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PSCI 337.01: Model United Nations

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Model United Nations¹

Course Description, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes

Model United Nations is a technique for developing your skills in research, writing, public speaking, negotiation, and conflict resolution. It is also a way to learn more about international issues, international diplomacy, and international politics.

In the class, each student will “represent” one of the approximately 200 countries in the world in simulations of UN committees such as the General Assembly and Security Council. You will learn about these committees, research your country’s position on the issues before the committees, and draft, debate, negotiate, and vote on resolutions to address those issues. We will discuss a range of issues, from security and economic challenges to environmental problems and human rights. By the end of the semester, you will have a deep understanding of the country you represent, as well as a broad understanding of international issues, the UN, and international negotiation.

Each student will also serve as a staff member on one of the five committees we will simulate, both in class and at UM’s Montana Model UN (MMUN) High School Conference. The conference will be held at the UC on the Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Approximately 400 high school students from 20 Montana and Idaho high schools attend the conference each year. Your participation in this class makes their experience possible.

At the end of the semester, a team of students from the class will be selected to represent UM at an international collegiate Model UN conference in the spring. Usually we send a team of 12 students to the National Model UN (NMUN) conference in NY, where 5,000 students from all over the world converge for a week to debate world issues and hold meetings at the actual UN. For many years, the MMUN team has come home from NMUN conferences with team, delegate, and position paper awards. By building your skills in this class, you make it likely that the MMUN Team will continue to win awards and that UM will continue to sponsor and fund the trip.

This course is required for participation in the Montana Model UN collegiate team and is excellent preparation for a career in public policy and international affairs.

Those who successfully complete this course will be better able to:

1. Describe the history, purpose, characteristics, and general organizational structure of the United Nations and select UN subsidiary bodies, such as the General Assembly and Security Council.
2. Identify appropriate sources for information on United Nations Member States and key international issues.
3. Explain key factors in several important international issues, as well as develop and assess potential solutions to those issues.
4. Research and convey, in writing and in speech, the diplomatic characteristics and most important domestic and international issues to a United Nations Member State.
5. Write properly formatted MUN position papers and resolutions.
6. Compare and contrast major schools of international relations theory and different arguments within those schools.
7. Apply international relations theory to a variety of international phenomena, such as UN diplomacy and negotiations, interactions between states, and even simulations of international actors and organizations.
8. Demonstrate aptitude in a skillset related to your role at the MMUN conference, including activities such as chairing a large committee of people, critically analyzing the ideas and work of others, and public speaking.
9. Negotiate with others in a large group setting in an effort to achieve solutions to problems in which a variety of ideas and interests are present.

Service Learning Designation

This is a service learning course. Service Learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students, faculty and community partners work together to enhance student learning by applying academic knowledge in a community-based setting. Student work addresses the needs of the community, as identified through collaboration with community or tribal partners, while meeting instructional objectives through faculty-structured service work and critical reflection meant to

¹ This syllabus is based on a previous syllabus for this course written by Prof. Karen Ruth Adams.

prepare students to be civically responsible members of the community. At its best, service learning enhances and deepens students' understanding of an academic discipline by facilitating the integration of theory and practice, while providing them with experience that develops life skills and engages them in critical reflection about individual, institutional, and social ethics.

Prerequisites

This course is open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors, as well as freshmen who participated in a Model UN conference in high school or are enrolled in the honors college.

PSCI 400

This course can be used to satisfy the one-credit PSCI 400 upper-division writing class requirement.

Graduate Students

Graduate students will have additional assignments. Please see me during the first week of the course.

PSCI 337 Versus PSCI 492.02

Students new to this course should enroll in PSCI 337. Students who took this course last year must enroll in the separate Model UN Leadership course (PSCI 492-02). These courses meet simultaneously, but have different assignments.

Executive Committee

MMUN leadership positions are as follows. Collectively, this group is known as the Executive Committee (Ex Comm). The Ex Comm will meet briefly at the end of each class to coordinate conference arrangements.

Internal Staff (focus on rules and procedures)

- Secretary-General/Internal (SG-I)
Wyatt Smith
- Assistant Secretary-General/Internal (ASG-I)
John Thomas
- Director of Operations (DO)
Jackson Widmyer
- Team President
Wyatt Smith
- Teaching Assistant
Dani Howlett
- Faculty Co-Advisors
Karen Ruth Adams
Nick Potratz

External Staff (focus on high school advisors and students)

- Secretary-General/External (SG-E)
Jared Halvorson
- Assistant Secretary-General/External (ASG-E)
Erin Harbaugh
- High School Liaison (HSL)
Erika Larsen

Course Communications

Throughout the course, I will communicate with you by email and by posting announcements and course materials on the UOnline (Moodle) website. To ensure that you receive my emails, please check your UM email regularly or have it forwarded to an account that you check often.

Required Texts

The following texts are required. The books can be purchased at the ASUM Bookstore.

PSCI 337

- Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 4th edition (Boulder: Westview, 2011).
- William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition (New York: Longman, 1999). It is OK to substitute for a previous edition.
- Articles available online, denoted by a plus sign (+).
- *New York Times* (Monday-Friday), <http://www.nytimes.com/>
As a student, you can subscribe for 99 cents for the first 4 weeks and \$7.50 per week thereafter. Or you can read it for free on the Mansfield Library website.
- UN News Centre (Monday-Friday), <http://www.un.org/news/>

PSCI 492 -- All of the above, plus:

- Paul M. Kennedy, *The Parliament of Man: The Past, Present, and Future of the United Nations* (New York: Vintage 2006).

Keeping Up With Current Events

You are required to keep up with current events related to international politics and the United Nations by reading the *New York Times* and UN News Centre on a daily (Monday - Friday) basis.

Whenever possible I encourage you to consult additional sources. Please note, however, that they will not substitute for daily reading of the *New York Times* and UN News Centre, upon which quizzes will be based.

Course Requirements and Grading

You are expected to complete all of the assigned reading, including the previous week's *New York Times* and UN News Centre before each class.

You must attend class regularly and participate in the discussions, simulations, and conference preparations, as well as the conference itself. Class attendance, in-class participation and assignments, and quizzes count towards 15% of your grade.

Conference attendance and participation are worth 25%. You must attend all or most of the conference proceedings on Monday, November 21 (7:45 am to 9 pm) and Tuesday, November 22 (8:30 am to 5 pm). I will provide an excuse note to give to your professors.

The remaining 60% of your grade in the class will be based on your papers and other projects. The number, length, and nature of assignments and their due dates depends on your role in the class.

To summarize, your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

15%	Class attendance, participation, in-class assignments, and quizzes
25	MMUN Conference participation
60	Papers and other projects

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved. The following distribution is the lowest I will use (*i.e.*, if you earn 93% of all possible points you are assured of an A in the course):

93-100	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	63-66	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-
87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	0-59	F

Drop Policy, Grading Options, and Incompletes

The 15th instructional day is the last day to drop this class without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop after that, you must provide documentation of an emergency or other serious situation that has made it impossible for you to complete the course. For UM's policy on incompletes, see <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/academics/academic-policy-procedure.php>.

Disabilities

If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations for this course, please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating your disability and suggested accommodations. Do this as soon as possible to ensure that you have sufficient accommodations early in the course.

Make-Up Policy

Late papers and other work will be accepted only from students directly involved in documented emergencies. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency, you must notify me as soon as possible. To do so, call me or send me an email explaining the circumstances of your emergency and giving me a way to contact you. I reserve the right to deny any and all petitions for make-up work, and to administer makeup assignments substantially different from those of the regular exams and papers. *Note: Since I will accept make-up work only in the event of documented emergencies, if you miss an exam or fail to submit a paper for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the assignment. That will put you at risk of failing the course.*

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty and should be familiar with UM's Student Conduct Code. The Code is available at http://www.umd.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the university.

Committees, Roles, and Topics

We will simulate five committees. Each committee will have at least 5 staff members, including an expert, a chair, a vice chair, a rapporteur, and an ExComm member. If enrollments permit, committees will also have one or more runners. Collectively, the committee staff is known as the Dais. The main conference duties of each position are as follows. Each committee member also has various pre-conference duties outlined below in the summary schedule.

- EXPERT:** The Expert is responsible for completing the analytic and informational duties of each committee. In conjunction with the committee Ex Comm Member (see below), the Expert is primarily responsible for approving working papers and amendments, responding to inquiries from delegates about their countries and the committee topics, and making presentations about the issues during debate. Depending on the committee's circumstances, experts may serve in dual roles, as either a Vice Chair/Expert or Runner/Expert. Because the duties of chairs and rapporteurs require their undivided attention, chairs and rapporteurs cannot serve in dual roles.
- CHAIR:** The Chair is in charge of all committee proceedings. S/he will open and close all committee sessions, interpret and ensure the observance of the Rules of Procedure and Delegate Code of Conduct, determine whether points and motions are in order, accord the right to speak, keep track of speaking time, approve working papers and amendments, announce the results of votes, etc. During caucuses, the Chair will help the delegates find allies, draft working papers, and propose amendments.
- VICE CHAIR:** The Vice Chair is responsible for assisting the Chair. S/he will take attendance, keep a written record of the committee proceedings, and keep track of delegate participation for awards. When possible, s/he will help the Expert, Ex Comm, and chair approve working papers and amendments, count votes, etc. During caucuses, the Vice Chair will help the delegates find allies, draft working papers, and propose amendments.
- RAPPORTEUR:** The Rapporteur is responsible for assisting the Chair and the Vice Chair. S/he will post the agenda, current motions, the speakers list, draft resolutions, amendments, and speaking time. The Rapporteur will also help the Expert, Ex Comm, and Chair approve working papers and amendments, count votes, etc when possible. During caucuses, the Rapporteur will help the delegates find allies, draft working papers, and propose amendments. The Rapporteur will also aid in keeping a record of committee proceedings while the vice chair evaluates working papers.
- **RUNNER:** Whenever possible, each committee will also have a runner. Runner duties include printing and distributing draft resolutions and delivering messages from the Chair to the Conference Staff, from delegates to the Committee Staff, from delegates to Home Government, and (at the discretion of the Chair) from one delegate to another. Runner also help the other members of the dais approve working papers and amendments, and give presentations, as well as help delegates find allies, draft working papers, and propose amendments during caucuses.
- EX COMM MEMBER:** Each committee will have one Ex Comm member to assist the chair and all other committee staff and to give the final approval on all working papers submitted to become draft resolutions. Ex Comm members also have administrative duties in the Office of Delegate Services (ODS) and at Home Government, as well as the responsibility of running a room at Region Night.

In committees without a runner, the Director of Operations, runners from other committees, and other committee staff will be responsible for printing and distributing draft resolutions and messages.

The SG-I, Wyatt Smith, will assist and oversee all committees.

The topics, chairs, and Ex Comm members for each committee are as follows. The open chairs and all other committee positions will be assigned by application and interview in the second week of class:

Committee	Topics	Chair	Ex-Comm Liaison
<i>General Assembly Plenary</i>	1. Addressing the Environmental Effects of War 2. Reforming Membership & Voting in the Security Council		Erin Harbaugh
<i>General Assembly First Committee</i> (Disarmament and Security)	1. Preventing an Arms Race in Outer Space 2. Strengthening Security and Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific		John Thomas
<i>General Assembly Second Committee</i> (Economic and Financial)	1. Sport for Peace and Development 2. Free Trade vs. Fair Trade with Developing Countries	Brandon Bart	Jared Halvorson
<i>General Assembly Third Committee</i> (Social and Humanitarian)	1. Controlling and Eliminating Infectious Diseases such as Malaria, Ebola, and Zika 2. The Role of Women in Military Conflict		Jackson Widmyer

<i>Security Council</i>	1. The Situation in Syria 2. Security, Peace, and Development (with emphasis on Haiti)		Erika Larsen
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Ex-Comm staff will also help with Role Groups, by assisting the members of each role in developing the skills needed to perform their duties at the conference.

Ex-Comm liaisons for Role Groups are as follows:

<u>Role Group</u>	<u>Liaison(s)</u>
Experts	Wyatt Smith (with Dani Howlett and Nick Potratz)
Chairs	Jackson Widmyer and Erika Larsen
Vice Chairs	John Thomas
Rapporteurs	Jared Halvorson
Runners	Erin Harbaugh

****PSCI 337 SUMMARY SCHEDULE****

Week	Date	Weekly Topic	Participation Assignment	Paper/Project Assignment	Paper Grade (% of Course)
I	8/30	Introduction	Background & interest survey (Posted to Moodle) Schedule Interview (In class)		
II	9/6	UN History & Structure; Committee Interviews	Quiz #1		
III	9/13	Theories about International Relations, the UN, and Diplomacy	Quiz #2		
IV	9/20	Diplomacy, Part I: Formulating and Articulating National Foreign Policies (overview of position papers and speeches)	Quiz #3	Country worksheet	10%
V	9/27	Diplomacy, Part II: Negotiating Resolutions	Fun resolution exercise and simulation participation		
VI	10/4	Diplomacy, Part III: Debating and Voting on Resolutions; Responding to Crises	Simulation participation Parli Pro Game	First draft of position paper and resolution (see assignment instructions from Weeks IV-V)	5%
VII	10/11	Security Issues & Security Council Simulation	<i>SC staff and Ex Comm:</i> Practice committee roles with Ex Comm, TA, and Fac Advisor assistance/supervision <i>All students:</i> Simulation participation <i>Extra Credit: Write a resolution for ONE of the topics from the Security Council (cannot have been used for your PP, Resolution and Neg Strategy Assignment)</i>	All Students: Revised position paper on both topics before <u>your committee</u> , revised resolution on one topic before <u>your committee</u> , and <u>negotiating strategy</u> on both topics <i>SC staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution	15% SC = 5%
VIII	10/18	Economic Issues & GA-2 Simulation	<i>GA-2 Staff and Ex-Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution <i>Other students:</i> Simulation participation <i>Extra Credit: Write a resolution for ONE of the topics from the GA-2 (not already used for your PP, Resolution and Neg Strategy Assignment)</i>	<i>GA-2 staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution <u>Part A: Security Council Staff only</u> (chair, vice, rapp, experts and ExComm): First draft of collaboratively written crisis/developments plan	GA2 = 5% SC = 2.5%

IX	10/25	Social & Humanitarian Issues/GA-3 & GA-1 Simulations	<i>GA-3 and GA-1 staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution <i>Other students:</i> Simulation participation	<i>GA-3 and GA-1 staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution	GA3/GA1 = 5%
X	11/1	Environmental Issues, UN Reform, & GA-Plenary Simulation Instructions for Grading High School Position Papers	<i>GA-P staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution <i>Other students:</i> Simulation participation <i>Extra Credit:</i> Write a resolution for ONE of the topics from the GAP (cannot have been already used for your PP, Resolution and Neg Strategy Assignment)	<i>GAP staff and Ex Comm:</i> 3-5 minute speech on your country's preferred agenda order and proposed resolution Part B: Security Council Staff only (chair, vice, rapp, experts and ExComm): Collaboratively revised crisis/developments plan	GAP = 5% SC = 2.5%
XI	11/8	<i>No Class – Election Holiday</i> Instead: One- hour role group meetings (all chairs, all vice chairs, all rapps/experts) led by ExComm members to review and clarify duties.	Role group attendance and participation	5. Conference predictions paper	5%
XII	11/15	Combined GA Plenary, Practice SC Crisis, and Review Conference Schedule	Committee attendance and participation	6. All committee staff (chair, vice, rapp, experts and ExComm): grade high school position papers submitted to your committee for awards	GA committees = 10%; SC = 5%
	11/18 Fri		<i>Extra credit:</i> Prepare confc materials (1pt)		
	11/20 Sun		<i>Extra credit:</i> Set up ODS (1 pt)		
XIII	11/21 Mon	MMUN High School Conference	Conference attendance & participation (REQUIRED ATTENDANCE: Day One = 12.5% of Participation)		
	11/22 Tue	MMUN High School Conference	Conference attendance & participation (REQUIRED ATTENDANCE: Day One = 12.5% of Participation)		
XIV	11/29	Conference Debriefing & the Future of the UN	Debriefing discussion participation	6. Debriefing paper	10%
XV	12/6	MMUN Club and Traveling Team Meeting			
		TOTAL – Experts, Chairs, vice chairs, rapporteurs, and runners			60%

Weekly Schedule and Assignments

The weekly lesson plan with topics to be covered, a list of assigned readings, and links to e-readings will be posted on Moodle. Readings marked (+) are available to print or download from the internet and/or Moodle. All other readings are in the books (Mingst & Karns, or Strunk & White). Detailed assignments for all papers will be posted on the Moodle website and discussed in class.

I. INTRODUCTION (8/30)

In class today: Introduction to the course and Model UN
Learning objectives (from syllabus)
NMUN video clip,
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhYznRuDIZY&feature=player_profilepage
Personnel Structure: Overview of leadership, committees, staff positions, and team
Fun simulation led by TA and SGs (use starting committee script)
Administrative issues

Due Today: All Students: Schedule interview during class

**** Plan to attend the MMUN conference: Monday 11/21 from 7:45 am to 9 pm and Tuesday 11/22 from 8:30 am to 5 pm; ATTENDANCE REQUIRED****

Review the syllabus and committee interview information sheet.
Start reading the NYT and UN News Centre, and do the readings for next week
(there will be a quiz at the beginning of class)

II. UN HISTORY & STRUCTURE; COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS (9/6)

Due Today: + Finish Background and Interest Survey before class (Posted on Moodle)

In class today: Quiz on readings and current events
Committee interviews; each student must interview with at least two committees

PSCI 337 Readings due today (in addition to NYT and UN News Centre)

Mingst & Karns, chs. 1 and 2, "The UN in World Politics" & "The Evolution of the UN System," pp. 1-62 (62 pp.)
+ "Global Issues on the UN Agenda," <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/> Skim the list of issues, then read the page of one that interests you

+ Montana Model UN Website, <http://www.cas.umt.edu/mun/>
Skim the entire website (club, class, MMUN conference, team, and alumni)
Pay special attention to the "Tools for Delegates"
Strunk & White, intro and part 1, "Elementary Rules of Usage" (14 pp)