

Gordon's Model United Nations



Delegate's Guide

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Introduction to the United Nations

The United Nations is an inter-governmental organization that has the goal of representing and protecting the rights of member states' populations.

The UN has four basic goals:

1. To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war
2. To reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person
3. To establish justice and respect for law and treaties
4. To promote social progress and better standards of life in larger Freedom

The above is the Preamble to the UN charter, which is signed by all member countries of the UN upon entry. The UN ensures through peaceful diplomatic means and promotion of international security that these basic aims of the UN are met.

The Concept of the Model United Nations

Model United Nations is an interactive, interdisciplinary simulation which places students in the role of official United Nations delegates. Participants research a country, take on roles as diplomats, investigate international issues, debate, deliberate, consult, and then develop solutions to world problems.

The concept of Model United Nations was developed by students in the United States after World War II in order to simulate the challenges of diplomacy and international negotiation. These model conferences particularly focus on areas of peace and conflict resolution that are a part of the day-to-day work of the United Nations. During an MUN conference participants are assigned to delegations representing a specific country.

These delegations represent the positions of their countries in the General Assembly, Security Council and numerous other committees. Within the committees the participants assume the role of representatives from their assigned states to debate the chosen topic agenda. Delegates represent the foreign policy of a country and do their best to portray their views to the other members. The debates are held in formal English, and student diplomats have to observe formal and diplomatic procedure.

Before playing out their ambassadorial roles, students research global problems to be addressed, drawn from today's headlines and current issues. Members learn how the international community acts on its concerns about topics concerning peace and security, human rights, the environment, food and hunger, economic development, and globalization. Model UN delegates also look closely at the needs, aspirations and foreign policy of the countries they will represent during the event.

General Outline

Each delegate will be assigned to a delegation representing a particular country (a member-state of the UN) and a particular committee.

Examples of committees are as follows:

- Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)
- Economic and Financial (ECOFIN)
- Environment
- Social, Cultural and Humanitarian (SOCHUM)

Many conferences also operate a Security Council - only 15 designated member states are members, these being the current composition of the UN Security Council.

Delegates should research their issues first on five levels:

- What is the issue all about?
- What is their designated country's attitude to it?
- What has the UN done about it?
- What have been the UN's success and failures?
- How could the UN improve their handling of the issue?

Delegates should aim to be well informed on all committee issues. They should find out what their country's stance is on these issues. In particular, each delegate must know and understand all of the topics for discussion for his or her designated committee so that he or she is able to participate in informed debate on resolutions covering each topic.

In preparation for conferences delegates should aim to write their own resolution(s) - at least one – however you may write a resolution on all topics in your committee. A good length to aim for would be around 1-2 sides of A4. The chairs will help you format your resolution.

A Delegate's Guide to MUN

The Charter of the United Nations

Delegates should be familiar with the Charter and its aims.

How to be diplomatic

The essence of MUN is to try to recreate reality. As a diplomat therefore, you must be ultimately diplomatic, creating or maintaining peace and accord, the purpose of the real UN. You should, therefore:

- Become aware of the will of your committee
- Achieve consensus for decision-making
- Emphasise negotiation, rather than confrontation
- Address the issue by defining its terms
- Never indulge in meaningless rhetoric
- Never sacrifice the country's interest to serve private motives (either your own or someone else's).

Research

The more you know, the more you can say. The more you say on relevant topics, the more you are respected, and the more you are respected, the more you are in demand to speak. The more you speak, the more you will enjoy MUN.

- Come with resolutions written on your committee topics
- Research thoroughly the topics that you don't have a resolution on, so that you can participate when they are being debated
- Read the newspapers, books and articles on your topics, making notes to refer to during debate
- Try to come up with your own ideas
- Get hold of UN publications on your topic and previous MUN resolutions, but bear in mind that if you copy actual UN resolutions or previous MUN resolutions you may be accused of plagiarism and the resolution will be rejected
- Know the policies of important countries who have an interest in your topic and then you will know if they veer away from their official policies
- The most important thing is to know, and stick to your own country's policy, e.g. A delegate representing Peru in a drugs committee MUST know and follow PERU'S policy, because others will know what this policy is and it will cause you considerable embarrassment if you get it wrong. Your credibility will also be very much open to question
- Be aware of countries that may hold similar views and also of potential opposition.
- **Use the research reports on the GMUN website – these are very helpful.**

Lobbying (at conferences only)

Lobbying is one of the most interesting and enjoyable parts of MUN! First impressions are important:

- Appear confident and knowledgeable
- Hand round copies of your resolutions to EVERYONE in your committee, and be ready to give a brief summary of your key points
- Be very persuasive, and be prepared to resolve any problems a country may have with your resolutions by amending them or MERGING them with another.
- Flexibility is not a sign of weakness - rather it is a sign that you are working as a diplomat. When merging a resolution you must politely urge that you speak on it when it is debated. As first speaker you and your country get most credit if it passes - and most sympathy if it fails. Lobbying takes place in committee rooms.
- Never panic, and get involved with discussion fully. If you get going, and go around everyone, influencing proceedings, people will trust, like, and respect you.

- Try to get as many co-submitters for your resolutions as possible. You will normally need 8 (or otherwise stated) to submit your resolution to the approval panel. BUT make sure that your co-submitters understand the resolution, and will not melt away if the going gets tough - the more new friends you make, the more support you get.
- In writing a resolution, refer to the sample resolution and format sheet included in this Guide.

Merging

- Merging is a vital part of conferences.
- Because time is short there may not be time for you and your co-submitters to retype your whole resolution - but if you have access to email then it will be a lot easier.
- The importance of merging cannot be stressed too highly. As the saying goes 'two heads are better than one', if there are two people promoting a resolution it will obviously take half the time to find the 8 (or otherwise stated) co-submitters needed to be accepted by the approval panel.
- If you bring your resolutions on a USB pen or memory stick, merging should be relatively straightforward.
- You may not merge resolutions before the conference.

Committee Work

- In all your dealings, be courteous to everyone, especially the Chair, and always address them as 'Mr. Chairman' or 'Madam Chair' in debate, however well you know him/her.
- Chairs get annoyed by dilatory points and poor debate. If he or she sees you contributing negatively to the debate, you are unlikely to be recognized.
- If you are not being noticed, be patient. If you do complain, do so with an even temper and charming manner.
- Get up to speak as soon as possible. Once the first ordeal is over you will find that you want to get up and speak again and again.
- Always have Points of Information prepared, and be as constructive as possible on all resolutions.
- Shafts of wit can help you, but do not go for cheap laughs. Always speak slowly, clearly and loudly, so that people can hear, and respond to, your points.
- Remember, when talking on a resolution, you are a salesperson.
- Do not ramble on about what each individual clause achieves. Everyone can understand that. Bring people around by general argument, and then, in replies to questions, impress your audience with your deeper knowledge.
- Gain eye contact with your audience.
- Do not try to make too many points in your speech. All debate must be constructive.
- Ensure that your arguments against others' resolutions are sensible and politely expressed.
- Use moderate language, and never insult those with whom you disagree.
- Anticipate what arguments may be made against your amendment and resolution.
- The first sentence of your speech is crucial in grabbing your audience's attention.
- Most importantly, learn from other good speakers.
- Passing a constructive solution is the individual goal of MUN. Never forget that, as a delegation, you must work together as a team to win any of the coveted and prestigious awards.

Writing an Amendment

If an improvement to the resolution can be made by striking or adding to an operative clause, delegates can submit amendments to the Chair.

The chair must receive all amendments well in advance of the speaker obtaining the floor. It is at the Chair's discretion which amendments will be debated. To allow them to make a fair judgment of which amendments to debate, you must submit all your amendments as quickly as possible.

All amendments must state: (a) the line(s) in which the amendment is to be made and (b) the nature of the amendment, e.g. '*strike*' or '*insert*'. Amendments may be hand-written or via email, but must be legible - illegible or untidy amendments will be ruled out of order. The more you contribute to the resolutions through amendments and debate, the more you will get out of MUN.

Security Council

The Security Council, in its nature, has its own rulings and procedures and the President of the Security Council will explain all of this on the first day of the conference. Delegates should come with a resolution on one topic, having fully researched all topic topics. Likewise, lobbying operates in a slightly different manner, but the delegates will be informed of this at the time.

Right of Reply

Rights of Reply will be *very rarely* entertained in response to POI and only at the Head Chair's discretion. Head Chair's will be told not to entertain them except under circumstances that will be productive for debate.

Publicity and Notepaper

Good notepaper can aid your cause. Make your publicity relevant to your country's policies. Notes can be used in a number of ways: (a) to discuss policy with allies on a particular issue; (b) to request the opportunity to speak after a certain nation in debate; (c) to submit amendments; (d) to express gratitude or remorse for a speech made or a question asked; but, be aware that:

- If notes get out of hand or are rude or abusive, disciplinary action may be taken
- Remember you are not at MUN to send notes. Rather, you are there to listen to debate and get involved wherever possible.

Preparing for debate:

1. Read your Research Report:

Regardless of how long it is, read your Research Report. It's easily the most important research you can do, and it's given to you with no extra work involved. Everyone else on the committee will have read it and will most likely refer to it multiple times throughout the conference. As you read, underline the problems that are brought up, and start brainstorming solutions. Pay close attention to case studies, bold terms, and any parts that mention your country by name. After you finish reading, you should be able to answer important questions about your committee. Who or what do the problems apply to? Are any nations responsible for the issues? Are the issues urgent, or do they require long-term solutions? Are the topics related? If so, how?

2. Learn about your country:

After you get a decent idea of the problems your committee will be addressing, it's crucial to understand how they apply to your country. Use the CIA World Factbook as well as Wikipedia to find out the basics of your country (usually the country's main Wiki will be enough, but there are also typically Wiki pages about a nation's economy and foreign relations). Where is your country located? Is your country developed or developing? What's the average GDP per capita? What is its economy dependent on? What are its major imports/exports? Is it involved in any world conflicts? Does it have any major allies? Enemies?

Apart from answering these questions, make sure to check major news sources for any current events regarding your nation, region, or committee, and be well versed in how these relate to the topics in your background guide. Take note of all these important characteristics and continue to brainstorm solutions. At this point, you should be thinking of specific solutions that would benefit your nation, its allies, and the rest of the world.

3. Organize your solutions:

Now that you know the problems your committee addresses, as well as how they apply to your nation, start to write down full solutions to the problems. Write down the pros and cons of your ideas. Do they address all nations, or just nations similar to yours? Are they moral? Are they expensive? If so, how will you fund them? How do they affect the impoverished? Will most nations agree to the solutions? Do they fall under the jurisdiction of your committee? Are they long term solutions, short term solutions, or both? What are the overall, economic, political, and social repercussions of your solutions?

4. Strengthen your solutions:

If you find yourself with any more time, it is important to refine your solutions. Start looking up statistics, redundancies, and specific UN resolutions. Do your solutions already exist? If so, how can you improve upon existing solutions? Are there any statistics that back up the urgency of the problems you plan to address? Have similar solutions worked in the past? How have past attempts at solving the problems failed? Are there any specific UN programs you can work with? Are there any relevant UN resolutions that you can reference? Are there any NGO's that tackle the same problems? Are they successful? Keep asking yourself similar questions until you run out of time, and remember: if you can back up your solutions and prove that they will be successful, despite your lack of preparation, you will seem like the best-researched delegate in the room.

Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

Point of personal privilege – you may interrupt the speaker at this point, it is usually when you cannot hear the speaker or see the resolution/amendment displayed.

Point of information – this must be phrased as a question and does not interrupt the speaker; delegate must stand to make a point of information and remain standing until an answer is received. *POIs can also be made to the Chair and again do not interrupt the speaker.

Point of order – you must not interrupt the speaker for this; delegate must rise to state their point. The point must be made to the Chair and is to express concern or objection to the procedure or language that the speaker has used of which you feel is inappropriate. If you wish to discuss your issue privately with the chair you must call for a **permission to approach the Chair**.

Motion to extend points of information – this is a request to extend the time for more points of information to be made.

Motion to move to open debate – this is a request to abandon the formal designation of ‘time for’ and ‘time against’.

Motion to move to voting procedures – this is a request to end the debate on the amendment/resolution and vote on the amendment/resolution as a whole.

Motion to divide the house – when votes are either tied or very close, you may request for a second voting procedure where no abstentions are allowed.

You must not interrupt the speaker for any of the motions stated above and for the motion to proceed, a ‘seconded’ is required. Objections are also permitted on some motions. The only point where you can interrupt the speaker is for a point of personal privilege if you cannot hear the speaker. Rulings on all motions are ultimately at the direction of the chairs, and chairs have the final say on all points.

AI Policy

At Gordons Model United Nations, AI is permitted to be used for research purposes before and during debate, but will not be permitted to use AI to create speeches, POIs, Amendments, or Resolutions.

If the chair suspects that a resolution is AI generated, they will not debate it, and it will be rejected. This decision is up to the chairs discretion and will not be overturned. If the chair suspects that a delegate is reading a speech made by AI, then they will ask the speaker to sit down, and debate will continue as if they never spoke. AI is a tool, but must not be used in lieu of effort, experience, and hard work. Delegates are of course permitted to read from a pre-prepared speech, but the Chairs are highly experienced and will be able to tell if it is not that delegates individual work.

GMUN 26 encourages delegates to use AI as a research tool in conjunction with the released Research Reports but also highlights the important of organic research and reading.

Delegates suspected / found to be using AI in their debate will be selected less by the chairs, and their opportunity of earning an award will be heavily reduced.