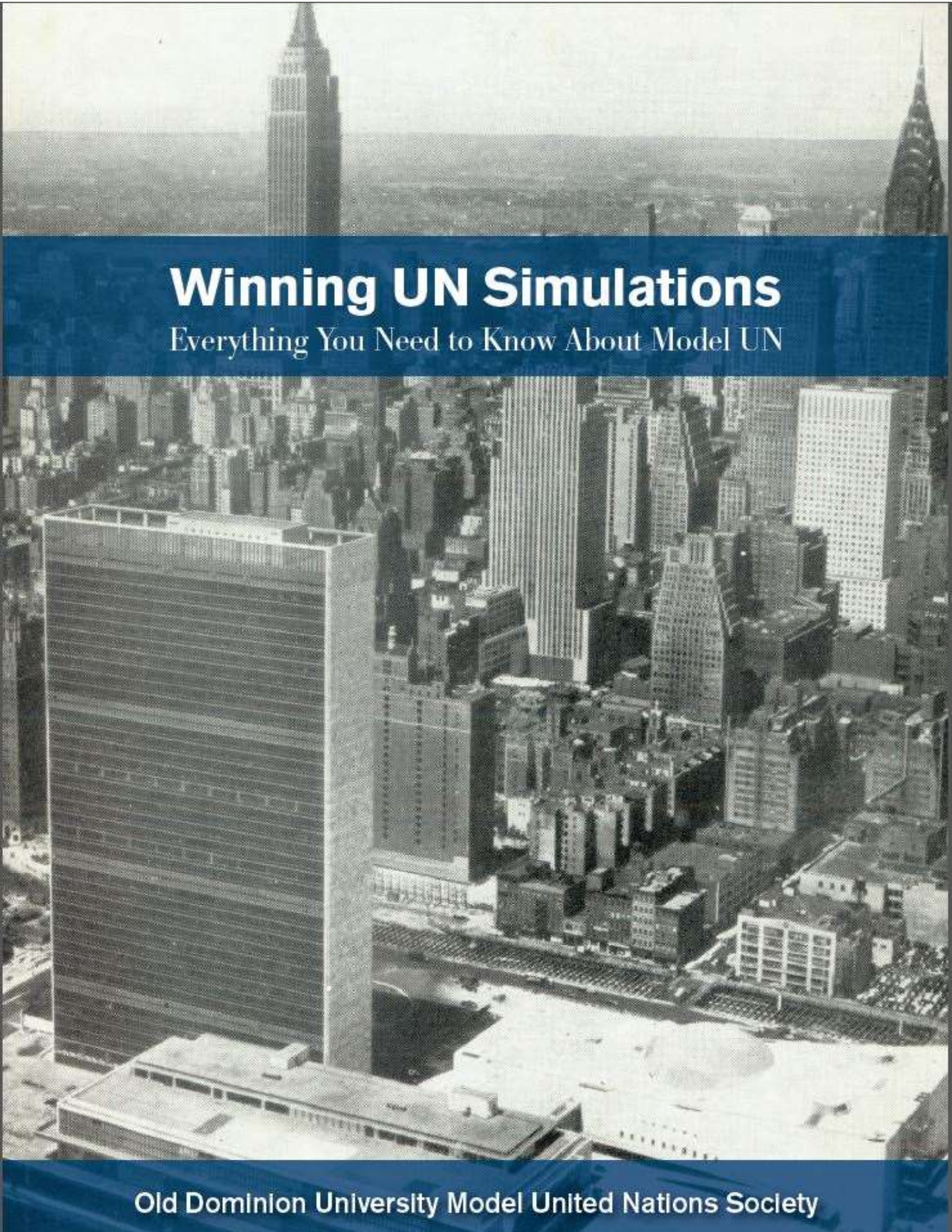

Winning UN Simulations

Everything You Need to Know About Model UN

Old Dominion University Model United Nations Society

Front cover: The New York skyline featuring the newly-completed United Nations headquarters, 1952.
Back cover: The New York skyline featuring the United Nations headquarters, 2011.

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Published by the Old Dominion University Model United Nations Society.

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Preface

This guide is designed to help you prepare for any Model UN or crisis simulation, whether as a teacher, staff member or delegate, whether at a huge General Assembly session or a small specialized body, a regional organization or a crisis simulation. The emphasis throughout is on practical advice to help participants contribute, excel and enjoy the event. The examples come from Old Dominion University's annual Model UN Conference (ODUMUNC), but the themes are meant to be relevant to any of the hundreds of comparable events that take place every year around the world.

For anyone who has experienced any kind of committee design-making, much of what you read here will not come as a surprise. With apologies to Gertrude Stein, a meeting is a meeting is a meeting. Preparation, presentation and negotiation are much the same wherever they happen. Experience with earlier versions of this guide showed that the ideas developed here apply to any college or high school simulation conference. Actual UN regular sessions and special conferences in Geneva or New York are surprisingly similar.

While many participants are drawn to Model UN by the practical experience simulating international relations, for a large proportion it is more appreciated as a chance to polish their professionalism. Model UN stands out for the intensity of the experience, applying a wide range of professional skills to achieve clear goals. Regardless of why you are engaged, this guide is designed to help you do it better.

This guide builds directly on almost forty years of continuous work by previous ODU Model UN directors: Jerry Bookin-Wiener, Chris Drake, Maria Fornella and Fred Warren. It also is the product of my personal experience, beginning as an undergraduate in Springfield, Missouri, at Drury College (now Drury University) where I was introduced to Model UN. It started me on a path that led to graduate study in New York and work at the UN. Closer to home, Alan Rogers and Valerie Sprouse have been continuous sources of experience, insight and correction.

Above all, though, this book is the product of work with the students of the Model UN Society of Old Dominion University. It is for them, and more than they realize, it is by them.

Aaron Karp
Norfolk, Virginia

The Model UN Experience

Model United Nations is a diplomatic simulation. Role players take the place of diplomats at the UN and other international conferences, representing country delegations as they deal with major issues, try to advance global and national interests. Like the UN itself, the simulation combines skill and bluster, cooperation and compromise, selfishness and assertiveness.

On the Model UN circuit, hubris prevails. Grandstanding is normal and inflated egos are almost as common as country placards. Neophytes are routinely told to go with the flow; don't sweat, after an hour it all will make sense. A lot can be learned from School of Hard Knocks, but a lot of nonsense hides there too. Another approach treats simulation as a legal exercise; keep studying the UN Charter and your Rules of Procedure. The Charter and rules matters enormously, but they are not a how-to guides. The truth is Model UN simulations reward preparation, study and training. The better a delegate prepares, the better they do and the more they achieve.

What is it really about? Working as a delegate from your assigned country—usually in the role of an ambassador or first secretary—you must make your country heard. This means speaking in the meeting room and caucusing in the lobby, promoting your country's goals and dealing with the goals of everyone else. The process includes steering the agenda to the issues your country wants to stress, trying to suppress agenda items your country opposes, and lobbying for resolutions that bring the solutions your country prefers. Success means achieving your own country's goals while crafting policies others can support. The result usually is measured in resolutions, statements that guide the UN and its member states.

To succeed, everyone in the room should know where your country stands, what it wants, and how much it can work with others to draft resolutions. Delegates need to know about the conference, their country, the issues and the procedures everyone must follow to get the outcomes they want. The more you prepare, the better the result. Preparation insures greater realism and confidence. Improvisation may be most of what happens, but good improvisation does not happen by accident. Know your country, the issue, and the positions of other delegations. Delegates draft working papers and resolutions, deliberate their consequences, amend them to build support and insure effectiveness, and work with as many countries as possible for success.

The experience is intense; imagine a sporting match that goes on for two to four breathtaking days. Delegates emerge with a deep personal appreciation of the difficulties of diplomacy and international governance. Delegates must be diplomatic, but that can mean different things. Especially in smaller bodies, and often in larger ones, passions run high. Major delegations—and clever smaller ones—often are in control. Is it any surprise when participants get the MUN bug, and make it their principle college extracurricular activity?

This guide is intended for delegates and staff at the Old Dominion University Model United Nations Conference (ODUMUNC), but you will find it a useful guide to any model UN or crisis simulation. While every conference has its distinctive rules and practices, the commitment to understanding international affairs and the work of international organizations through hands-on experience make the world of Model UN a community. Think of this book as a guide to the shared language of that community.

MUN Roots

Teaching and study through simulation goes back to ancient times. One such example is the casual improvisations of the 'rock drills' of military commanders preparing for battle. Simulations became part of college curriculums with the rise of business schools in the 1920s. Already legal scholars were using simulations to teach the concepts of courtroom litigation, including the newly created World Court in The Hague and the League of Nations, the predecessor of the United Nations.[1] In the United States, legislative simulations like Boys' and Girls' State (state legislature simulations) undoubtedly helped ready the soil for further innovation.

Not long after the UN was established in 1945, college students were celebrating and studying its potential through simulation. The first model United Nations is not known, but annual conferencing started in the United States in 1951, when Stanford University hosted the first session of what eventually became the Model United Nations of the Far West. It reveals much about the wider excitement about their work that the guest speaker at the first session was Ralph Bunch, the senior American in the United Nations and then-president of the General Assembly, followed the next year by none other than Eleanor Roosevelt, then representing the United States in GA Third Committee.[2] Other annual conferences started one year later at Berkeley and Indianapolis.[3]

In 1978 Old Dominion University introduced its high school conference, applying the experience of its students in college conferences, and the university's commitment to international education, to achieve new levels of realism in high school simulation. Supported by an internationally-oriented university, located in the center of the greatest concentration of American and allied military facilities and the mid-Atlantic's leading port, the conference reflects the region's globalized outlook. Almost forty years of experience has culminated in the best organized and most realistic Model UN and crisis simulation to be found anywhere.

Box 1. MUN Support

The world of UN and crisis simulations is almost as old as the UN itself. With hundreds, maybe thousands of conferences held every year for middle schools, high schools, colleges and simulations for professionals, model UN has emerged as a major tool for international training, education and competition. There are several books on how to prepare and several major websites. Besides this guide, check three exceptionally useful websites:

MUN: Planet, a network with advice, conferences and discussion forums, www.munplanet.com

Best Delegate, especially the resource page, http://bestdelegate.com/resources/

United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA), a private group with an MUN preparation page, http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation

[1] Anjli Parrin, "The Dog-Eat-Dog World of Model U.N.", *New York Times*, 2 August 2013.
[2] "MUNFW History", *Model United Nations of the Far West* (n.d.).
[3] "About the Indianapolis Model United Nations", *Indianapolis Model United Nations* (n.d.).

MUN versus the real thing

You would not want to directly simulate every aspect of UN reality. Model UN is much quicker, with sessions that last two to four days instead of two to four months. Speeches have to be much quicker, too. Negotiations that might take weeks in conference rooms have to be crammed into minutes in the corridors. Each session or conference is unique, unconnected to the past or future, unlike the real world where delegates and countries who make friends or enemies one year will have to deal with each other every year in the future. Then there is the tendency for simulation delegates to portray their home country, regardless of the placard in front of them. Add differences in education and professional experience, and of course it is not the same. In Model UN the committee staff—especially the committee chair—compensate by taking a more active role to facilitate deliberations.

In other ways, Model UN simulation is exactly like the real thing. Above all, it stresses the sovereignty of countries. Whether it is Russia or Burkina Faso, no one, not even the UN General Assembly or Secretary-General, can tell a sovereign state what to do. Resolutions of the General Assembly and most other UN bodies reflect this directly when they *call* on states, *appeal* for action, and *request* contributions. Only the Security Council creates binding international law. Its resolutions can *require* state compliance and *demand* action. But international law is fundamentally different from domestic law; essentially voluntary with unreliable enforcement mechanisms, it relies on self-interest and reciprocity between countries to encourage compliance. So even in the Security Council, consensus matters.

Consensus is how the UN solves problems. While voting is a basic mechanism of the UN—it recognizes the sovereign equality of all states—wise diplomats strive for resolutions that avoid voting, especially on resolutions. A resolution that passes by a narrow majority means nothing to the countries who voted against, and are certain to ignore it. A resolution that makes excessive demands on a particular country is unlikely to change their behavior. To get the widest possible support, UN resolutions often must avoid controversy and strong action. But in a model simulation or in the real UN, a resolution that everyone can support may be so weakened by compromises that it cannot affect anything. Welcome to world, where the best you can do often isn't as much as you would like.

Things can get tense. Never confuse diplomacy with congeniality. Making friends is essential, as is assuaging enemies. But consensus decision-making or formal voting does not always mean pretty. UN diplomacy exposes all the disputes and rivalries of international politics. Role players often make the mistake of confusing diplomacy with self-abnegation. To the contrary, diplomacy usually is polite, but it is not all about being nice. The most effective diplomats often are the loudest and most assertive. International meetings, whether at the UN, regional organizations or high-level summits, are the scene of anger and petulance. When they think it will lead to outcomes they want, governments authorize their diplomats to stall or stop meetings, to walk out rather than vote. Making friends is good when it is useful. But getting along is rarely a goal in and of itself. Above all, an effective diplomat gets the results their government wants. Diplomats have elbows. Be ready to use yours.

And exactly like the real thing, the countries that do best are those that arrive most prepared and are most active. Preparation involves knowing your country, your topics and your procedures.

Box 2. Why you are there

Part of the excitement and the weirdness of the Model UN experience is the opportunity to visit major cities and other interesting places and not see much of them. You have one job at a conference. You were sent to represent your school, to engage the simulation, to make it go well for other participants, to learn and compete. So be in session, be attentive, and always be ready to spring to action.

Sessions are for work. Down time is for rest. Behave yourself, excel and support your delegation. Sorry, but you were not sent for studying, tourism, partying or any of a hundred other imaginable diversions. No bar crawls, tasteless t-shirts or mystery tattoos. Not this time. Don't worry; life is short, but you will have other chances to see the town.

You Are Your Country

Learning about the country you represent is one of the most rewarding parts of preparation. That means mastering much more than just geographic facts and government basics. The CIA *World Factbook*, *Wikipedia* and other web resources are great for basics. Those details about the country are essential, but there is far more to it. Keep in mind that you represent a country's foreign policy. After learning the national salutation and everyone's favorite dessert, you need to understand their goals at the UN.

To get a sense of national politics and foreign policy, study speeches, official statements, and news reporting. Useful overviews can be found on the country pages of major media outlets like *BBC News Country Profiles* and the *New York Times*.[4] Pay special attention to government policy and the priorities of national leaders; those are your bosses!

Just as important as familiarity with your country's foreign policies is knowing how it operates in the UN and other international organizations. What issues are most important to it and what are its general goals in international diplomacy? Essential country guidance can be found at:

- **Annual *General Debate* speeches**. This is the single best resource for any diplomat, the ultimate quick guide. The annual session of the General Assembly begins with two weeks of General Debate. Every September-October, heads of state, prime ministers and foreign ministers come to New York to address the international community. Since virtually all 193 member states speak in General Debate, the annual speech is the best introduction to each country's agenda, priorities and approach to UN deliberations. All General Debate speeches are available on the UN website at http://gadebate.un.org/

[4] *BBC News Country Profiles are available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/* On the *New York Times* looking by country under *Times Topics*, http://www.nytimes.com/pages/topics/

- **Country missions**. Every member state has a permanent mission (embassy) to the UN. The mission website usually links recent speeches by national leaders and UN representatives. Start with the UN Mission Directory, http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml. Smaller countries may not have an English page; use Google Translate.

- **Foreign Ministry website**. Where does your country stand on major issues of the day? What are your national priorities? Foreign Ministries have websites largely to update their own diplomats, so expect them to help you too. Often you will find an English version, but sometimes *Google Translate* is necessary. Use it; it works.

- **News reporting**. For country positions in the UN see the *Inter Press Service*, a UN oriented news agency. Search your country or issue at http://www.ipsnews.net/. Also be sure to check national news services, which usually have an English version. Most countries have an English-language news service. If not, put Google Translate to work. The UN's own *UN News Centre*, http://www.un.org/news/ is also very good, but stresses the work of UN leaders and agencies, not the member states.

- **Specific topics**: When the topics get particular, it often is easiest to troll the Internet. Search with: issue + country + United Nations

- ***Voting Practices in the United Nations*** is a periodic American report, congressionally mandated and prepared by the U.S. Department of State, showing how often member states voted with the United States. Although it lacks detail on country positions, it is a revealing guide to general inclinations. http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/190024.pdf

Box 3. Call Home

UN diplomats do not speak for themselves; they represent their country's government and people. They hesitate before saying, "I think…" or "In my opinion…", if only because it is not about them but those they represent. Most immediately, it is about their superiors in their Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and government (typically the Prime Minister's office or Chancellery).

But do you know what your bosses think? Study helps, but surprises are guaranteed. Your counterparts in New York would duck out and call their support staff at their country's New York Mission or their MFA colleagues in the national capital, their home government. You can do the same. Consult your support staff (faculty sponsor) or your *Home Government*.

(Photo: ODUMUNC)

The conference Home Government office is your government, your capital on the telephone. Its staff of international relations experts can advise on how your delegation would act in a particular situation. It is the place to stop for substantive policy advice on your country's position on any issue, including help with Working Paper composition, speech preparation, or country policy. If you are not sure where your country stands, call your home government.

Know Your Topics

Except for some crisis simulations, each committee at a model UN is a specialized body in the United Nations system. Committees specialize on part of the international agenda, from which most simulation conferences—including ODUMUNC—select a few topics every year. Research the committee on the conference website. At ODUMUNC that's http://al.odu.edu/mun/conference/, where you will find a page dedicated to each committee and body. Get to know your committee, what it is all about, and especially the topics you will be debating.

Issue briefs: On each committee webpage you will find *issue briefs* on each topic. These are designed to get you up to speed as efficiently as possible, with background and a common starting point for your own research. Issue briefs introduce the problem under debate, the role of the UN system in that issue, major proposals for action, country positions, and a bibliography. A well-written issue brief is a succinct introduction to the topic, positions and proposals for action. But do not expect to find much guidance there on your country, one of the 193 UN member states.

Position Papers

Pre-conference preparation culminates in your *position paper*. It is your foundational document, explaining how your country plans to proceed during the conference. A good position paper should serve as the basis for your speeches and remarks. When writing, think of it as a speech.

A policy guide, an outline for others, it explains how you will act in the committee. It tells other delegations about your country's general approach to the committee, priorities among the agenda of topics (which topics should be addressed first and which should not come up for discussion), what policies your country favors and opposes. It tells other countries what is most important to your country, which policies your delegation is prepared to support, and which it refuses to touch with a barge pole, the red lines it will not cross.

A position paper explains your *country's positions* on your committee's topics. It is where you tell everyone what you want. It is not a place for interesting tit-bits about your country, for background information on the topic or recapitulating facts from the issue brief. A well-written position paper is a sign that a delegation has it together and should be taken seriously. A position paper gives you a ready resource for phrases and themes to stress in speeches and draft resolutions.

Position papers are not contracts—changing circumstances often lead to recalculation and improvisation—rather they serve as your starting position. Adaptation and compromise will come. And if you do not know, check with Home Government and improvise. As long as you stay in character, though, it usually is sufficient to approximate the policies of the country as best you can.

Every delegation needs to prepare several position papers, one for each body where it is represented. At ODUMUNC, position papers are presented by delegates upon arrival, submitted to the Committee Staff, which use them when judging for awards. Delegates are encouraged to bring copies for distribution to other delegations. Delegates also can bring pre-prepared Working Papers (proposed resolutions, see below), but expect to change these to adapt to rapidly shifting circumstances.

Position Papers should be in a formal style, written from the perspective of your government, delegation or organization. It requires a heading. Although the specifics vary (check submission rules) the heading usually includes:

- conference and session (year)
- committee
- delegation (country)
- school
- position paper title.

The exact format varies from conference to conference; always check the rules. Typical length is 300 to 700 words, or one or two single-spaced pages. Time and space are limited, so stress top priorities. Tell people why you are there and what you want to see happen. Forget background details. No need to explain national geography or how people dress. Concentrate on your country's policies (*your policies*) on the issues. The paper should devote at least one paragraph each to country perspectives on each of the following:

- *Your country's foreign policy goals* and its goals in the UN. What does your country wish to achieve in the next few months or years?

- *Priorities:* Which of the body's topics are most important to your country why? How do the topics affect your country or its global goals? Any it refuses to see discussed?

- *Past policy:* What are the major elements of your country's approach to these topics that everyone should know?

- *Policy at this conference*: Your country might advocate specific measures or general approaches to the topics. These should be clear enough that everyone in the room understands what you want to accomplish. Are there redlines that your country refuses to cross or measures that it will work to suppress?

Box 4. Your delegate binder

(Photo: ODUMUNC)

Arrive prepared. This is worth its weight in gold. At most conferences, no electronics are permitted for delegates in the meeting room, so keep a binder with everything you need. It's your tool; customization is the rule. Three parts are basic:

- your country background information
- background on committee topics, and
- your positions and draft working papers (draft resolutions).

Start with country background including national positions and key speeches. Add committee topics: issue briefs, topical UN resolutions, research institute reports and news articles. Finally, add your own positions: your position paper, draft speeches to aid your speaking, draft working papers and resolutions. Flip through at decisive moments; the delegations to your left and right will sit in silent envy, struggling not to look amateurish.

Opening Speech

UN deliberations begin with General Debate, in which delegates are invited to make national statements on the body's agenda and paths for further action during the conference. Opening speeches typically are based on position papers, but that is not mandatory; the most effective opening speeches often include greetings from national leaders and tell about specific national problems or concerns.

Arrive with a prepared text, but be ready to improvise; depending on how many delegates wish to present, the Chair may have to adjust speaking times, typically two minutes in General Debate. Never let a good speech go to waste; prepared remarks that you cannot fit into the initial time allocation will be useful later. A good opening speech is succinct. It stresses committee topics. It tells the body which

topic your country wants to address first and why. It explains where your country stands and what your government expects to achieve at the conference. You might urge specific policies for consideration or lay down red lines your country refuses to cross, action it refuses to accept.

Subsequent speeches will be more spontaneous: assemble your speaking notes before the Chair gives you the floor. Use your position paper and other resources. Practice while you have a chance. And mind the time as you speak.

Box 5. Look Sharp

A simulation conference is a professional environment. Dress to be taken seriously, not to distract. Standard delegate attire at conference sessions is Western business dress; jacket and tie for men; dress, jacket or dress sweater and otherwise professional for women; dress shoes for all. For men the chief rule is no grunge, ever. For women, the rule is seriousness. Conferences are not the place to show off your spring collection. As a practical rule, if you are not sure about it, do not wear it.

Ethnic dress--meaning non-Western business attire--is another matter. At ODUMUNC national clothing matching your country assignment is permitted so long as it is formal, not mocking or distracting. Other conferences have their own rules on this.

Dressed to Kill. President Idi Amin Dada of Uganda addresses the General Assembly on 1 October 1975. Even he would strive to show professionalism and collegiality, when at the UN. (Photo: United Nations).

Role Playing

It is not who you are, but how you do it. China has 1.3 billion people and Tuvalu a total of just over 11,000, but both are sovereign states, diplomatically equal in the UN General Assembly, each with a single vote. Even more than the real world, in model UN simulations sovereign equality makes all delegations equal. One of the realities of MUN simulations is they reward strategically minded delegates, regardless of which country they represent. The mover and shaker in a body may be the well-prepared delegate representing a country you never heard of the day before. Preparation, style and skill can trump all the numbers. Unlike the real thing, in a model UN simulation, superpowers can become mice and mice can emerge as superpowers.

Stay in character—advocate positions consistent with the policies of the country or character you represent—but expect differences. The simulation environment usually brings greater equality, allowing small countries to be more assertive than they might elsewhere. At a MUN, diplomatic skill often matters more than GDP or oil reserves. An inspired performance, or a sleepy one, often trumps realism. It is not realistic, but nor is it unusual in MUN for a delegate playing a country like Burkina Faso or Seychelles to run rings around a tortoise-like China or United States.

No delegation can be faulted just for being too effective. What matters most is that their positions are in character and consistent with national policy. When a microstate is muscling like a superpower, it is time to up your game. If a delegation is seriously out of character or contradicting well-known national preferences, and disrupting the ability of the body of get things done, privately consult the chair. If you are not sure about your own role, check with the chair or Home Government and improvise.

The work of a delegate is entrepreneurial; it is what you make of it. The committee environment rewards assertiveness. With dozens, sometimes among one hundred or more delegates in a committee, the chair is there to keep order and help the process advance. Do not sit there waiting to be called upon. It will not happen. Delegates succeed by speaking, authoring and lobbying:

- *Speaking* out to make their country's positions and preferences known,
- *Authoring* texts (working papers, draft resolutions, and amendments), and
- *Lobbying* others in caucuses—before, during and after the session—to steer agreement.

Doing one of these well should be enough to win recognition. Awards tend to go to delegates who excel at all three. Above all, be active. Never sit unemployed. If you find yourself coasting aimlessly through deliberations, wondering about the messages accumulating on your telephone, it is time to start something instead: get recognized to address the issue, author an amendment, start organizing an alternative. The more you do, the more you enjoy, the better you do, and more likely you'll win awards.

Speaking

Public speaking is the most visible part of a delegate's job and the most important. Without all the expectations and responsibility of your country's foreign policy resting on your shoulders alone, never pass up an opportunity to speak. Speaking at a simulation conference is essentially a version of extemporaneous speaking. While model UN speeches are not formally evaluated competitively—as extemporaneous speakers are at forensic competitions—they might as well be. The emphasis is much the same: be easy to understand and persuasive. All extemporaneous speaking boils down to salesmanship. Resources designed for public speaking generally, and extemporaneous speaking especially, are ideal training materials.[5]

Practicing your public speaking is just as important as researching your position. If you cannot express your thoughts, they do not do much good. So practice the art of short speeches, the staple of simulations. At the conference, be continuously thinking of how you would use the time if recognized and always try to get on the speakers' list. Once you are recognized to speak, time is short, so keep your message as simple as possible.

The best short speeches stress a single basic theme. Keep your cool, strive for seriousness and avoid the excited rush of the overeager and incoherent. Speaking notes should be minimal; a single note card is plenty. Reading a speech tends to bore any audience. And once lost, an audience's attention is impossible to recover. Reading also makes it impossible to keep eye contact. Some points to keep in mind when you get the microphone:

- *Begin formally*, with brief thanks to the chair and your fellow delegates.
- *Speak slowly*; if people cannot understand you, you might as well not say it. Speak deliberately
- Avoid *meaningless fillers* such as "umm" or repetitive ticks such as "like" or "I mean".
- *Stress basic themes*, your country's position, what it wants and what it cannot accept.
- *Keep eye contact*. Hold your head up. Continually scan the room. It is one of odd rules of humanity that most people hear you only when you're looking at them.
- *Be succinct*; get to the point, keep on the point, and when you're done, finish.
- *If you run out of time* (if the chair says to stop), never cram unfinished thoughts into a buzz-saw crescendo, speaking so fast that no one understands. Simply reaffirm your most basic theme, thank the chair and be done.

Formal speaking does not mean boring. Any speech should be engaging. As in any other aspect of public speaking, praising others and humor is always appreciated. And the process continues after you leave the microphone. Once you return to your seat, get back to work; let the notes fly.

[5] For more guidance on extemporaneous speaking, see Chris Kristofco, *Advanced Extemp* (Victory Briefs, 2005); Blake J. Neff and Scott D. Turcott, *Brief Guide to Extemporaneous Public Speaking* (Newtown, Massachusetts: Triangle Publishing, 2009); Anne Cooper Ready, *Off the Cuff: What to Say at a Moment's Notice* (Franklin Lakes, New Jersey: Career Press, 2004).

Box 6. Look who's talking

As the representative of a sovereign state, delegates speak on behalf of their entire country. The views you offer are not your own, but those of the country you represent, even when you are improvising. Speak in third person, always referring not to yourself, but to *we, our delegation* or *my country.* In speeches this often turns to passive voice, such as "The government of Freedonia believes without reservation or hesitation that…" Refer to other delegates the same way, with formality and respect, such as "The respected delegate of Tyrannia is sadly mistaken when she assumes…."

Madame chairman, the Representative of Romania kindly requests the floor. (Photo: ODUMUNC)

Allies, friends, others

Knowing your own country is just the start. Nothing passes with a single vote; a successful delegation courts supporters. The most powerful resolutions often are passed by consensus; without objection. More controversial proposals will require approval by a majority of delegation, sometimes more. Identifying allies, friends and adversaries requires research and on-the-spot observation. Caucusing and the Bloc System are where much of the most important decision-making happens.

Moderated Caucus is semi-formal debate allowing delegates to hear the views of a large number of delegations, to gauge views, clarify possibilities and impossibilities. Procedural rules are suspended for the duration of a moderated caucus. Speakers are recognized by the chair. The only point or motion allowed in a moderated caucus is a point of order for noise.

Unmoderated Caucus is a kind of temporary adjournment, a recess to facilitate informal negotiation and coordination. In the committee room, the halls and stairs, delegates get to work. Blocs and alliances often use informal caucusing to align their positions. Working papers are drafted and discussed, sponsors and signatories sought, deals are made.

The Bloc System in the UN is the basis for negotiating, caucusing (and allocating jobs in UN agencies). The formal UN Bloc System is based on regional blocs, with exceptions to make sure all member states have a home bloc. There also are non-regional blocs. Blocs can meet during unmoderated caucuses to deliberate joint positions, tactics and plan committee action. The largest is the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). With almost two-thirds of the UN membership, the NAM normally dominates the General Assembly. It often can agree among itself and pass resolutions without support from other blocs.

Bloc coordination is strictly voluntary. Some blocs, with strong common interests and perspectives, work extremely well. Others are diplomatic cesspools of internal dissention. In practice, there often are major divisions within blocs. Progress may require informal coalitions between blocs, especially to pass controversial or innovative resolutions. Listen in General Debate and Moderated caucusing to learn whose approaches are closest to your own. Understanding which countries are your most reliable friends, where shared interests lie, is vital to winning sponsors on Draft Resolutions, avoiding Unfriendly Amendments and divisions, and ultimate success with passage of Amendments and Resolutions.

Conference Organization

Who are all these people? UN bodies range from the Security Council with just fifteen members to General Assembly Committees where all 193 member states are eligible to speak. What they all have in common are basic procedures, and the roles of secretariat and delegations. The players:

Conference Secretariat

- *Secretary-General:* The SG is in charge of the conference, with authority over all conference activities, participants and staff, subject to conference rules and procedures.
- *Under Secretaries-General:* USGs are delegated specific roles under the authority of the SG.
- *Secretary-Treasurer:* The ST maintains conference registration and financial records, receives registration payments and makes refunds, prints badges and certificates.
- *Assistant Secretaries-Treasurer:* ASTs assist the ST in all of their duties, as delegated by the ST.

Committee Secretariat (dais staff)

- *Chair:* In charge of the committee in all aspects, under the authority of the conference SG.
- *Vice-Chair:* Assists the Chair and in their absence is acting chair.
- *Director:* Receives and edits Working Papers for approval and designation as Draft Resolutions. They verify the final text of approved Resolutions.
- *Rapporteur:* Committee Rapporteurs handle roll call, the speakers list, and voting. They receive delegation notes requesting to be added to the speakers list.

Country Delegations

- *Head Delegate:* Equivalent to a member state's Chief Ambassador, a Head Delegate is responsible for their mission's committee assignments, coordinates policy throughout the delegation, and resolves delegate issues with the Conference Secretariat. They usually represent their country in the committee or body of their choice. They also represent their delegation at Head Delegate meetings, convened to help keep the conference working efficiently.
- *Delegates:* May have the rank of Ambassador (especially in the Security Council) or First Secretary. Delegates are assigned to a specific body by their Head Delegate and Faculty Sponsor.

Tough call? Dias staff confer
(Photo: ODUMUNC)

Procedure: How it Works

For most first-time delegates, the rules are the least familiar part of the simulation, but it is surprising how quickly they are mastered. How does the UN manage 193 sovereign countries, all demanding to speak simultaneously, without sparking the seemingly inevitable brawl? If you are new to this, it might look like the monkey house at the UN Zoo. In reality, it is an orderly diplomatic process that respects the sovereign equality of all member states. UN bodies use modified parliamentary procedure, a simplified version of the classic *Robert's Rules of Order*.

The rules follow a simple logic. Expect the rhythm to become clear after about an hour of deliberation. Your Committee Chair should explain procedures as they move along. Rules of procedure vary from conference to conference and always should be studied before, but the basic features usually are the same. The basic process is known as the *flow of debate*.

Flow of Debate

Guided by the rules, UN bodies follow a standard process to get things done, a process designed to insure all member states get to speak and are treated fairly. The process begins long before anyone shows up, not when the first gavel cracks against the dais, but when delegations submit their Position Papers to the Committee Secretariat prior to the opening of the first session. A well-organized conference staff makes position papers available to committee delegates.

Formal Debate opens a session for Roll Call and General Debate (general country policy statements). Formal debate does not permit recessing to caucus or points of information to the speaker; it usually is reserved for opening the session and voting procedures. Informal debate allows for caucuses, points of information and note passing. Delegates must motion to move into informal debate. See the Quick Guide, below, or *ODUMUNC Rules* for detailed procedures.

Once the session has opened, *parameters* must be set. These include: speaking time, question limits and response time limits. Parameters are set by the body via motions, which might be solicited by the Committee Chair, and agreed by vote. There must be a Speakers List opened and maintained by the Committee to organize General Debate, before a topic is agreed. Once the topic is set a new speakers list is opened on the topic being addressed. The speakers list is an on-going list that allows delegations to address the assembly. It also gives other delegations a chance to question speeches given by the speaker. If the speakers list is completed during debate on a resolution, the committee moves directly into voting procedure.

A Point of Order is a procedural inquiry by a delegate directed at the Chair. Examples include failure to follow Rules of Procedure or a breakdown in order. A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker, but only if it is relevant to their presentation, such as not being able to hear.

A Point of Information is used by a delegate to raise a question. It may be directed to the Chair or the speaker. If directed to the speaker the delegate would say "Point of information directed to the speaker". The Chair may respond "Does the speaker yield?" If the speaker yields the chair indicates that the delegate may proceed. A Point of Information directed at the chair could be any question the delegate has for the chair, whether to ask clarification on a rule or for any other question.

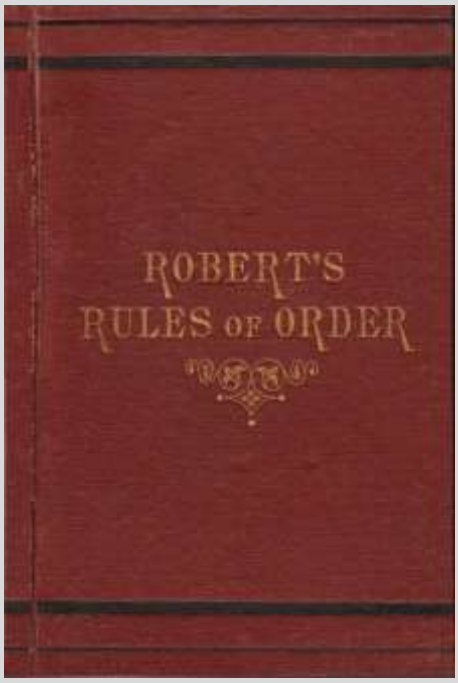
Procedural Motions allow delegates to change what the committee is doing. Common motions are for a moderated caucus, un-moderated caucus, recess, adjournment of debate, closure of debate or suspension of the rules. For a thorough explanation of the various motions see the ODUMUNC Rules. Motions only can be made after a delegate is recognized by the Chair. Motions may not interrupt a speaker. Motions cannot be made from a procedural point.

Communication. Delegates need to communicate in the session. This is done in a variety of ways. Texting and all electronic media are prohibited while in session, so forget that. In the large committees there are pages to pass notes. In the small committees the delegates may pass notes. The chair may suspend the pages or note passing if it becomes disruptive. In committee session, there should be little talking. If delegates need to speak they should step outside. It is recommended that at least one delegate from a double delegation remain in the room.

Voting can be Procedural or Substantive. *Procedural Votes* occur when a procedural motion has been raised. All delegations must vote Yes or No on a procedural vote. A *Substantive Vote* is for decision on Draft Amendments and Draft Resolutions. If a delegation does not wish to vote Yes or No on a substantive matter, they Abstain. They may not refrain from voting altogether.

Box 7. The complete rules

The flow of debate outlined here is just that, an outline sufficient for most purposes. But every now and then some has been carefully reading the rules and gets inspired. There is no substitute for the complete rules and procedures. At ODUMUNC, rules for the Security Council, the General Assembly and other bodies are available on the conference website (http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/modelun)



Where it all began: Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert's riveting classic from 1876. A very useful book. (Photo: wikipedia.org)

The Resolution Life Story

Contrary to what one might assume, international organizations do not have to pass resolutions. They often cannot reach agreement. Sometimes the members are satisfied simply to air and deliberate their views and policies. A few might be euphoric to see nothing happen. Just as delegations often try to prevent discussion of a topic that does not serve their interests, they often prefer to suppress any resolution on the matter too. But that's mere reality. At simulation events delegates come to pass resolutions.

Resolutions are statements of agreement on specific responses or action on a topic. After General Debate and setting a topic, UN bodies begin debate on a topic. Member states are free to write and circulate Working Papers. With sponsorship, signatories and dais approval, these can become Draft Resolutions. The latter are open to deliberation, amendment and approval by the body. In the UN it is common to pass several resolutions on a single topic.

Working papers

UN resolutions begin as a *Working Paper*, an unofficial document intended to become a resolution. It is circulated among like-minded countries for modification, and to attract sponsors and/or signatories, as described below. Working Papers should be written in resolution format, but as unofficial documents, they can be monkeyed with to your heart's content. Once it has the required number of sponsors or signatories, the Working Paper goes to the Committee Director to be checked, modified if necessary, and approved with a stamp to be introduced as a Draft Resolution.

Sponsors and signatories

The heading of a Working Paper lists sponsors and signatories in alphabetical order.

Sponsors are the authors of a resolution. They have the right to offer friendly amendments. One sponsor is mandatory, but UN practices and the need for support and consensus encourage as many as possible. If all sponsors withdraw from a draft resolution and new sponsors cannot be found, it dies.

Signatories are countries who wish to see a Working Paper formally debated as a Draft Resolution. Signatories are not necessarily in favor or against a document's content; they may just wish to make it eligible for debate as a Draft Resolution. At ODUMUNC, signatories are mandatory.

The total number of co-sponsors or signatories required to designate a Working Paper as a Draft Resolution varies with the size of the body. The combined total of sponsors or signatories must equal at least one-fifth (twenty percent) of the member states officially present. The Committee Chair will inform the committee exactly how many sponsors and signatories are needed at the start of the session.

You call this a resolution? If they're counting on Russia's support, they'd better get one thing straight… (Photo: ODUMUNC)

Draft resolutions

A Working Paper with sufficient sponsors and signatories and approval of the Committee Director is stamped, introduced, given an official number, and becomes a Draft Resolution, ready for copying, distribution and debate. Draft Resolutions are official documents; they can be changed only through amendment.

Resolutions

A Resolution is the final product of the deliberative process, based on a Draft Resolution that has been adopted by a committee, and possibly amended, passed either by vote or consensus.

Resolution elements

United Nations resolutions follow a common format (see sample, below). Each resolution has three parts: the *heading, preamble*, and *operative clauses*. Working papers and Draft Resolutions should be single-spaced with each line following the heading numbered in the left-hand margin. The preamble and operative sections are written as a single long sentence with commas and semicolons, and one period only at the very end. Short resolutions might have three perambulatory and three operative clauses. Longer resolutions can be several pages long.

The heading includes an official document number, the topic and list of sponsors. A typical Draft Resolution number is ODUMUNC/37/GA3/1.a (for *conference/session/body/topic.draft*). If passed, the final Resolution receives a final number instead of a final letter (as in ODUMUNC/37/GA3/1.1).

Preamble explains the justifications for the resolution, previous UN action that is relevant guidance, the problem it addresses, and the goals of the resolution. Each preamble clauses begins with their first word italicized, and ends with a comma.

Operative clauses specify specific action for the international community and the UN. They begin with their first word underlined, and each clause ends with a semicolon, except the final clause, which ends with a period. For more information see the *Resolution Writing Guide*.

Resolution Language

Here are some of the most commonly used verbs and adverbs to begin perambulatory and operative clauses in resolutions. Resolutions of the General Assembly and most other UN bodies cannot *insist* upon action by sovereign states. The GA can demand action only by the UN itself: by the Secretary-General and specialized agencies. Because states alone are sovereign, and the General Assembly is essentially a club house—it cannot dictate to the members—the tone is always recommending:

Preambulatory language

Affirming
Alarmed by
Approving
Aware of
Bearing in mind
Believing
Confident
Contemplating
Convinced
Declaring
Deeply concerned
Deeply conscious
Deeply convinced
Deeply disturbed
Deeply regretting
Deploring
Desiring
Emphasizing
Expecting
Expresses appreciation
Expresses satisfaction
Fulfilling
Fully alarmed
Fully aware
Fully believing
Further recalling
Guided by
Having adopted
Having considered
Having devoted attention
Having examined
Having heard
Having received
Having studied
Keeping in mind
Noting further
Noting with approval
Noting with concern
Noting with regret
Noting with satisfaction
Observing
Reaffirming
Realizing
Recalling
Recognizing
Referring
Seeking
Taking into account
Taking into consideration
Taking note
Viewing with appreciation
Welcoming

Operative language

Accepts
Affirms
Approves
Calls
Calls upon
Confirms
Congratulates
Considers
Declares accordingly
Deplores
Draws the attention
Emphasizes
Encourages
Endorses
Expresses its appreciation
Expresses its hope
Further invites
Further proclaims
Further reminds
Further recommends
Further requests
Further resolves
Has resolved
Notes
Proclaims
Reaffirms
Recommends
Regrets
Reminds
Requests
Solemnly affirms
Supports
Takes note of
Transmits
Trusts

Additional Operative Terms for Security Council

Only the UN Security Council can require specific action of sovereign states and alter international law. Consequently, the language of its operative clauses can be imperative:

Approves
Authorizes
Condemns
Decides
Demands
Mandates
Requires
Strongly condemns

Getting a Draft Resolution printed

To become an official Draft resolution, a Working Paper with sponsors and signatories is submitted for approval to the Committee Director. The Director reviews for essential elements and topical relevance; they do not judge content, although they can advise. Once approved and stamped, Working Papers are typed and printed for review by the Committee Director. Upon final approval, the document receives a second stamp authorizing printing and distribution to the committee. Once introduced, it receives an official number/letter.

From Draft to Resolution

Amendments: Come in two forms. *Friendly draft amendments* are those signed or accepted by all the sponsors of the resolution. They are automatically incorporated into the resolution text. *Unfriendly draft amendments* are those that are not accepted by all the sponsors. They require approval by vote or consensus, before the voting on the resolution. The amendment furthest removed in content from the original resolution, as judged by the Committee Secretariat, is voted upon first.

Amendments that contradict the intent of the Draft resolution's sponsor or which have no relationship to the resolution can be ruled not germane by the Committee Secretariat. An amendment requires a single sponsor, but many are preferred, and enough signatories to insure consideration, for a combined total of at least twenty percent of the body's membership officially present. During voting, unfriendly amendments are allowed one speaker in favor of the amendment and one against, with a simple majority required to pass.

Division of the Question (voting separately on parts of a draft resolution) is a procedure to remove controversial clauses in a resolution.

A delegate may move that parts of a resolution be voted upon separately. The motion and the section to be separated from the rest of the text must be submitted to the Chair in writing before the close of debate. After debate is closed, but before voting procedure commences on the resolution to be divided, a delegate must move for a division of the question.

Division of the Question requires the majority of member states present and voting for passage. Two speakers in favor of and two against may address the motion. If the motion for division passes, the separated sections are voted on as separate resolutions, keeping the same preamble. If the motion fails, the resolution stays intact.

Voting

Once the committee moves into voting procedure, usually as a result of a vote, the committee is then in formal debate. All caucusing, note-passing and points of information cease. Voting is done in placard or roll call vote.

Placard Vote allows delegations to vote *yes, no* or *abstain* by a show of placards.

Roll Call Vote can be requested by a delegation for voting on a resolution only. A roll call vote is taken in English alphabetical order of the names of member states. A delegation may pass once during a Roll Call Vote. When called again the delegation must vote *yes* or *no.*

Right of Explanation A delegation voting differently from how it would normally may vote with *Right of Explanation* during a roll call vote. Explanations are invited by the Chair after the vote is finished, but before the decision of the body is announced.

Changes to the Vote After the explanations, the Chair will ask if there are any *Changes to the Vote*, if there are none the Resolution decision remains. If there is a change, it is noted as is any change to the outcome.

Specialized Bodies

Most specialized bodies in the UN system—such as the Human Rights Council and conferences—follow the same rules as the General Assembly. Three prominent exceptions are ECOSOC, the NGO Forum and the Security Council, which use slightly different procedures, as do crisis simulations.

ECOSOC/NGO Forum

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was created to resolve the problems of international inequality and injustice responsible for conflict and war, to help insure all people sufficient conditions for productive life, equal rights and dignity. The Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Forum was created to acknowledge the essential role of civil society organizations—private, non-profit groups with capabilities that rival those of many states—in these international dialogues and problem solving. The United Nations system cannot achieve its goals without the expertise, resources and dedication of civil society and civil society relies on the UN for authority. The synergistic relationship between UN member states and NGOs extends throughout the UN system, nowhere more so than on the topics at stake in the Economic and Social Council.

This synergism takes many forms, including the NGO Forum, a semi-official body, not mandated under the UN Charter, but strongly supported by the UN Secretary-General, UN resolutions, member states and UN organizations that rely on NGOs for expertise and to get things done. Civil society organizations work with all UN bodies and country delegations, in a relationship of mutual dependence. Both bodies follow the same procedures as the General Assembly, and delegates should prepare similarly.

The fusion of civil society and international action is part of the ODUMUNC simulation, as the two bodies work together to solve the most important developmental and social issues. The two bodies monitor and coordinate topics and action. Because NGO implementation is crucial to the success of international action, their priorities and concerns must be taken into account during ECOSOC deliberations.

Unmoderated caucuses are more frequent to facilitate and encourage discussion between the two and promote more effective problem solving. ECOSOC may invite NGO representatives observe its deliberations and speak on relevant issues. Resolutions from the NGO Forum are presented to ECOSOC for consideration as country delegations try to solve the same problems. Resolutions from ECOSOC are sent to the NGO Forum for consideration of whether civil society will support and work for their implementation.

Security Council

As the most powerful and prominent body in the United Nations, the Security Council has special powers and procedures. Unlike the General Assembly, its resolutions are international law, binding on all states, although its resolutions usually lack enforcement provisions, unless the member states agree to do it themselves. Instead it relies on reciprocity to encourage implementation. Consequently, it can use the language of mandatory action, unlike other UN bodies. Five members are permanent, with veto power. The other nine are elected by the General Assembly to serve rotating two-year terms. A resolution requires the support of a majority of all Security Council member states present, with none of the five Permanent Members vetoing.

Veto Power allows any of the five Permanent Members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and United States, the P5) to defeat a resolution unilaterally. For a resolution to pass, all P5 governments must vote yes or abstain.

States that are not members of the Security Council, but which are members of the United Nations, may be invited by a motion of the Security Council to address an issue that directly involves them.

At ODUMUNC, the Security Council is a crisis simulation and may receive crisis updates while considering an unrelated topic. Crisis updates can be received after voting on a Draft Resolution (ending debate) or after temporary Adjournment of Debate. For more information, see the *ODUMUNC Security Council Rules*. Other conferences have their own Security Council procedures.

Crisis Simulations

This popular and exciting format has revolutionized the world of student simulation. A crisis simulation is a decision-making exercise designed to develop skills in small group politics. They can be based on UN bodies, but alternative settings are popular too, including historical and even fictional settings.[6] Regardless of the setting, crisis simulations typically involve a small group of decision-makers dealing with a basic problem, guided by a *Chair* and prompted by updates from the *Crisis Manager*. Role players act in character—whether as ambassador of a Security Council state, a cabinet minister in a revolutionary cabal, or perhaps the acolyte of a religious leader—as they struggle to solve a series of crises and respond to changing circumstances.

[6] Anjli Parrin, "The Dog-Eat-Dog World of Model U.N.", *New York Times*, 2 August 2013.

Preparation

Crisis simulation is designed to facilitate learning about how people manage critical situations. Delegate preparation is vital. Preparing for a crisis simulation involves studying topical information as well as the approach of your assigned character, to gain an understanding of the topic through the eyes of the character.

This requires mastering the *situation* (group preparation) as well as history or background of your *character* (individual preparation). Group preparation starts by examining the political environment of the day and related problems. A well-designed crisis simulation includes a website and issue briefs to get everyone oriented. There also is individual preparation. A delegate should examine whether their personality was aligned with a particular political movement or party, their personal views of current events, and how those views may have changed through their lifetime. The better informed a delegate is about the situation and the character, the better they can portray how the character might react to the crisis at hand.

Once a general understanding of the character has been developed, delegates should research the relationship between the character and situation. Some questions to consider are:

- How is the character *involved* in the rise of the topic?
- How does the crisis issue affect the *affiliations* (family, clan or nation) of the assigned character?
- How does the crisis affect the character's *power or influence*?
- How will particular *outcomes* affect the character?

Position papers are just as vital in a crisis body as any other Model UN simulation. A crisis position paper can take different forms, but they allow you to arrive better prepared, give a basis for opening remarks, and help guide other participants. A crisis position paper should be written from the character's perspective. A letter to your colleagues or a speech are typical formats.

A crisis simulation: The war room in Stanley Kubrick's 1964 film, *Dr. Strangelove, or How I learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*.

Participant Goals

Your goal as a crisis delegate is to solve the crises presented in a way that betters the situation of the delegate and their group (family, party, clan nation, etc.). Think about how to twist crises given to better your own goals, and how to convince other participants to support them. Anticipate consequences from directives that are passed to be able to react quickly to developments in the crises. Better yet think of possible problems with directives, present them to the body and be sure to point them out before the directive is passed.

Portraying an Assigned Character

High quality role playing involves a few simple practices. The most important is realism. When playing an assigned character, a delegate must speak and act consistently with the perceptions of that character. The *rule of realism* applies to all conduct in the body's room. On the other hand, an assigned character does not leave the crisis room (the *rule of position*); comments heard in passing outside of the session or found in a misplaced note are never taken into account when returning to portray a character again.

An outstanding role player always is mindful of their assigned character, dedicated to furthering the character's goals, and well-informed about both the character and the crisis topics. They are respectful of the way other delegates chose to portray their own assigned characters, and knowledgeable of the rules of crisis. Above all, do not be too nervous or embarrassed with your role playing; such feelings generally signify you are doing well. Everyone in the room will feel the same at first.

Role of the Chair and Crisis Manager

The role of the Chair in a crisis simulation is similar to UN bodies, moderating and facilitating deliberations and ensuring the body runs smoothly. The chair of a crisis simulation runs the body and the debate. The Crisis Manager runs the simulation.

Running the simulation includes many different duties. Periodically, at the chair's discretion, the crisis manager will interrupt debate to provide updated information on the on-going crisis or new crises as they develop. The Crisis Manager also takes delegate notes and incorporates their effects into the crisis when applicable. Lastly, the Crisis Manager receives directives, communiques and press releases and integrates them into the crisis scenario.

Rules of Procedure for Crisis Simulations

Crisis bodies require different rules of procedure. There usually is no formal debate in a crisis body, no speakers list and no formal agenda. Instead participants motion to debate on one of two forms: a *moderated debate* on a specific topic (example: the feasibility of opening negotiations) with a specific time limit, or *round table debate* of a specific topic. The round table functions similarly to a moderated debate, except each delegate gets a chance to speak, within a set time limit, in the order they are seated around the table. Motions for round table debate, points of information, and points of order to the chair

also are accepted. If there are no motions, debate automatically defaults to moderated debate. In special circumstances, the chair may intervene in debate to facilitate a compromise solution to an immediate crisis.

The real thing: US Ambassador Adlai Stevenson presents evidence of Soviet missiles in Cuba to the Security Council, 25 October 1962 (Photo: United Nations)

Portfolio Powers

In some circumstances, particular delegates are assigned abilities (*portfolio powers*) that can be used separately, such as the ability to make announcements, raise funds, start businesses, move troops or intercept communications. Portfolio powers are used through *personal directives*, notes written to the chair informing the body the role player is taking action. Characters also can cooperate through a *joint personal directive*. Directives require the approval of the chair. Use of portfolio powers requires approval from the Chair in writing. Delegates cannot use portfolio powers that their character would not be able to perform.

Normally, a written request to use portfolio powers is submitted to the chair, reviewed by crisis staff, and receives a response from the chair or crisis staff. It is important to remember that not all requests for actions will elicit a response by our staff. Also keep in mind that unilateral actions may have unforeseen effects.

Outcome Documents

Instead of resolutions, crisis bodies pass *directives*, *communiques*, or *press releases*:

Directives: Directives are similar in function to resolutions in the UN Security Council. Directives have no formatting requirements, and typically do not separate perambulatory and operative clauses. Rather, directives are statements from the body calling for specific action. Subjects can range from instructing diplomats or commanders to raising taxes or maneuvering military units. Directives can be short or multifaceted. In order for a directive to pass, it must have the support of over half the body, (note abstentions count in the negative in case of ties). Chairs have the power to veto an unrealistic or overly-imaginative directive. In order for a directive to be submitted to the chair, it needs at least one sponsor and signatures from at least one-fifth the body.

Communiques: Communiques are similar to directives, with the same voting rules, but focus on requesting information or action from another party. For example, a directive may call for a specific action, while communique seeks an opinion from another party. Communiques could take the form of requesting the opinion of an ally, asking for the advice of an intelligence/military agency, or a message to a third party.

Press Statements: Press statements are another output, with the same voting rules, but they do not create an action; rather it will inform the international community of your actions. While the language of the directives and communiques will not be automatically released, press statements will elicit reaction either domestically or internationally.

Common Crisis Delegate Mistakes

Do the preparation! The biggest mistake any delegate can make happens before walking into the room. Getting lost and left behind is easy. If a delegate is not prepared for the topic, the rules, or their character, everyone else in the room suffers.

Be prepared, but be flexible. Another common mistake is taking an assigned character too literally. It is important to stick to your character's specific views and motives, but allowing for creative interpretation may be necessary. For example, delegates in historical simulations often attempt to recreate historical events as accurately as possible, but thinking of original solutions to historical crises is the key to developing a better outcome.

Be mature. Avoid (unless explicitly sanctioned) anything involving gratuitous death. Assassination attempts, mass killing and rapid recourse to weapons are rarely allowed. Repeated attempts will annoy the Chair and Crisis Manager. Passing notes is common practice, as is proper note etiquette: always put your character's name on your notes (*To… From…*), and never withhold notes from other delegates. Formality and propriety reign, regardless of who it is addressed to: staff or other delegates.

Quick Guides

UN Caucusing Blocs

The 193 member states divide into five official UN regional blocs: the *African Group* (AG) with 55 member states, *Asia-Pacific Group* with 53 member states, Eastern European Group with 23 member states, the *Latin American and Caribbean Group* (GRULAC) with 33 member states and *Western European and Others Group* (WEOG) with 28 member states including Canada and the United States) plus 1 observer (Israel). UN regional blocs are the basis for dividing UN responsibilities, jobs and allocations. Other major groups often are more important in resolution voting. These include:

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): Functionally the same as the Group of 77 (G77), now 120 countries caucus with the NAM (not all present at ODUMUNC). The largest UN voting bloc, it includes nearly all nations of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia. NAM members also caucus with their regional blocs.

African Union (AU): The AU includes all countries of the African continent, as well as adjacent island states: Madagascar, Sao Tome and Principe, and Seychelles

Organization of American States (OAS) includes all sovereign states of North and South America, and the Caribbean, except Cuba which refuses to participate in OAS events. Several Latin American countries including Cuba caucus separately as the **Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas**.

The League of Arab States (AL)

Members	Djibouti	Kuwait	Morocco	Saudi Arabia	Tunisia	Eritrea
Algeria	Egypt	Lebanon	Oman	Somalia	UAE	Iran
Bahrain	Iraq	Libya	Palestine	Sudan	Yemen	Turkey
Comoros	Jordan	Mauritania	Qatar	Syria	***Non-members***	Uzbekistan

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Members	Indonesia	Myanmar	Thailand	***Candidates***	***Plus Three***	Rep. of Korea
Brunei	Laos	Philippines	Vietnam	Papua New Guinea	China	
Cambodia	Malaysia	Singapore		Timor-Leste	Japan	

The European bloc in the UN

Members	Czech Rep.	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovakia	Albania	Serbia
Austria	Denmark	Hungary	Malta	Slovenia	Bosnia	Turkey
Belgium	Estonia	Ireland	Netherlands	Spain	FYROM	***Non-Candidates***
Bulgaria	Finland	Italy	Poland	Sweden	Iceland	Israel
Croatia	France	Latvia	Portugal	United Kingdom	Kosovo	Norway
Cyprus	Germany	Lithuania	Romania	***EU Candidates***	Montenegro	Switzerland

Blocs make their own rules. Member states are free to form *ad hoc* blocs as they wish.

Rules Summary

Motion	Second?	Debatable?	Vote?	Special Notes
Set the Agenda	Yes	GA: 2 For/ 2 Against SC: 1 For/ 1 Against	Simple Majority	Sets the agenda item to be debated by the body
Point of order	No	No	No	Raised on Procedural matters. May not address substantive matters. ONLY one that may interrupt.
Set Parameters	Yes	No	Simple Majority	Used to set the Speaking Time, Question Limit, and Set Response Time.
Point of Information	No	No	No	For substantive question, directed toward the Chair or the speaker.
Yield	No	No	No	Must be done before a delegate's speech and can be to another delegate, the chair, or to questions.
Right of Reply	No	No	No	Request in writing to the Chair to respond to a derogatory comment.
Un-moderated Caucus	Yes	No	Simple Majority	Must specify length of time.
Moderated Caucus	Yes	No	Simple Majority	Chair shall moderate. Must specify length of time.
Suspend the Meeting / Recess	Yes	No	Simple Majority	Adjourn until specified time.
Adjourn Debate / Table the Topic	Yes	2 For / 2 Against	Simple Majority	Ends debate on a topic without resolution vote. To return to topic requires 2/3 majority vote.
Closure of Debate	Yes	2 Against	Simple Majority	Ends debate and moves to voting procedures.
Division of the Question	Yes	Only if opposed: 2 For / 2 Against	Simple Majority	Vote on specified operative clauses of a resolution separately.
Amendment	If Friendly – No If Unfriendly – Yes	If Unfriendly: 1 For / 1 Against	Simple Majority	To change a word, phrase, or clause within the operative clause section.

Flow of Debate

Roll Call

The Rapporteur will announce each country's name. After delegates hear their delegations name, they should respond with "present." The Rapporteur will respond by saying that "the delegation of _____ is present."

Setting the Agenda

ODUMUN committees and councils have more than one topic they can discuss; therefore the body must choose which topic they wish to discuss first. Chairs should normally allow a moderated caucus after opening the speakers list to let delegates talk about the agenda order preference and then take the matter to a vote.

Establish the Parameters

After the agenda has been set the chair should urge delegates to set a speaking time, question limit, and response time after the committee has been moved into Informal Debate. The Speakers List will automatically open once the parameters have been set.

Debate

Formal Debate

Formal Debate operates around the Speakers List. Delegates raise their delegations placard to be added to the Speakers List and the Chair will randomly call on the delegations. Delegates may only deliver speeches during this form of debate. No delegation may ask or answer questions. Nor do students motion for any form of caucus.

Informal Debate

Informal Debate operates around the process of listening to delegation speeches and entertaining motions for caucuses. The chair should entertain at least 5 speakers before entertaining a motion for a caucus. Afterwards the chair may accept a motion for a caucus, preferably a moderated caucus to allow more opinions to be heard. It is then up to the Chairs discretion to determine how often the committee has a caucus or has a caucus.

The effort of debate is to compromise and generate working papers that will be presented to the committee either while a sponsor has time on the speakers list or during a suspension of the rules. Introduced working papers turn into draft resolutions and the chair gives the working paper a number.

Closure of Debate

Once the Speakers List has expired or a delegate motions for a Closure of Debate and the votes in favor, the committee proceeds to Voting Procedures.

Voting Procedures

The committee votes on the Draft Resolutions in the order they were presented. The chair will also entertain and vote on motions for amendments or division of the question. The Order of Precedence is Amendments, Division of the Question and then a vote on the Draft Resolution. At the end of voting procedures the committee moves onto the next topic and resumes the Flow of Debate.

Sample Draft Resolution

Number given by Committee Chair:

Date: 17 February 2016

Final *letter* for a Draft. Becomes a *number* for passed Resolution.

Resolution: ODUMUNC/37/GA4/3.a
Body and committee: General Assembly, [illegible]
Topic: Strengthening UN Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies
Sponsors: Lesotho, Malawi, Tuvalu
Signatories: Angola, Bangladesh, Yemen, Zambia

Alphabetized lists of sponsors and signatories. Combined one-fifth the body

The General Assembly,

Reminding all nations of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Hu[illegible] Rights*, which recognizes the inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all Global [illegible],

Italicize

Reaffirming its Resolution 33/1996 of 25 July 1996, which encourages governments to work with UN bodies aimed at improving the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance,

Comma

Noting with satisfaction the past efforts of various relevant UN bodies and organizations,

Stressing that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform,

Underlined

Semi-colon

1. Encourages all relevant agencies of the United Nations to collaborate more closely with countries at the grassroots level to enhance the carrying out of relief efforts;

2. Urges member states to comply with the goals of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs to streamline efforts of humanitarian aid;

3. Requests that all nations develop rapid deployment forces to better enhance the coordination of relief efforts of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies, such as:

Colon

a. Appointing an official to be the head of international coordination efforts,
b. Provide funding and planning for short-notice emergency missions [illegible] quick deployment;

Comma

4. Requests the expansion of preventive actions and assurance of post-conflict assistance through reconstruction and development.

One and only period

Notes: Draft and Resolution numbers are given by the Committee Chair. Separate preambulatory clauses with commas. Semicolons separate operative clauses. Resolutions end with a period. Line numbers in drafts only. Showing line numbers is done via Page Layout. ODUMUNC will supply a template for working papers/draft resolutions with line numbers.

Sample Position Paper

Old Dominion University Model United Nations Conference 45
Human Rights Council

Position paper of the Republic of Costaguana
State A&M University

The Republic of Costaguana is honored to contribute to international deliberations of the UN Human Rights Council. Protection of human rights is among the greatest duties of all sovereign states and the international community. Having witnessed great tragedies, crimes and generosity Costaguana strives to assure the standards of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Genocide Convention and all other international treaties guiding the international community.

The topic *International Intervention to Protect Human Rights*, Agenda Item 1, is a source of special concern. The government and people of Costaguana strongly believe in the necessity to protect the rights of all men and women. But we also believe this responsibility is best achieved by individual governments, who alone assure the dignity and welfare of their people. The intentional community cannot afford to let bedrock principles of peace and stability be compromised in a misconceived rush to misuse military capabilities, risking completely unpredictable results.

Although small and impoverished, Costaguana has special insight into the dangers of sacrificing principles of international order. We have painful experience with imperialist polices by certain major powers, who used allegations of torture and abuse to justify immoral intervention in our affairs. Having seen our precious sovereignty mocked by foreign powers, our leaders denied proper respect and the territory of our country abused. The people of Costaguana stand behind the government that strives to assure them the rights we all cherish. Determined to protect national sovereignty above all, the government and people of Costaguana speak as one against the misuse of principles of human rights to intervene in the affairs of others.

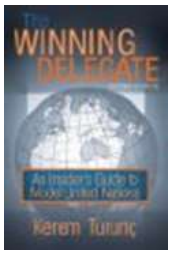
Instead, the people of Costaguana rise in unity to reaffirm that the best protection of human rights comes from restraining the interventionist instincts of foreign powers, those who would undermine bedrock principles of sovereignty and non-intervention to serve their own interests. Instead of punishing the victims of oppression, the Human Rights Council will be better served to focus its attention on the unjustified excesses of greater powers, those who act in violation of international law, twisting the meaning of sacred treaties and conventions to serve their own purposes and enslave the weak.

The best way for the international community to help those who suffer in poorer countries is by insuring them the capital they need to better themselves. The people of the Republic of Costaguana believe the UN Human Rights Council should focus on Agenda Item 2, *Economic Development for Human Rights*. Only by reducing global inequality, freeing all men and women from the chains of poverty, can human rights be assured. We stand ready to work in a cooperative spirit will all members of the international community who will join us in this struggle for sovereignty, decency and human good.

For Further Reading

Model United Nations: Student Preparation Guide, by Linda S. Adams and Janet E. Adamski (Kendall/Hunt 2002)

Coaching Winning Model United Nations Teams: A Teacher's Guide, by Edward Mickolus and Joseph Brannan (Potomac Books 2013)



The Winning Delegate: An Insider's Guide to Model United Nations, 2nd edition, by Kerem Turunç (iUniverse, 2009)

How to Win Awards in Model United Nations, by Ryan Villanueva and Kevin Felix Chan (Best Delegate, 2011). Order from http://bestdelegate.com/

Authors

Aaron Karp is Senior Lecturer in Political Science and Geography at Old Dominion University, and Director of the ODU Model UN since 2009. He previously worked for the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs (now the Office for Disarmament Affairs, ODA) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).He also was Consultant to the UN Secretary-General on Missiles and Consultant on South African Nuclear Weapons, and was accredited to the Swiss mission to the UN for the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty. At ODU he teaches international relations and international security.

Valerie Sprouse (*Procedure and Resolutions*) received her BA in International Studies from ODU in 2008 and an MA from the ODU Graduate Program in International Studies with a concentration in Interdependence, Transnationalism and Power in 2009. She is a past ODUMUNC Secretary-General and a five year veteran working for the ODU Model UN.

Connor Clarke, Brenden Cooley, and Christopher Steadman (*Crisis Simulation*) are ODU undergraduates and members of the ODU Model United Nations Society.

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