluate the delegate's ability to engage in effective lobbying efforts, both during formal debates and in informal settings such as unmoderated caucuses. Consider their ability to build alliances, negotiate effectively, and promote their country's interests.

Speaking Abilities and General Command (5%)

Evaluate the delegate's speaking skills, including their ability to communicate clearly, articulate their points effectively, and command attention during speeches and debates.

Overall Knowledge of Issues (5%)

Assess the depth of the delegate's understanding of the topics being discussed, including their knowledge of relevant facts, figures, and historical context. Consider asking questions during debates to gauge their knowledge.

Resolution Writing and Documentation (25%)

Working Papers (10%)

Evaluate the delegate's contribution to drafting working papers, including their ability to collaborate with other delegates and propose practical solutions.

Resolution (10%):

Assess the delegate's role in drafting the final resolution, including their ability to negotiate effectively, compromise when necessary, and advocate for their country's interests.

Amendments (5%):

Evaluate the delegate's ability to propose meaningful amendments to resolutions,

demonstrating a thorough understanding of the issues at hand.

Formality and Respect for ROPs, the Executive Board, and Fellow Delegates (5%): Assess the delegate's adherence to the Rules of Procedure, their respect for the Executive Board and fellow delegates, and their overall professionalism and demeanor throughout the conference.

This framework provides a detailed and structured approach to evaluating delegate performance in MUN conferences. Adjustments can be made to the parameters based on the specific requirements and focus areas of each conference.

MODEL UN RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rules of Procedure are essential guidelines used in Model United Nations (MUN) conferences to ensure order and decorum during discussions.³¹ These rules dictate who can speak, when they can speak, and what topics can be discussed. While many MUN conferences follow parliamentary rules of procedure, which differ from the actual procedures used at the UN General Assembly, efforts have been made to align MUN procedures more closely with those of the UN. In an international conference, delegates act as representatives of their respective states, engaging in cooperative discussions to address lengthy agendas. Rules of procedure help facilitate these discussions by dividing them into two types: formal and informal consultations.

Formal consultations occur under the supervision of the committee Chairperson, where delegates make speeches, answer questions, introduce and debate resolutions and amendments. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that discussions are conducted in an orderly manner, with only one delegate speaking at a time, and to allow the Chairperson to guide negotiations constructively.³² Informal consultations, on the

³¹ 'General Assembly of the United Nations' <<https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/ropga/agenda.shtml>> accessed 17 February 2024.

³² *ibid.*



other hand, occur throughout the conference and may involve social interactions or pursuit of specific objectives. These consultations take place through face-to-face conversations and do not adhere to formal rules of procedure. In the past, MUN simulations have placed greater emphasis on formal rules of procedure compared to the UN. This is partly due to the more rigid parliamentary rules employed at MUNs and the fact that most proceedings, including motion, debate, negotiation, amendment, and resolution, occur during formal consultations. In contrast, at the UN, the primary mode of communication between delegates is through informal consultations, with formal processes mainly used to provide a context for these informal discussions and formalize agreements reached. Efforts to align MUN procedures with those of the UN aim to make the simulation more realistic and reflective of actual diplomatic processes. By understanding and following these procedures, delegates can engage more effectively in discussions and negotiations, gaining valuable insights into international relations and diplomacy.

THE FLOW OF DEBATE

The flow of debate in a traditional Model United Nations (MUN) conference follows a structured process that allows for formal and informal discussions on various topics.³³ Here is an explanation of each step:

Roll Call

The Chairperson calls out each country's name, and delegates respond with "present" or "present and voting" to indicate their presence.

Setting the Agenda

The committee considers the agenda, and a motion is made to prioritize a specific topic for discussion. This motion requires a second and is debatable. A provisional speakers list is established, and after speeches for and against

the motion, a vote is taken. A simple majority is needed to pass the motion. The committee can only move to the next topic after voting on a resolution or tabling the current topic.

Debate

Speakers List (Formal Debate)

Delegates raise their placards to be added to the speakers list. Speaking time is set through a motion, with the default being 90 seconds. When in formal debate, all rules of procedure are enforced.

End of List

Once the speakers list is exhausted, the committee moves to immediate voting procedures.

Voting Procedures: After a motion to close debate is approved, the committee votes on amendments first, then resolutions. Once all resolutions are voted upon, the committee can move to the next topic.

Caucus

Moderated Caucus

A mixture of formal and informal debate where delegates address the committee for a specific time.

Unmoderated Caucus

A temporary recess where delegates can meet informally to discuss draft resolutions and other issues.

Working Papers and Draft Resolutions: Delegations collaborate to create resolutions, and delegates may propose amendments to these documents.

Closure of Debate

A delegate can make a motion to close debate once they feel their country's position is clear and there are enough draft resolutions on the floor.

³³ 'Opening Debate Procedure' (*All-American Model United Nations*) <<https://www.allamericanmun.com/opening-debate-procedure/>> accessed 17 February 2024.



Final Voting Procedures

After the motion to close debate is approved, the committee votes on amendments and resolutions before moving to the next topic.

This structured flow of debate allows for thorough discussions and decision-making processes, mirroring the procedures followed in real-world diplomatic settings.

FLOW OF DEBATE: UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In the United Nations General Assembly, the flow of debate follows a structured process designed to ensure orderly discussions and decision-making. Here in an explanation of each step:

Model Quorum

The quorum, or the minimum number of member states required for the meeting to open, is one-third in the Plenary and one-fourth in the Main Committee. The Chairperson announces each country's name, and delegates respond with "present" to indicate their presence.

The Agenda

The provisional agenda is prepared by the Secretary-General and shared with all delegations before the conference. The agenda includes relevant documents, reports, and the order in which issues will be considered. The second topic area is addressed only after the first has been resolved or tabled.

Debate

Formal Consultations

The Speaker's List may be based on messages from delegates in advance or by raising placards during the conference.

Delegates can request to be added to the list by sending a note to the Chairperson. There are no yields, and speaking time is usually set at 90 seconds unless otherwise specified in the Programme of Work. All rules of procedure are enforced during formal debate.

End of Speakers' List

The President/Chairperson may close the speakers' list with the permission of the representatives present. The President/Chairperson may allow a right of reply to any member if a speech delivered after the list closure makes it necessary.

This structured flow of debate ensures that all member states have the opportunity to participate in discussions and that decisions are made in a fair and organized manner.

ADOPTION BY CONSENSUS

In the United Nations, adoption by consensus is a process used to approve resolutions when there is general agreement among member states.

Formal Informal

In the United Nations setting, a "formal informal" is a designated period during a meeting where delegates engage in discussions in a more structured and organized manner than in regular informal sessions.

Purpose and Procedure

When a motion to suspend the meeting for a formal informal is passed, it indicates a shift from the usual proceedings to a more focused discussion.

The Chairperson oversees this phase by calling upon delegates who raise their placards to address the committee.

Delegates are given a specific amount of time to speak on the designated topic or issue.

Structured Discussion

Unlike informal sessions where discussions may be more spontaneous and free-flowing, a formal informal session follows a more structured format.

Delegates may be required to adhere to specific speaking protocols and may address the committee one at a time.



Focused Topics

The topics discussed during a formal informal session are typically important or contentious issues that require deeper consideration and deliberation.

The aim is to facilitate meaningful dialogue and exchange of views among delegates on these specific topics.

Decision-Making

While formal informal sessions do not involve voting or decision-making directly, they often contribute to the formulation of positions, resolutions, or agreements that may be pursued further in subsequent meetings.

Informal Consultations

While formal caucuses do occur, the UN does not use this terminology. Instead, informal consultations are held. When a motion to suspend the meeting for a formal informal is passed, the Chair calls upon delegates to address the committee for a specific time. An informal informal is a temporary recess during which rules of procedure are suspended for negotiation. Delegates can meet informally to discuss and merge resolutions, which takes up a significant amount of committee time.

Nature of Discussions

Informal informals provide delegates with an opportunity to engage in more casual and informal discussions on various topics. Delegates may use this time to exchange ideas, negotiate, or build consensus on issues in a less formal environment.

Flexibility and Informality

Unlike formal sessions, there are no strict rules or procedures governing discussions during informal informals. Delegates have the freedom to interact more informally and spontaneously, fostering a conducive environment for dialogue and collaboration.

Networking and Relationship Building

Informal informals also serve as networking opportunities for delegates to build

relationships, establish connections, and explore potential areas of cooperation outside of the formal meeting setting.

Informal Decision-Making

While no official decisions are made during informal informals, they may lay the groundwork for future discussions or agreements that can be formalized through formal procedures.

Draft Resolutions

Delegates divide into regional or political blocs to agree on resolution language within their group.

Each group merges with another until one resolution is proposed to the entire committee.

Closure of Debate

Once regional and political groupings have merged their texts into one acceptable resolution, delegates may move for the closure of debate to adopt the resolution by consensus.

If consensus cannot be reached, then voting may occur.

ADOPTION BY CONSENSUS

If consensus is achieved, the Chair simply states that the resolution has been adopted by consensus and forwards it to the Plenary for approval. If consensus cannot be achieved, debate can either be tabled (No-Action) or closed (Voting). Amendments are voted upon first, then resolutions. Once the resolution is voted upon, the committee can move to the next topic on the agenda. The process of adoption by consensus is aimed at ensuring that resolutions are adopted with the broadest possible agreement among member states, promoting cooperation and unity within the United Nations.



RULES OF PROCEDURE: OPENING THE DEBATE

Setting the Agenda

Rule 1: The provisional agenda for the conference shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General and communicated to all delegations at least two months before the start of the conference.

Rule 2: The provisional agenda of the conference shall include:

Reports on the themes selected for each conference; and,

All items which the Secretary-General deems necessary to put before the delegations;

The order in which issues will be considered in the meeting.

Rule 3: At each conference, the provisional agenda shall be submitted to the meeting for approval during the opening session.

Minute of Silent Prayer or Meditation:

Rule 4: Immediately after the opening of the first meeting and preceding the closing of the final meeting, the President/Chairperson shall invite the representatives to observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

These rules govern the initial stages of a conference, ensuring that the agenda is set in advance and that there is a moment of reflection before and after the debates. The agenda is carefully curated by the Secretary-General to include relevant topics and the order in which they will be discussed, allowing for a smooth flow of the conference. The minute of

silent prayer or meditation provides delegates with a moment to collect their thoughts and focus before engaging in the debates and decisions ahead.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS: SPEECHES

Speeches

Rule 5: No representative may address the meeting without having previously obtained permission of the President/Chairperson. The President/Chairperson shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak after adding them to the Speaker's List. The President/Chairperson may call out a speaker if his or her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

TIME LIMIT ON SPEECHES

Rule 6: The meeting may limit the time to be allowed to each speaker and the number of times each representative may speak on any question. Before a decision is taken, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against a proposal to set a time limit which will then be put to vote. When the debate is limited and a representative exceeds his or her allotted time, the President/Chairperson shall call the speaker to order without delay.

These rules ensure that the debate remains focused and efficient. Representatives must seek permission from the President/Chairperson before speaking, and their remarks must be relevant to the topic at hand. Time limits on speeches help to ensure that all representatives have an opportunity to speak and that the debate proceeds in a timely manner. If a representative exceeds their allotted time, the President/Chairperson will intervene to maintain order.

POINTS OF ORDER

Rule 7: During the discussion of any matter, a representative may raise a 'point of order' if the delegate believes that the President/Chairperson is not following the Rules of Procedure or not being sufficiently active in ensuring that other representatives do so. The



point of order shall be immediately ruled on by the President/Chairperson in accordance with the rules of procedure. If a delegate feels that the ruling of the President/Chairperson is incorrect, they may appeal against the ruling. The appeal is put to a vote and the decision of the President/Chairperson could be overruled by a majority of the members present and voting.

There is a widely used convention for signaling to the President/Chairman that the reason that the delegate is asking for the floor is to raise a 'point of order' rather than simply to be put on the Speaker's List, the delegate makes a 'T' with their hand and placard.

Points of order are crucial for maintaining the integrity of the debate and ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are followed. Representatives can use this mechanism to raise concerns about the conduct of the meeting and seek clarification on procedural matters. The ability to appeal the ruling of the President/Chairperson ensures that decisions are made fairly and transparently.

III. MOTIONS

Closing of List of Speakers; Right to Reply

Rule 8: During the course of the debate, the President/Chairperson may announce the list of speakers and, with the permission of the representatives present, declare the list closed. The President/Chairperson may, however, accord the right of reply to any member if a speech delivered after the closing of the list makes this desirable. Right of reply is not used under any other circumstances.

IV. MOTIONS

Suspension of Meeting

Rule 9: The meeting may be suspended for a limited amount of time upon request by a representative or the President/Chairperson. Such matters will not be debated but will immediately be put to a vote. A suspended meeting is resumed on the same day. This

motion is used to break for informal consultations and for lunch and tea breaks.

Adjournment of Meeting

Rule 10: During the discussion of any matter, a representative may motion for the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions will not be debated but immediately put to a vote. Any continued consideration of an item on the agenda will take place at another meeting on another day. This motion can be used at the end of the day.

ADJOURNMENT OF DEBATE

Rule 11: During the discussion of any matter, a representative may propose the motion to adjourn the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak for the motion and two representatives may speak against, after which the proposal will be put to a vote. Adjournment of debate ends parts or all of the agenda item being discussed during the conference. This can be used to block action on specific draft resolutions and is known as a 'no-action motion'.

CLOSURE OF DEBATE

Rule 12: A representative may at any time motion for the closure of debate on the item under discussion, whether or not the representative has signified their wish to speak. A representative can motion for this after they feel that sufficient progress has been made on draft resolutions, and they are ready to be adopted by consensus, or to be forced to a vote. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two speakers opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to vote. If the meeting votes in favor of this motion, the President/Chairperson shall declare the closure of the debate.

ORDER OF PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Rule 13: Subject to Rule 8, the motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following

order over all the other procedures or motions in the meeting:

- a) To suspend the meeting;
- b) To adjourn the meeting;
- c) To adjourn debate on the item under discussion;
- d) To close debate on the item under discussion.



V. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

Tabling Draft Resolution

Rule 14: Any member state may submit a draft resolution to the Secretary for which no minimum percentage of support is required. However, since resolutions are aimed to be adopted by consensus, it is advised that representatives build multilateral support before tabling draft resolutions.

PROPOSALS AND AMENDMENTS

Rule 15: Proposals and amendments on a tabled draft resolution/decisions shall be submitted are either formally submitted in writing to the Secretary, issued as 'L-documents' or proposed orally from the floor if no member objects.

Rule 16: When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the committee shall first vote on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily

implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be considered or voted upon. A motion is considered an amendment to a proposal if it merely adds to, deletes from, or revises part of the proposal.

Rule 17: A member can request division of proposals, i.e. a separate vote on paragraphs or parts of the draft resolution or amendment before the adoption of the whole text. This applies to parts of a paragraph, an entire paragraph, or several paragraphs. If the request is challenged, there will be a vote to decide whether the proposal can be divided such that the paragraph(s) can be voted on separately to the rest of the draft resolution. After two delegates each have spoken for and against the request, there will be a vote based on a simple majority. If by majority, the request is passed, immediately after the voting on the paragraph, the entire draft resolution will be considered. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Voting on Draft Resolution

Rule 18: It is assumed that draft resolutions will be adopted by consensus and therefore shall not require voting. However, in the event that the draft resolution cannot be accepted by consensus, the meeting will go into a vote.

Rule 19: If all operative paragraphs of a draft resolution are rejected, the draft resolution will be considered rejected as a whole.

V. VOTING

Voting Rights

Rule 19: Each member state of the meeting shall have one vote.

Majority Required

Rule 20: Decisions of the General Assembly meeting shall be made by a simple majority of the members present and voting, except on important questions including

recommendations with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security, the suspension of the rights and privileges of membership, the expulsion of Members, and budgetary questions. This applies to both draft resolutions and amendments.



Method of Voting

Rule 22: The meeting shall normally vote by a show of hands or by standing but any representative may request a roll-call vote. The roll-call will be taken in alphabetical order, and when called, the representative shall answer “yes”, “no” or “abstention”.

Conduct During Voting:

Rule 23: After the President/Chairperson has announced the beginning of voting, no delegate shall interrupt the voting unless on a point of order in connection with the actual voting procedure. The President/Chairperson may permit members to explain their vote either before or after the voting. The time given for these explanations may be limited by the President/Chairperson. The President/Chairperson shall not permit the proposer of an amendment to explain his vote on his own proposal or amendment.

Equally Divided Votes

Rule 24: If a vote is equally divided on any matter, the President/Chairman shall decide if a second vote shall be taken. If the second vote also results in an equally divided situation, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

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