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Model United Nations: Advisors' Training Packet

Over the past years, the International Institute of Buffalo has been asked by many teachers and faculty advisors for suggestions on how to prepare a team for our Model United Nations Conference. What follows is a five part lesson series designed to introduce students to Model United Nation (MUN) and prepare them to actively participate in the conference. We encourage teams to use these lessons as structured guidance to conference preparation and supplement the lessons with their typical training procedure. Please, do not feel obligated to conduct all of these lessons if you feel that you have a “tried and true” method to delegation training. However, if you feel that you need assistance in training your delegation, these lessons provide a firm framework to prepare students for the conference.

The following are the five lesson topics in this packet:

Topic 1: *Swords into Plowshares: the History and Function of the United Nations*

Topic 2: *Country Research*

Topic 3: *Resolution Writing for Model United Nations*

Topic 4: *Committee Sticks and Stones: Rules and Parliamentary Procedure*

Topic 5: *Simulation*

Each topic is broken down into three sections and can be conducted within 45-60 minutes. For each topic there is an Overview and Introduction to both inform the faculty advisor about the topic and introduce the topic to the students. This is followed by an Activity that is designed to teach students a particular skill or provide background information on the topic. These activities are designed to make students comfortable with speaking in public, while engaging with important conference preparation. The final section is Discussion that functions to clarify the lesson and allows students to ask questions. I urge you to leave time for the Discussion section; some of these subjects are complicated and benefit from earnest dialogue.

If you have any questions regarding this training packet, or need additional resources, please feel free to contact the International Institute of Buffalo at mshogan@iibuff.org.

Topic 1: *Swords into Plowshares: the History and Function of the United Nations*

Overview and Introduction:

To truly understand Model United Nations, one must have a firm grasp of the history, principles, and controversies of the real United Nations.

Teachers: Please read the preamble to the *Charter of the United Nations* and give a brief background into the reasons for the formation of the UN and its current functions. (PDF link to full version of the charter is below. Please either print for students or project so all can see and read)

Activity:

Following this, the students will form a circle and read aloud, to each other, the *Charter of the United Nations*. Students will start with “Chapter 1: Procedures and Principles” and go around the circle reading one sub-clause each, until the end. This activity is important because it allows the students to become familiar with parliamentary language in a very relaxed way. Of equal, if not greater, importance is that this exercise begins the long process of making students comfortable speaking in public. I feel that fear of speaking in public is the primary reason why many students don’t fully participate in MUN conferences—I want to remedy that. This first exercise is meant to “break the ice.” Each exercise afterward will incrementally require students to speak for longer and periods of time; culminating in reciting, from memory, a brief (15-30 seconds) prepared statement during the conferences first 45min.

Discussion:

After the activity I would like the students to either ask questions to clarify the meaning of the *Charter*, or to discuss the following questions. The following questions are provided by bestdelegate.com, an amazing website for all things MUN.

“What is the purpose of the UN? (This is covered in the Preamble and Chapter I). Are the UN’s purposes and principles realistic? Does the UN today live up to what it set forth to accomplish 68 years ago?”

How do countries join the UN? Chapter II: Membership describes the requirements of UN membership. Why do countries want to join the UN? Is the membership process fair? (Consider that membership is subject to veto by the Security Council.

How is the UN organized? Chapter III: Organs breaks down the UN into 6 principal organs and Chapters IV-XV describes the powers and membership of those organs. Does this organization make sense? Is it effective?

Can the UN infringe on a country’s sovereignty? Article 2 is about upholding state sovereignty and ensuring that the UN does not “intervene in matters which are essential within the domestic jurisdiction” of a member state. However, the Security Council can authorize enforcement action under Chapter VII—but the Security Council is subject to

the veto of the Permanent 5. How does the UN balance its principle of sovereignty with maintaining international peace and security or promoting human rights?

Does the UN challenge the status quo, or preserve it?"

Additional Resources and References

PDF of United Nations Charter: http://www.mofa.gov.iq/documentfiles/un_charter.pdf

Discussion questions: <http://bestdelegate.com/how-to-teach-model-un-5-discussion-questions-on-the-un-charter/>

Topic 2: *Country Research*

Introduction:

Country research is a critically important skill for all MUN participants. Luckily, the International Institute of Buffalo's MUN is designed so delegates can conduct research and write resolutions with their teammates *before* the conference. This enables the delegates to thoroughly research their country's history, system of government, regional allies, and foreign policy, while fine-tuning their resolutions.

The first step for any MUN delegation is country research. Country research is essential to accurately representing a country. Also, I have found that students gain a real sense of confidence about speaking in committee if they have a solid understanding of *what* they are talking about—the more they feel they know, the more likely they are to speak up. I will write an introduction for the teachers to read, or use as a starting point for their own introduction. In this I would like to press the point that in MUN a delegate *is* the representative from their country. It is important that they fully “play the part” and use pronouns such as “we, our” in committee. The delegations are also judged on how faithfully they adhere to the real world positions of countries, making research indispensable.

Activity:

For this activity students will need to have computer access (from one computer per country to one for every student). Teachers can decide if they want to do this activity in a MUN meeting, or if they want to give the students a handout to complete over the course of a week on their own time.

Bestdelegate.com has a “Country Profile Activity” sheet that mirrors ones that I have written in the past and is totally comprehensive—please use theirs. However, if you feel that this activity is not manageable for the time allotted, please attenuate the questions from the “Country Profile Activity” sheet. As I mentioned, I estimate that after school meetings will be approximately 60min; this activity should take no more that 45min.

Activity Sheet: <http://bestdelegate.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Best-Delegate-Country-Profile.pdf>

Discussion:

To once again help students become acclimated to the feeling of public speaking, I would suggest that delegates standup with those from their committee and take turns reading the answers to their cohort. Before leaving, students should be encouraged to continue the research process in their free time and start brainstorming about possible topics of interest for their resolutions.

Additional Resources:

CIA World Fact Book: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

The Official website of the United Nations: <http://www.un.org/en/>

Also find newspapers online *from* the country.

Topic 3: *Resolution Writing for Model United Nations*

Overview and Introduction:

Resolution writing can seem like a daunting task for many first time delegates, but it much easier than it appears when broken down. First, let's define the purpose of resolutions. The overall goals of a resolution is to affirm a country's stance on a particular topic, define the position of the delegation (person(s) writing the resolution), and come up with solutions to the problems that the committee is trying to solve. Additionally, in the world of MUN, the resolution demonstrates that you have thoroughly researched your country's prior legislation and public statements on the topic. In this way, it is important to refer to specific public statements made by representatives of your country in your resolution. Remember: when writing a resolution you *are* the representative of you country; be sure that this is reflected in the language of your resolution.

Lesson:

(Attach example of well written resolution, perhaps SpecPol Brazil).

(I will ask the teachers to project the same on the board or make copies for delegates).

Take a moment to read and look over the sample resolution. Any resolution can be broken down into three sections: the heading, perambulatory clauses, operative clauses.

The heading simply provides information about the committee and authors of the resolution. It should be formatted as follows:

Committee:

Country:

Sponsors:

Topic:

Address the resolution to your committee

Economic and Finance Committee,

Following the heading you break into the body of the resolution with pre-ambulatory clauses. The following is an example of the structure and format of this section:

1. With respect to the purpose of maintaining global peace and international safety as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations,
2. Bearing in mind that in order to achieve the goals of the United Nations, peaceful means of mediation and problem solving are expected and preferred,
3. Reaffirming the right of sovereign states to peacefully settle disputes either amongst themselves or in the forums set up in the Charter of the United Nations,

4. Fully aware that it is sometimes necessary to apply forceful measures in order to achieve the goals of the United Nations,
5. Convinced that these forceful measures should only be enacted in extreme circumstances and only as a last resort,
6. Primarily concerned with the implementation of sanctions, such as those set down in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, [**Note that pre-ambulatory are separated by commas and numbered**]

The United Nations Association of the United States provides an incredibly concise outline of the functions of the pre-amble and pre-ambulatory clauses:

“The preamble of a draft resolution states the reasons for which the committee is addressing the topic and highlights past international action on the issue. Each clause begins with a present participle (called a preambulatory phrase) and ends with a comma. Preambulatory clauses can include:

References to the UN Charter;

Citations of past UN resolutions or treaties on the topic under discussion;

Mentions of statements made by the Secretary-General or a relevant UN body or agency;

Recognition of the efforts of regional or nongovernmental organizations in dealing with the issue; and

General statements on the topic, its significance and its impact.”

Note the underlined pre-ambulatory phrases in the above example. Each pre-ambulatory clause needs an underlined pre-ambulatory phrase, for a list of common phrases see:

<http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation/resolutions/preambulatory-and-operative-clauses>

Following the pre-amble, the resolution begins offering solutions to the issues defined in the pre-ambulatory clauses. These solutions and recommendations are called the *operative clauses*. Once again the, the United Nations Association of the United States provides an incredibly concise outline of the functions of operative clauses:

“Operative clauses offer solutions to issues addressed earlier in a resolution through the perambulatory section. These clauses are action oriented and should include both an underlined verb at the beginning of your sentence followed by the proposed solution. Each clause should follow the following principals:

Clause should be numbered;

Each clause should support one another and continue to build your solution;

Add details to your clauses in order to have a complete solution;
Operative clauses are punctuated by a semicolon, with the exception of your last operative clause which should end with a period.”

Below is an example of format and style of the operative clause section provided by the United Nations Association of the United States:

“Stressing the fact that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform, particularly in the humanitarian realm,

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; **[use semicolons to separate operative clauses]**
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;
4. Calls for the development of a United Nations Trust Fund that encourages voluntary donations from the private transnational sector to aid in funding the implementation of rapid deployment forces;
5. Stresses the continuing need for impartial and objective information on the political, economic and social situations and events of all countries;
6. Calls upon states to respond quickly and generously to consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance; and
7. Requests the expansion of preventive actions and assurance of post-conflict assistance through reconstruction and development. **[end resolutions with a period]”**

The following is a link to commonly used operative phrases: <http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation/resolutions/preambulatory-and-operative-clauses>

Discussion:

Encourage students to raise any questions they have about resolutions. I believe that the lesson on how to write will probably take up all of the allotted time, if not, I would suggest the entire team writing a “silly” resolution together to instill the format and function of the document. Possible topics could pertain to pop-culture, something about their school, or other commonly known and breezy topic.

Topic 4: *Committee Sticks and Stones: Rules, Parliamentary Procedure, and Setting the*

Overview and Introduction:

It is difficult to understand how a committee functions without seeing the process first hand. However, one can prepare themselves with knowledge of the *rules* and *parliamentary procedure* before conference day, making the transition into the debate very smooth. The conference rules and parliamentary procedure are designed to add structure to the debate and provide a common framework for procedural matters in committee. Trust me, the conference rules and committee procedural process are your friends—they ensure equitable opportunity to express opinions and clearly define voting matters.

Rules, print or display for students to read:

<http://www.iibuff.org/clientuploads/model%20un%202014/MUN12%20Main%20Committees%20Rule2012.pdf>

Activity:

The only true way to understand the rules is by reading and discussing them. This may seem a bit redundant after the activity from Lesson 1, but it is the most effective way to engage with the rules. Once again, I would have the students sit in a circle and take turns reading each rule aloud. If copies can be provided to each student, I would encourage students to take notes and write down questions as they go. (Attach Rules to back of PDF!!!)

Discussion:

I would use the balance of the time to have students ask questions about the rules. Also, be sure to gage their understanding of the procedural matters of the rules. Sections I-V are certainly important, but Section VI what delegates need to know to be able to function in committee. Ask the students to study section VI before the last and most fun topic.

Topic Five: *Simulation!*

Overview and Introduction:

Simulating a committee session is an extremely instructive activity for all delegates. The goal of the simulation is to practice parliamentary procedure and to encourage students to participate in the debate. There should be no resolution writing or research aspect to this activity.

Activity:

I would encourage students to sit in a circle and work independently during this simulation. Also, the teacher or faculty advisor should chair the committee and keep strictly to the IIB “Rules of Procedure.” Have the students pick a light topic beforehand; Pepsi v. Coke, Batman v. Superman, or similar binary topics. Students should also make a simple placard from a sheet of paper with the name of their fictional country on it—use fictional countries, it eliminates many problems.

Once ready, begin the session! Set the time limit for speeches and let students debate and engage with procedural matters. Correct them when they fumble with the order of procedural motions and try to get them to vote on a verbal resolution.

Discussion:

If time allows, give a critique of what needs to be understood more clearly in the rules.

Before the Conference:

As we have mentioned throughout this packet, the greatest obstacle to student participation in committee is fear of speaking in public. I feel that the best way to get delegates fully engaged in committee is to compel them to make a short, memorized speech within the first 45min of the session. This short speech has a few essential functions. Firstly, it encourages participation from the beginning of the session. I find that delegations are unlikely to participate in debate if they do not make a speech early in committee. Secondly, because the speech is written and memorized before the session, students feel more confident in their remarks. In this way, the students have a framework of facts in their speech that provides a dose of encouragement when speaking to the committee. Thirdly, the energy/ excitement/ terror that comes from speaking to a large committee often propels students to keep debating throughout the day—once the first hurdle of speaking to the committee is crossed, it is much easier to do it again.

The goal of this first speech is to present an argument for the topic that your delegation wants discussed in committee. These remarks are often called your “3x5 card speech,” because they should be no longer than the information that can be written on one side of a 3x5 card. These speeches should take 30-45 seconds to read by one member of the delegation from each country, in each committee.

I suggest that students each write a 3x5 card and read it aloud to the entire team. Then I would have the team discuss the 3x5 speeches by committee groups. After the discussion, have delegates compile and create a comprehensive speech. To compile the final speech, the students may want to take a few days to conduct additional research or meet with their delegation.

Once the 3x5 card speech is finalized for each committee of each country, have each student memorize the remarks for their assigned committee and country. Work on reading these speeches as much as possible before the conference and be sure that the students are constantly reciting the remarks aloud. Writing, memorizing, and reciting these 3x5 card is great preparation for the individual delegate and we encourage all delegations to employ this method.

Example 3x5 card speech for a Delegation from Denmark in “Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian” General Assembly:

The Kingdom of Denmark would like to first thank the chair and our fellow member states for convening here for a meeting of the “Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian” committee. While there have been many passionate and earnest speeches advocating for the discussion of crimes against women in India, we believe that the more pressing and urgent topic is the refugee crisis caused by the Syrian Civil War. The UN Refugee Agency estimated that between 1.5-2.5 million people have fled their homes due to this conflict, with hundreds more displaced each day. These refugees can often be the victims of violence or exploitation and need the acknowledgement of this committee to preserve

their health and safety; which are essential rights expressed in the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. The Kingdom of Denmark urges all nations committed to the defense of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to join us in addressing the human rights issues faced by the refugees of the Syrian Civil War.