

Fall 9-1-2008

PSC 337.01: Model United Nations

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Recommended Citation

Adams, Karen R., "PSC 337.01: Model United Nations" (2008). *Syllabi*. 6732.
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PSC 337/HIST 395-03
Fall 2008
Tuesdays 3:40-6:00 p.m.
337 Liberal Arts

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Office Hours: M/W 3:45-5:00, T 6:00-7:00, & by appointment

Model United Nations

Course Description and Objectives

This course uses readings, lectures, research papers, and in-class simulations of United Nations meetings to examine the history and structure of the UN, the role of the UN in contemporary world politics, and contemporary global problems. Course participants also plan, organize, and run the annual Montana Model UN high school conference at the end of November. This conference, one of the largest high school Model UN conferences in the US, provides us with a laboratory to reflect on the inner workings of the UN and with an opportunity to encourage high school students to become aware of and involved in international affairs.

Because the course is both academic and experiential, it offers a chance to extend your knowledge of international politics while developing proficiency in writing, editing, public speaking, policy formulation, parliamentary procedure, diplomacy, negotiation, and conflict resolution. The course is required for participation in the Montana Model UN collegiate team and is excellent preparation for a career in public policy or international affairs.

Prerequisites

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

Course Communications

Throughout the course, I will communicate with you by email and by posting announcements and course materials on the Blackboard website. To ensure that you receive my emails, you should check your UM email account regularly. For instructions on accessing and using Blackboard, please consult the Blackboard handout.

Required Texts

The following texts are required. The first two can be purchased at the ASUM Bookstore and will be on 2-hour reserve at Mansfield Library:

- Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 3rd edition (Boulder: Westview, 2007).
- William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style* (New York: Longman, 1999). Earlier editions of this book are fine (1972, 1979).
- Articles available online, denoted by a plus sign (+).
- *New York Times* (Monday-Friday), <http://www.nytimes.com/>
- UN News Centre (Monday-Friday), <http://www0.un.org/News/>

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.

There are many ways to supplement your reading of these newspapers:

- Reading other national newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, as well as international papers such as the *London Times*, *Guardian* and *Le Monde*.

- Reading Wordpress.org, <http://www.worldpress.org>
- Reading weekly news magazines such as *The Economist*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *US News and World Report*.
- Listening to National Public Radio programs such as “Morning Edition,” BBC World Service,” and “All Things Considered” on KUFM 89.1 (for schedule, go to <http://www.mtpr.net>).
- Watching national nightly and weekly television news programs. On PBS, these include “The News Hour,” “BBC World,” “Charlie Rose,” “NOW,” “Foreign Exchange with Fareed Zakaria,” and “Frontline,” which are available on both KUFM Channel 11 (<http://www.montanapbs.org>) and KSPS Channel 32 (<http://ksps.org/>). The ABC, CBS, and NBC evening news, as well as ABC’s “Nightline,” can also be helpful.

Whenever possible I encourage you to consult these and other additional sources. But please note that they will not substitute for daily reading of the *New York Times* and UN News Centre, upon which current events 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 actively participate in the discussions, simulations, and conference preparations, as well as the conference itself. Class attendance, participation, in-class assignments, and quizzes will count towards 25% of your grade.

Conference attendance and participation will be worth 20%. You must attend all or most of the conference proceedings on November 24 (9 am to 9 pm) and November 25 (9 am to 5 pm). I will provide you with an excuse note to give to your professors.

The remaining 55% of your grade in the class will be based on 5-7 papers. The number of papers required, the topics you will address, and the dates your papers will be due will depend on your role in the class.

To summarize, the grading for the course will be as follows:

- 25% Class attendance, participation, in-class assignments, and quizzes
- 20 MMUN Conference participation
- 55 Papers

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved, but 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

October 6 is the last day to drop this class or change the grading option without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop or change the grading option after October 6, 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 p. 23 of the Course Catalog.

Course Roles

Those with Model UN and other leadership experience will serve as committee leaders in the classroom simulations and at the high school conference. Those without such experience will serve as country delegates in the classroom simulations and as committee staff at the conference. Roles will be assigned based on experience and interest.

We will simulate six committees, each of which will have 5-6 staff members, including a chair, a vice chair, a rapporteur, an ambassador/runner, and 1-2 regional experts/runners. The simulation and conference duties of each role will be discussed in class.

The papers required of each role are as follows:

<u>Role</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Description of Paper</u>
CHAIRS			
	5%	9/9	1. Update welcome letter & committee history
	5	9/16	2. Revise welcome letter & committee history
	10	9/16	3. Write topic background guide
	10	9/23	4. Revise topic background guide
	5	9/30	5. Description of three possible crises/developments related to your topic, with memos and roles
	10	10/7	6. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for GA-1
	10	12/2	7. Debriefing paper
VICE CHAIRS & RAPPORTEURS			
	10%	9/16	1. Write topic background guide
	10	9/23	2. Revise topic background guide
	5	9/23	3. Description of three possible crises/developments related to your topic, with memos and roles
	10	9/30	4. Country background paper
	10	10/7	5. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for GA-1
	10	12/2	6. Debriefing paper
AMBASSADORS/RUNNERS			
	15%	9/30	1. Country background paper
	10	10/7	2. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for GA-1
	10	10/14	3. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for GA Plenary
	10	10/21	4. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for Security Council or GA-2 (please commit in advance)
	10	12/2	5. Debriefing paper
REGIONAL EXPERTS/RUNNERS			
	15%	9/23	1. Regional background paper
	5	9/30	2. Memos & role scripts for crisis/developments in your committee
	10	10/7	3. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for GA-1
	5	10/14	4. Script for regional presentation/meeting on Monday night of the conference
	10	10/28	5. Position paper, resolution, and negotiating strategy for World Food Program or ECOSOC (please commit in advance)
	10	12/2	6. Debriefing paper

SECRETARY GENERAL

5%	9/2	1. Paper summarizing goals for the semester & conference
5	9/16	2. Editing/grading of committee welcomes/histories
5	9/23, 9/30	3. Editing/grading of crisis/development ideas for each committee
10	9/30	4. Organization and leadership of in-class workshop on position papers, resolutions, and rules
10	10/28	5. Opening and closing ceremony scripts and speeches
10	misc	6. Misc duties outlined in the MMUN Constitution
10	12/2	7. Debriefing paper

ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL - INTERNAL

5%	9/2	1. Paper summarizing goals for the semester & conference
10	9/23	2. Editing/grading of topic background guides
10	9/30	3. Presentation to in-class workshop on position papers, resolutions, and rules
10	10/28	4. Assist SG with oversight of Home Government and editing of crisis/developments in each committee
10	misc	5. Misc pre-conference duties outlined in the MMUN Constitution and assigned by the SG and Faculty Advisor
10	12/2	6. Debriefing paper

ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL – EXTERNAL AND FACULTY LIAISON

5%	9/2	1. Paper summarizing goals for the semester & conference
10	9/30	3. Presentation to in-class workshop on position papers, resolutions, and rules
10	10/7	3. Editing/grading of position papers, resolutions, and nego strats
10	10/28	4. Script for Monday night events
10	misc	5. Misc preconference duties outlined in the MMUN Constitution and assigned by the SG and Faculty Advisor
10	12/2	6. Debriefing paper

ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL – CRISIS

All chair assignments except position paper due 9/30, in place of which:

5%	misc	1. Assist SG and ASG-I with oversight of Home Government and crisis developments in each committee
5	misc	5. Misc preconference duties outlined in the MMUN Constitution and assigned by the SG and Faculty Advisor

MODEL UN TEAM PRESIDENT

All chair assignments except position paper due 9/30, in place of which

5%	tbd & 9/23	1. ASUM registration, Club/Team Plan (paper summarizing goals for the year), and leadership of Club Meeting
5	misc	2. Special project: alumni relations and/or UN Day speaker

Graduate students should consult with me about additional requirements.

PSC 300/400

Chairs, vice chairs, and rapporteurs can receive credit for PSC 300 or PSC 400 (writing courses) by submitting the relevant paperwork to me. Grades will be the average of the grades on the first and final drafts of the topic background paper.

Ambassadors and regional experts can also receive PSC 300/400 credit, but this involves at least one re-write of their country or regional background paper, based on feedback from the graders. Grades will be the average of the first and final drafts of these papers.

Make-Up Policy

Make-up exams will be scheduled only for students directly involved in extreme, documented emergencies. Late papers will only be accepted in such situations as well. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency, you must notify me as soon as possible (in advance of the exam or due-date if at all possible) that you will be unable to attend the scheduled exam or submit the paper on time. 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 extreme, documented emergencies in which you are directly involved, if you miss an exam or fail to submit a paper for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the assignment. This will put you at risk of failing the course.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the university.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/sa/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities should apprise me of their needs at least two weeks before an assignment on which they wish to be accommodated.

Course Outline and Schedule

Readings marked (+) are available to print or download from the Blackboard website. All other readings are in the books (Strunk & White, or Mingst & Karns).

I strongly suggest you copy, print, or download all of the online articles during the first several weeks of class. To minimize the number of pages you have to print, select “2 pages per page” and “manual duplex” in your printer menu.

If a journal link is not functioning, go to the library website, <http://www.lib.umt.edu/>, click on “Journals,” type in the name of the journal, select the electronic index that contains the issue in which the article appeared, and search for the article using the title and/or author’s name. If links to book chapters are broken, let me know.

I. Introduction (8/26; 61+ pp.)

Due Today: ***Background & Interest Survey (due at the end of class).***

In class today: discuss MUN concept, staffing, and schedule

After class: Executive Committee will assign & announce staff positions and countries (all staff should have a country)

Readings to do by the end of this week:

+Montana Model UN Website, <http://www.cas.umt.edu/mun/> Skim the site, then click on “Topics” and skim the background guide for at least one committee (approx 10 pp).

Strunk & White, Parts I-IV (51 pp).

II. Overview of the United Nations and Contemporary International Problems (9/2; 91+ pp)

Due Today (SG, ASG-I, and ASG-E): Read the updated MMUN Constitution and write a 3-5 page paper summarizing your goals for the semester & conference

In class today: Current events/readings quiz

Lecture/discussion about the UN and current events

Discussion of role assignments & paper assignments

Discussion of research process for committee histories

SG-led plenary session to determine dress and conduct code for conference

Meet in committees to recommend topics

After class: Executive Committee will determine final list of conference topics

Readings to do before class today:

Mingst & Karns, "The UN in World Politics" and "The Evolution of the UN System," pp. 1-52 (52 pp)

+ "Global Issues on the UN Agenda," <http://www.un.org/issues/> Read the list of issues, then skim the web pages of three that interest you.

+ "Charter of the United Nations," available at <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter> (approx 10 pp).
Strunk & White, Part V (29 pp)

III. UN Structure and Role in International Politics (9/9; 97 pp.)

Due today (chairs): Updated Welcome Letter and Committee History – bring 5 copies

In class today: Discussion of UN structure and challenges, with reference to committee structure and history (from papers)

Discussion of research process for topic backgrounders

Discussion of editing process: "Top 20 Editing Rules" and "How to Edit Someone Else's Paper"

Editing of committee welcome letters and histories; each document will be edited by all committee members, as well as one staff person:

SG/David S. – Security Council

ASG E/Kelsi – GA Plen

ASG I/David K. – GA 1

Fac Liaison/Bob – GA 2

Editor/Diane – ECOSOC

TA/Aimona – World Food Program

Editing will be done on the document itself and using an editing form; each editor will fill out two forms – one for the chair for revisions and one to turn in for a grade; the chair's grade for this assignment will be the average of the editing grades; the editors' grades will be assigned by the staff person assigned to each committee based on the accuracy and helpfulness of the editing feedback

Readings to do before class today:

Mingst & Karns, "Actors in the UN System," pp. 53-82 (29 pp).

+ Ban Ki-Moon, "Speech on taking oath of office," December 14, 2006, available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sg2119.doc.htm> (2 pp).

+ John J. Mearsheimer, "The false promise of international institutions," *International Security* 19:3 (Winter 1994), pp. 5-49 (44 pp).

+ Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, "The promise of institutional theory," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp. 39-51 (12 pp).

+ Alexander Wendt, "Constructing international politics," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995), pp. 71-81 (10 pp).

IV. International Issues and Crises (9/16; 68 pp)

Due today (chairs): Revised Welcome Letter and Committee History

SG/David S., TA/Aimona, & Editor/Diane will each grade and edit 2 of them, then send to Prof A. for posting on website; chairs' grades will be the average of the editors' and Prof. Adams' grades

Due today (chairs, vice chairs, rapporteurs): Topic Background Guides

In class today: Current events quiz and discussion of issues before the UN, with reference to topic papers

Discussion of crises and crisis resolution

Discussion of home government and paper assignment for regional experts

Editing of Topic Background Guides; each topic guide will be edited by at least one committee member, as well as one staff person;

<u>Author</u>	<u>Editors</u>
Chair	Vice Chair + Ambassador/Runner
Vice Chair	Rapporteur + Staff Person
Rapporteur	Chair + Regional Expert/Runner

Staff Assigned to Committees are as follows:

SG/David S. – Security Council

ASG E/Kelsi – GA Plen

ASG I/David K. – GA 1

Fac Liaison/Bob – GA 2

Editor/Diane – ECOSOC

TA/Aimona – World Food Program

Editing will be done on the document itself and using an editing form; each editor will fill out two forms – one for the author for revisions and one to turn in for a grade; the author's grade for this assignment will be the average of the editing grades; the editors' grades will be assigned by the staff person assigned to each committee based on the accuracy and helpfulness of the editing feedback

Develop ideas for crises/developments in each committee

Readings to do before class today:

Will be announced

...The rest of the syllabus will be handed out as soon as possible....