



# Old Dominion University Model United Nations Conferences Rules and Procedures

## General Assembly

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## **I. SESSIONS**

### *Rule 1 Opening Date*

The Old Dominion University Model United Nations General Assembly shall meet in regular session commencing and closing on the dates designated by the ODU Model United Nations Society.

## **II. LANGUAGES**

### *Rule 2 Official and Working Languages*

English shall be the official and working language of the General Assembly of the ODU Model United Nations, its committees and other bodies. Use of any other official UN language is permitted if simultaneous translation into English is provided by the Delegate. All resolutions and other documents shall be published in English.

## **III. SECRETARIAT**

### *Rule 3 Duties of the Secretary-General*

The Secretary-General chairs plenary sessions of ODUMUN, directs the operations of the ODUMUN staff, and insures the effective conduct of all meetings of the General Assembly, its committees, and other bodies. The Secretary-General may designate a member of the Secretariat to act in their place at these meetings. The Secretary-General or a person designated by them may at any time assume the role and duties of the Chair in any ODUMUN body.

### *Rule 4 Staff*

The Secretary-General provides and directs ODUMUN staff required by the General Assembly and any committees or subsidiary organs, which it may establish. The Secretary-General may suspend and substitute staff at ODUMUN with due cause, with the approval of the Director of ODUMUN.

### *Rule 5 Duties of the Secretariat*

The Secretariat shall receive and distribute official documents, reports, and resolutions of the General Assembly, its committees, and other ODUMUN bodies; and generally perform all other support each ODUMUN body may require, as determined by ODUMUN staff.

## **IV. COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

### *Rule 6 Chair*

At each session of an ODUMUN body, the Chair designated by the Secretary-General shall preside. The Chair exercises their functions under the authority of the Secretary-General.

### *Rule 7 Acting Chair*

If the Chair finds it necessary to be absent during a meeting or any part thereof, the Vice-Chair, or another member of staff designated by the Chair or Secretary-General, shall preside as Acting Chair. The Acting Chair shall have the same powers as the Chair.

#### *Rule 8 General Powers of the Chair*

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him/her elsewhere by these rules, the Chair shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the session, direct debate in meetings, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, rule on points of order, and maintain decorum. The Chair shall maintain the list of speakers either by taking placard requests or by requiring requests in writing. The Chair may, in the course of the discussion of an item, limit the number of times each member may be placed on the speakers' list and limit their speaking time. The Chair is authorized to ask Delegates to focus their remarks on topics under discussion. The Chair may invite motions, judge the suitability of Draft Resolutions (Working Papers) and proposed Amendments, declare motions dilatory, and limit caucusing.

#### *Rule 9 Voting*

Only official Delegates vote. The Chair shall not vote on any matters concerning procedural or substantive issues.

### **V. DELEGATIONS**

#### *Rule 10 Composition*

Delegations to a committee or other body shall have not less than one and no more than two representatives.

### **VI. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

#### *Rule 11 Opening of Meeting and Deliberations*

The Chair may declare a meeting open and permit deliberations when at least one-half of the member states registered for that body are present. The presence of a majority, consisting of one half plus one of the members, is required for a vote on a resolution or an amendment.

#### *Rule 12 Debate to Establish of an Agenda Topic*

Debate on establishment of an agenda topic is limited to two speakers in favor of and two against the proposed topic. The Chair may limit the time to be allowed to speakers under this rule.

#### *Rule 13 Precedence*

Members of the Secretariat are accorded precedence at all times.

#### *Rule 14 Statements by the Secretariat*

The Secretary-General or a member of the Secretariat designated by the Secretary-General, may at any time make either oral or written statements to an ODUMUN body.

### *Rule 15 Speeches*

A Delegate may speak only if recognized by the Chair to do so. No Delegate may address the General Assembly, its committees, subcommittees, or another ODUMUN body without permission of the Chair. The Chair shall call upon speakers to be placed on a Speakers' List in the order of their turn to speak. The Chair may call a speaker to order if their remarks are not germane to the topic under discussion.

A Delegate wishing to yield time to questions, to the chair or another Delegation must note so at the beginning of their speech.

### *Rule 16 Time Limit on Speeches*

The committee or Chair may limit the speaking time allowed for each speaker. When debate is limited and a Delegate exceeds allotted time, the Chair shall call them to order without delay.

### *Rule 17 Points of Order (Procedural)*

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may rise to a Point of Order (a procedural question). The Point of Order shall be decided immediately by the Chair, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. A representative rising to a Point of Order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

A Delegate intending to seek information or clarification of procedure rises to a Point of Order as a means of obtaining the floor. However, *to Introduce a Motion* (request specific action), a Delegate raises their placard and waits to be recognized by the Chair.

A Point of Order also can be an intervention directed to the Chair, requesting the Chair to make use of some power of their office, such as the manner in which the debate is being conducted, the maintenance of order, observance of the rules of procedure, or how the Chair is exercising their powers. Under a Point of Order, a Delegate may request the Chair to apply a particular rule of procedure.

Delegates should not rise to Points of Order interrupting another Delegate's speech, except under extraordinary circumstances.

### *Rule 18 Points of Information (Substantive)*

A Point of Information (a substantive question) is used to request information or clarification of remarks by the Chair or a Delegate relating to material or arrangements of the meeting, documents, translations, etc. A Point of Order always is directed to the Chair.

A Point of Information can be used to request information from another Delegate, but must be addressed through the Chair.

### *Rule 19 Appealing the Decision of the Chair*

A Delegate may appeal a ruling of the Chair or Acting Chair. Appeals must be submitted in writing through the Chair. The appeal shall be put before the Secretary-General. The Chair's ruling shall stand unless overruled by the Secretary-General. Decisions concerning Right of Explanation, Right of Reply, Roll Call Votes and speaking times are not appealable.

### *Rule 20 Right of Reply*

A request to speak under a Right of Reply must be submitted in writing to the Chair.

Recognition of a Right of Reply may be granted by the Chair to a Delegate allowing them an opportunity to correct a serious misunderstanding or misrepresentation or a Delegate's or Member State's position, remarks, draft resolution or amendment.

The Chair has total discretion in granting a Right of Reply. This decision is not appealable.

## **VII. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS**

### *Rule 21 Closing the Speakers' List*

During the course of debate, the body may vote to close the Speakers' List. This motion requires a majority vote of those members present and voting; it is not debatable.

The Chair may, however, accord the Right of Reply to any member after the Speakers' List is closed.

### *Rule 22 Formal Debate*

During Formal Debate, Delegates only may present speeches. Questioning of Delegates is not permitted. Voting on substantive matters shall occur when the body is in formal debate.

### *Rule 23 Informal Debate*

By majority vote or the discretion of the Chair, the body can move into Informal Debate. No substantive matters shall be voted on during Informal Debate. During Informal Debate questions may be asked of the speaker under conditions established by the Chair. Caucusing also may occur. The Chair at any time may move the body back to Formal Debate.

### *Rule 24 Moderated Caucus*

A Moderated Caucus is informal debate under the authority of the Chair. The body may vote to move into a Moderated Caucus at any time by majority vote. A time limit for the Moderated Caucus must be part of the motion. There will be no Speakers' List, and Delegates will be recognized to speak upon raising their placards. There can be no points, motions or votes during a moderated caucus. The Chair may, at their discretion, move the body back into formal debate before the time limit has expired.

### *Rule 25 Un-Moderated Caucus*

The committee may vote to move into an Un-Moderated Caucus (unstructured meeting for consultation) at any time during normal debate by simple majority vote. A time limit for an Un-Moderated Caucus must be part of the motion. The Chair may, at their discretion, move the body back to debate before the time limit has expired.

### *Rule 26 Suspension of the Rules*

Suspension of the Rules allows for an informal structured presentation and is one way to introduce a draft resolution. The committee may vote to suspend the rules or it may be done at the Chair's discretion, with a time limit for a question-answer period in the motion. During the Suspension of the Rules, sponsors can read their draft resolution and answer questions pertaining to the draft resolution. Once the time for the questions has elapsed, the body moves back into debate.

#### *Rule 27 Adjournment of Debate*

To Adjourn Debate is to end discussion (table debate) on an agenda item *without* a vote on any resolution on the floor under that item. Deliberations move directly to the next agenda item.

During the discussion of any matter, a Delegate may move for Adjournment of Debate on the item under consideration. Such a motion requires a majority of members present and voting to pass. This motion is debatable: two Delegates may speak in favor of, and two against this motion. The Chair may limit the time allowed to the Delegates debating under this rule.

#### *Rule 28 Closure of Debate*

Closure of Debate terminates discussion on the agenda item and moves the body directly into Formal Voting Procedure.

A Delegate may, at any time, move for Closure of Debate on the agenda item under discussion. Permission to speak on the Closure of Debate shall be accorded to two speakers opposing the motion, after which the Motion for Closure will be put to a vote. The Chair may limit the time allowed to speakers under this rule. Passage of Closure requires a majority of the members present and voting.

After debate is closed, voting shall be conducted in the following order:

- a) amendment(s);
- c) the resolution as amended.

#### *Rule 29 Recess/Suspension of the Meeting*

A Delegate may move to Recess a Meeting (typically for meals) or for Suspension of the Meeting (typically ending a day's deliberation) during the discussion of any matter. Such motions shall not be debated. Recess or Suspension of the meeting requires the support of a majority of the members present and voting. The Chair may also Suspend the Meeting at their discretion.

#### *Rule 30 Order of Procedural Motions*

The motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all other proposals or motions before the body:

- a) to move for a Moderated or Un-Moderated Caucus
- b) to Recess or Suspend the Meeting;
- c) to Adjourn Debate;

d) to Close Debate.

*Rule 31 Draft Resolutions*

Working Papers for consideration as Draft Resolutions are submitted to the body's Director in writing with the appropriate number of signatures by sponsors. A Working Paper cannot be considered by the body until it has been approved by the Director. If accepted by the Director, the Working Paper becomes a Draft Resolution. It must be formally introduced by a sponsor in a speech. The Director is responsible for distribution of the resolution, if necessary.

*Rule 32 Proposed Amendments*

To amend is to change a Draft Resolution in some way. The process for submitting an Amendment is the same as for a Resolution.

Friendly Amendments, approved by the Sponsors, are automatically incorporated into the Resolution.

Unfriendly Amendments require the vote of the body to be added to the Draft Resolution. All unfriendly Amendments and the Draft Resolutions to which they apply shall be voted after debate is finished or closed.

*Rule 33 Reconsideration of Resolutions*

A Resolution or Draft Resolution may be reconsidered (re-opened for debate or modification after a vote). Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be limited to one speaker in favor and one against the motion.

*Rule 34 Withdrawal of Motion and Resolutions*

A Motion, Draft Resolution or Amendment may be withdrawn by its sponsors at any time before voting on it has commenced, provided that the Motion or Resolution has not been amended. Any Delegation who co-sponsored or signed the Motion or Resolution must also agree with the withdrawal. The Motion, Draft Resolution or Amendment may be reintroduced and seconded by other delegations.

## **VIII. VOTING**

### *Rule 35 Voting Rights*

Each Member State of the General Assembly shall have one vote.

### *Rule 36 Questions Decided by a Simple Majority*

Unless provided otherwise in these rules, Decisions of the Body shall be determined by a simple majority.

### *Rule 37 Important Questions*

An issue may be designated upon majority vote of a committee as an Important Question if it relates specifically to recommendations on the maintenance of international peace and security, suspension of the rights and privileges of a member or membership, expulsion of members, and budgetary questions.

A matter designated an Important Question requires a two-thirds majority of members present and voting to pass.

### *Rule 38 Method of Voting*

The Body normally votes by a show of placards. Any Delegate may request a Roll Call Vote on a resolution. If there is opposition the Chair shall call for a majority vote on the question. A Roll Call Vote shall be taken in English alphabetical order of the names of Member States. One Delegate for each Member State shall reply *yes*, *no*, or *abstain*. A Delegation also may vote *pass*. When called again the Delegation must vote *yes*, *no* or *abstain*.

### *Rule 39 Conduct During the Vote*

After the Chair announces the start of voting, all caucusing and note passing must cease. No Delegate shall interrupt voting except on a Point of Order in connection with the actual conduct of voting. No one is permitted to enter or exit the meeting room once a vote has begun, until after the vote is completed.

### *Rule 40 Explanation of Vote:*

The Chair may permit Member States to explain their votes, after voting. The Chair may limit the time allowed for explanations. After explanations are concluded, the Chair shall ask for any change of votes.

### *Rule 41 Voting on Unfriendly Amendments*

When two or more Unfriendly Amendments are moved to a Resolution, the body votes first on the amendment farthest removed from the substance of the original resolution, as determined by the Chair. One speaker in favor of the Unfriendly Amendment and one against may speak before the vote. After Amendments are voted upon, the body votes on the Resolution.



*Rule 42 Division of the Question*

At ODU Model United Nations Conferences there is no Division of the Question. The same goals can be achieved by amendment.

*Rule 43 Equally Divided Votes*

If a vote is equally divided, the proposal fails.

**IX. DISCRETION OF THE CHAIR**

*Rule 44 Discretion of the Chair*

Any matters of interpretation or items not covered by these rules are left to the discretion of the Chair. All decisions, except those otherwise noted in the rules, are appealable only to the ODUMUN Secretary-General.