

## Basics of MUN 101

### What is Model United Nations?

Model United Nations, also known as Model UN or MUN, is an extra-curricular activity in which students typically role-play delegates to the United Nations and simulate UN committees. This activity takes place at MUN conferences. At the end of most conferences, outstanding delegates in each committee are recognized and given awards. Thousands of middle school, high school, and college students across the country and around the world participate in Model United Nations. Through MUN, you will be able to gain skills including, but not limited to: researching, public speaking, debating, writing, critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership.

### How does it work?

1. **You represent a country/position** (e.g. China)
2. **You are given a topic/problem(s)** (e.g. Misuse of foreign aid)
3. **You have a foreign policy**
  1. e.g. China likes to give foreign aid to developing nations by building infrastructure there
4. **You try to solve a problem to the best of your country's interest while following your foreign policy**
  1. e.g. "Harms of misusing of foreign aid happens because monetary aids often fall to the hands of corrupt political leaders in developing nations with corrupt governments. Therefore, if we give them foreign aid through building them infrastructure they need, foreign aid cannot be misused as much"
5. **Other countries want to solve the problem to meet their country's interest**
  1. e.g. USA believes China going in to developing nations and building infrastructure only helps Chinese economy and takes away job opportunities for the people of the developing nation
6. **This is where the debate occurs**
  1. Example:
    1. USA - "Instead of building infrastructure and only benefiting the Chinese companies, it's much better to just give monetary aid and receive a quarterly report on exactly where the money is spent."
    2. China in reply – "Even if we receive a quarterly report, there is no guarantee such report will be 100% legitimate. Further, even when the report doesn't come, we can't simply cut foreign aid and allow millions of innocent citizens in the nation to suffer

### How do you participate?



- **Delegate**
  - As a delegate you will be participating in majority of the debates that occur during committee sessions
  - Depending on the committee, you will also be writing various MUN documents such as position papers, resolution papers, and private/public directives
  
- **Staff**
  - *Director*
    - As a director, your role includes but is not limited to: writing the backgrounder(s), picking the awards, making sure the committee sessions are run productively, and preparing a midnight crisis (if there is one)
    - \*Joint Crisis Committees will carry multiple directors (overlord directors, bloc directors)
  
  - *Assistant Director*
    - As an assistant director, your role is to assist both the chair and the director. Hence, you will be mediating the debate (when the chair is not doing so) and helping the director move the debate forward and finish day-to-day responsibilities
    - \*Not all conferences will have an assistant director
  
  - *Chair*
    - As a chair, your main role will be mediating the debates as well as maintaining the rules of procedures during committee sessions
  
- **Secretariat**
  - There are multiple positions on the Secretariat team
  - The core pieces are: Secretary-General, Director-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Chief of Staff, USG Committees (General Assemblies or Specialized Agencies), USG of Conference, USG of Marketing, USG of Sponsorships, USG of Delegate Affairs
  - As part of the Secretariat team, you will be in charge of organizing and running a Model United Nations conference (from small day conferences to large hotel conferences carrying hundreds of delegates)
  
- **Volunteer**
  - As a volunteer, you will be responsible of helping out the conference in various ways: setting up rooms, directing delegates to their rooms, etc...
  - However, your primary role would be to work as pages, delivering notes between delegates during committee sessions

### **Where do you participate?**

- **Hotel Conferences**
  - Location: Hotels at Downtown Vancouver (ex. Sheraton Wall Centre, Pinnacle Hotel, Hyatt Regency)



- Duration: 3 days
- Approximate cost: \$190 - \$230
- Hotel conferences provide 3 days of Model United Nations experience with on average 6 - 7 committee sessions discussing on average 2 in-depth topics. Food is not-provided. Accommodations will be included in the cost. Usually on the second day of the conference, a delegate social will also take place where you can partake in a dance, video games, contests, group events, meet & greet, etc...

Examples: Vancouver Model United Nations (VMUN), Canadian High Schools Model United Nations (CAHSMUN), Canadian International Model United Nations (CAIMUN)

#### - **Day Conferences**

- Location: Varying buildings from various regions (ex. university campuses, city halls)
- Duration: 1 day
- Approximate cost: \$20- \$35
- Even though day conferences is much shorter than hotel conferences, with only 1 topic being discussed in the span of on average 3 committee sessions, it serves as a great and affordable learning experience before heading to a hotel conference. Even though no delegate socials or accommodations exist, food will often be provided (ex. pizza)

Examples: Surrey Model United Nations (SurreyMUN), North Vancouver Model United Nations (NVMUN), Burnaby Model United Nations (BMUN)

### **Types of Committees**

#### - **General Assemblies**

- usually considered beginner committees
- very large in size (70 - 100 delegates in hotel conferences)
- Example: Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC), Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM), Economic and Financial Committee (ECOFIN), etc...

#### - **Specialized Agencies / Regional Bodies**

- usually considered intermediate to advanced committees
- small to medium in size (30 - 50 delegates in hotel conferences)
- Example: European Union (EU), World Cities Summit (WCS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), League of Arab States (LoS)

#### - **Crisis Committees**

- considered advanced committees
- small to medium in size (30 - 50 delegates in hotel conferences)



- Crisis committees function differently from general assemblies or specialized agencies. Instead of having the traditional moderated caucuses and unmoderated caucuses, crisis committees function by public/private directives
- In a crisis committee, on top of having a topic of discussion, the dais members will have a specific scenario planned that is to be developed through your private/public directives
- Crisis committees are fast-paced and will develop continuously throughout the entire conference
- Example: Joint Crisis Committee (JCC)

## **Types of Awards**

- **Best Delegate**
  - equivalent to 1<sup>st</sup> place
  - given to only one delegate
  - includes a certificate of recognition + a wooden gavel
- **Outstanding Delegate**
  - equivalent to 2<sup>nd</sup> place
  - given to one (in smaller committees) or two delegates (in larger committees)
  - includes a certificate of recognition
- **Honourable Mentions**
  - equivalent to 3<sup>rd</sup> place
  - given to one (in smaller committees) to three delegates (in larger committees)
  - includes a certificate of recognition
- **Best Position Paper**
  - given to the delegate who wrote the best position paper
  - however, often equivalent to 4<sup>th</sup> place
  - includes certificate of recognition

## **Awards Criteria**

### **1. Oratory Skills**

- Ability to present your ideas in a persuasive, convincing, and cohesive manner

### **2. Leadership/Initiative**

- Ability to lead the debate and the delegates around you (both during moderated and unmoderated caucuses)
- Can show this by: writing resolution papers, leading discussion during unmods

### **3. Substantive Development**

- Contents of your speeches should supply substantial input to the discussion (giving new/more in depth analysis, providing a solution, sharing a new problem/perspective)



#### **4. Procedural Manipulation**

- Ability to move the debate forward, share new perspectives, open up undiscussed problems and focus points

#### **5. Following Foreign Policy**

- Each nation/position you represent will have a foreign policy
- You must follow your given foreign policy
- Example: Iraq and Saudi Arabia should not work together

#### **6. Hand in Position Paper**

- In order to be eligible for an award, you **MUST** hand-in your position paper(s)

#### **7. Speaking Time**

- Applies more so towards Best Delegate award
- Even though speaking time isn't part of an official awards criteria, it still affects the judging process of many dais members
- Even if your speeches are always top quality, if you speak very little, it's hard to justify receiving the Best Delegate award
- Try to be at least in the top three when it comes to speaking time



## Some definitions of MUN jargons

- **Midnight Crisis** | held at the midnight of second day of conference; allows non-crisis committees a crisis committee experience related to the topic at hand
- **Backgrounder** | background information written by the Director to assist your research on a given topic; often includes areas of discussion, highlighted concerns, timeline, possible solutions, past UN actions, discussion questions, and more; MUST read before any conference
- **Pre-ambulatory Clauses** | clauses in a draft resolution that recognizes the problems
- **Operative Clauses** | clauses in a draft resolution that outlines the solutions (sub-clauses are used within operative clauses to explain the solution in detail)
- **Superlatives** | done at the end of the last committee session; recognition of fun, entertaining "titles" for delegates (e.g. most likely to be a dictator, most try-hard, best couple, etc...)
- **Agenda** | the order in which the two topics will be discussed; in order to "set" the agenda, one must enter the Primary Speakers' List
- **Position Paper** | a paper that you must write that outlines your country's foreign policy, concerns, and possible solutions; one per topic; mandatory to be eligible for an award; different types of position paper exists for different conferences
- **Directives** | used only in crisis committees or Midnight Crisis as a method of progressing the debate forward; demonstrate different private/public actions carried out by a nation
- **Public Directives** | actions carried out in public; need sponsors; dais must approve before formally presenting the action to the committee; if passed the voting process, the directive is carried out and applied to the scenario
- **Private Directives** | actions carried out in private; does not need sponsors; dais must approve before being considered put in action, however, does not require formal presenting and/or voting
- **Page** | refers to volunteers passing notes for delegates during committee sessions; you may not get up to pass a note by yourself unless the page is absent
- **Delegate Social** | a plethora of events that serve as entertainment for delegates; usually held on the second evening of the conference; often includes but not limited to: a dance, game room, meet & green, group events, etc...
- **Dais** | refers to the entire staff (director, chair, assistant director)
- **Merging** | if two or more draft resolutions are too similar in content, you may merge the draft resolutions to form one draft resolution (the dais will often request a merge if needed)
- **Friendly Amendments** | amendments approved by the dais and the sponsors of the draft resolution
- **Unfriendly Amendments** | amendments approved by the dais but not the sponsors of the draft resolution (in order to be passed and added to the resolution, it must garner the support of one fifth of quorum in the form of signatories before a vote)
- **Sponsors** | when you write, present, and lead a draft resolution, you are a sponsor of that paper (there can be 3 sponsors per draft resolution)
- **Signatories** | being a signatory for a paper means you would like to see the paper presented; this does not mean that you support or oppose the paper, it simply means you want to see it presented (please don't say no when asked to be a signatory)
- **Roll Call** | Attendance taken at the start of committee session; respond with either "Present" or "Present and Voting" (By saying the latter, you can vote on resolution papers in future sessions; please always say the latter in all cases)
- **Quorum** | must be established in order to begin formal debate or enter voting procedure in a committee; met when 1/3 of members are present
- **Primary Speakers' List** | only used when there are more than 1 topic; two speakers per topic; debating which topic to discuss first; all speeches must be 90 seconds
- **Secondary Speakers' List** | delegates may request to be added on to the list; default speaking time is 60 seconds; usually used to outline your country's stance; if no moderated caucuses are past, the committee reverts back to the secondary speakers' list
- **Yields** | Upon completing a speech from the Secondary Speakers' List, delegates must yield their time
- **Yielding to the chair** | remaining time will be given to the chair
- **Yielding to a delegate** | remaining time will be given to another delegate
- **Yielding to questions** | remaining time will be used to answer questions from selected delegates (one from each)
- **Unmoderated Caucus** | allows delegates to leave their seats to examine a topic area in a more informal manner; cluster of ideas may be discussed; draft resolutions may be written



- **Moderated Caucus** | allows delegates to discuss specific, substantive debate; example of requesting for a motion during moderated caucuses: "Delegate of USA motions for a 10 minute total, 1 minute speaking time on the motion: Education of women in developing countries"
- **Right of Reply** | delegates may request a right of reply if they feel their personal or national integrity was attacked by another delegate during a speech; 90 seconds if approved by the dais
- **Closure of Debate** | used to close debate on any procedural or substantive matter whenever the floor is open; if passes, committee will enter voting procedure immediately
- **Suspension of Debate** | postponement of all committee functions until the next scheduled session; used only near the end of a committee session
- **Adjournment of Debate** | only when the committee nears the end of the last committee session of the conference
- **Point of Order** | raised to bring attention to the Chair an error in the execution of the rules of procedure
- **Point of Personal Privilege** | raised for personal comfort
- **Point of Inquiry** | raised if delegates are uncertain about any aspect of the committee (in relation to the topic, ROP, general conference information)
- **Cluster of Ideas** | unorganized document with cluster of ideas; formatted later into working papers
- **Working papers** | informal document written to communicate ideas among delegates of the committees; should contain formal structure (pre-ambulatory clauses & operative clauses); should recognize problems discussed throughout committee sessions and propose solutions to them
- **Draft Resolutions** | working papers approved by the dais; ready to be presented and voted upon by the rest of the committee
- **Procedural Voting** | all voting on motions other than draft resolutions and unfriendly amendments; members have one vote each, no members may abstain
- **Voting by Placard** | used in all procedural matters; each delegate will raise their placard if in favour
- **Voting by Roll Call** | used only during substantive matters; when called upon in an alphabetical fashion, delegates must respond with: "Yes" (in favour), "Yes with reasons" (in favour), "No" (opposed), "No with reasons" (opposed), or "Abstain" (in abstention); if stated with reasons but you do not win, you get an opportunity to explain your reasoning after the voting has finished
- **Substantive Voting** | all voting on draft resolutions and unfriendly amendments (delegates may vote on the method of voting)
- **Precedence of Motions** | when multiple motions have been proposed, they will be considered in the following order of presence
  - Right of Reply → Moderated Caucus → Unmoderated Caucus → Introduction of a Draft Resolution → Introduction of an Amendment → Closure of Debate → Suspension of Debate → Adjournment of Debate
- **Simple Majority** | 1/2 of the committee in favour
- **2/3 Majority** | 2/3 of the committee in favour
- **Blocs** | A group of countries that share similar foreign policies and often work together
- **Extension** | When you extend the current motion for a proposed amount of time



## Basic MUN Procedure

- Source: CAHSMUN 2016

