

**POLI 379 Special Topics in International Relations: Model United Nations
College of Charleston
Fall 2016**

Instructor: Dr. Max Kovalov E-mail: kovalovm@cofc.edu Class time: MW 4:00pm-5:15pm Classroom: Maybank 207	Office: 206A Ed. Center (ECTR) Office hours: WF, 11:00-11:45am and by appointment. Please email me to schedule a meeting.
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Course Description and Objectives

Model UN is a simulation of the meeting of main governing bodies of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly, Security Council, and various committees. This course is designed for students interested in learning about the work of international organizations, and specifically, the United Nations. It will focus on the issues and goals of the UN and will help students understand the foundations of international diplomatic procedures and protocols. In preparation for meetings students will also learn about global issues and about specific countries they represent – their history, culture, foreign policy, regional, and international relations.

The course consists of two components.

- 1) Students enrolled in this class will organize and execute a two-day UN conference on campus for College of Charleston undergraduate students who will act as *delegates* representing UN countries. Students enrolled in this class will hold training sessions on parliamentary procedures, rules of debate, crafting and amending resolutions, and proper conduct in committees in order to prepare the delegates for Model UN.
- 2) Students enrolled in this class will also prepare for a Southern Regional Model UN (SRMUN) conference in Atlanta. Students will represent **France** at SRMUN and will spend significant amount of time learning the background information about the country, as well as about its interests and policies. Students will also conduct research on committee-specific issues and learn how to follow parliamentary procedures during the meetings of the General Assembly and other committees.

Expectations

Your participation in team exercises is imperative for the class success and for successful preparation for the regional conference. In addition to learning about the UN, we will discuss current events and students should keep up with current international events by reading daily and weekly newspapers. You should make sure to read stories in-depth rather than simply browsing through the headlines. Below are the newspapers and websites I recommend:

- The UN website offers a good selection of international news <http://www.un.org/News/>.
- The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
- Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
- The Economist (www.economist.com)
- Al Jazeera America (<http://america.aljazeera.com/>)
- NPR World News (<http://www.npr.org/sections/world/>)

Assignments

1. *Oral presentations on the country and issues*

Students will become experts on 2-3 topics central to their committees and will be expected to share their expertise with other students during 5-7-minute in-class presentations. In order to successfully represent the interests of their country students need to learn the country's position on issues and how the country argues about the issues.

2. *Draft resolutions for CofC MUN*

This is a group project. Student groups consisting of 2-3 students will prepare imperfect (faulty) resolutions or background guides for CofC MUN delegates. During the first few weeks of the semester we will discuss a variety of global issues, identify 3-4 topics, and work on draft resolutions and background guides. This group assignment will be split into the following stages

- a. Define the problem: background info on the issue (**Deadline September 7**)
- b. Identify solutions (**Deadline September 12**)
- c. Put everything in the clause language (**Deadline September 19**)
- d. Revised drafts (**Deadline September 26**)

Here are several examples of resolutions prepared in previous years <http://modelun.cofc.edu/resolutions/>.

Important note: students will keep revising draft resolutions until they are clear, concise, and fully completed. The grade for resolutions is “F” until they are completed and approved by instructor.

3. *Position Papers*

Position papers provide “building blocks” for developing recommendations that will be used by the UN committees to develop resolutions addressing specific issues. Each student will prepare 2 position papers addressing their committee topics for SRMUN and will use these position papers as an opportunity for in-depth research on the country and their topic. The general requirements set by SRMUN for position papers are available through OAKS. Each position paper should include the following information:

- a. Brief statement on the issue and country's position on this issue
- b. Background information: country's history and current situation on the issue
- c. Recommendations for change: proposed policy and areas for negotiation

Position papers must be submitted to SRMUN by the deadline. Students will be required to submit their position papers to the instructor a few days before the SRMUN deadline. The instructor will then upload all the position papers to SRMUN website. All position papers will be graded by the SRMUN staff and the grades will be revealed in Atlanta.

Deadline for position papers – October 10

Revised drafts of position papers – October 19

4. *Practice (mock) debates*

Students will learn how to use the UN rules, known as *parliamentary procedures*. We will use the same rules, as used during the actual UN meetings. Students will participate in weekly practice debates to present their positions using the parliamentary procedure. Each student will be required to learn the parliamentary procedure and to run a committee.

5. *Performance at SRMUN*

Participation in SRMUN in Atlanta is required and you must also be present there for the committee work and for all the team meetings. Students will be evaluated on their professionalism, work in committees, motions/points raised, and amendments proposed. I reserve the right to exclude from participation in SRMUN and remove from the course those students who fail to attend classes, team meetings, or other official functions.

6. *CofC MUN performance Training College of Charleston country delegates*

Approximately 150 CofC students (country delegates) will participate in the CofC Model UN held on October 28-29.

- a) Students enrolled in this class will be responsible for organizing several training sessions on parliamentary procedures for country delegates. During training sessions students will provide delegates with basic information on the MUN, on where to find the information pertaining to their country, how to prepare position papers, and other helpful info.
- b) Students will prepare a resolution on a fun (ex. introduction of college uniforms) issue for delegates to work on, debate, find compromise, and to find a solution. This should be a very basic resolution on a fun topic to give delegates an idea of how MUN is run.
- c) Students will also be evaluated on their work running their committees. Each committee will be run by 2-3 students who will take turns as committee chairs or secretaries.

Grades

- 1) Oral presentations of issues – 20%
- 2) Draft resolutions for CofC MUN – 15%
 - a) Define the problem: background info on the issue – 5%
 - b) Identify solutions – 5%
 - c) Put everything in the clause language – 5%
- 3) Position papers for SRMUN – 20%
- 4) Mock debates – 10%
- 5) SRMUN performance – 10%
- 6) CofC MUN performance – 10%
 - a) Training sessions for CofC delegates – 5%
 - b) Work in committees – 5%

Grade scale

A =94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ =87-89; B =83-86; B- =80-82; C+ =77-79; C =73-76; C- =70-72; D+ =67-69; D =63-66; D- =60-62; F <60.

Course materials

There are no required books for the course but there is a number of articles available via OAKS.

Students will be responsible for conducting their own research on global issues using online sources.

Information on global issues addressed in the UN is available via the UN website

<http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/>.

The parliamentary procedures (Robert's Rule of Order) are available on OAKS.

The website for the Southern Regional Model UN is <http://srmun.org/atlanta/>.

The course website is <http://modelun.cofc.edu>. It lists the information necessary for national delegations in their preparation for the College of Charleston Model UN to be held on November 7-8. We will revise it to keep it updated for CofC country delegates. We will also create a facebook page to keep CofC students updated on training sessions and the main event.

Course/University Policies

Students with Disabilities: The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104 prior to receiving accommodations in this course. Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent them from

fully demonstrating their abilities should contact the instructor personally as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate their educational opportunities.

Academic Integrity: Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines whether the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

Avoiding Plagiarism

“Plagiarism falls into two categories: using someone else's *words* or using someone else's *ideas* as if they were your own. You must be scrupulous in avoiding both categories of plagiarism in your writing. Properly cite all quotations, paraphrases, and summaries of information from other sources. The only exception to this rule is common knowledge, or information commonly known and accessible to your audience... If you are unsure whether certain information constitutes common knowledge, document it. Collusion, a form of plagiarism, occurs when two or more people agree to devise a piece of writing that will be attributed to only one of them... For any individual writing assignment, the idea and the organization of ideas in your paper must be your own... You can incorporate into your writing ideas that have arisen from class discussion [and] lectures... You may revise and edit your writing with other people... but you should not have others do your writing or revising for you.”¹

Changes to Syllabus

I reserve the right to make minor changes to the syllabus during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class and via email.

¹ Frank O'Hare and Edward A. Kline, *The Modern Writer's Handbook, Fourth Edition*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996, pp. 447-450.

Class Schedule and Assignments

Part 1 Preparing draft resolutions for CofC MUN

Week 1

August 23

Course overview, class introductions

Week 2

August 28

Brief intro to the UN mission, functions, and organizational structure
Introduction to global issues for CofC MUN and SRMUN

- Peace and security
- Social and humanitarian issues
- Development, trade, and energy
- Human rights

Assignments:

Familiarize yourself with the UN's main bodies via <http://www.un.org/en/mainbodies/>.

Identify a list of 3 topics for CofC MUN. For each of the three topics prepare 1-2 paragraphs describing the problem. Be ready to give a brief overview of your 3 topics for CofC MUN.

August 30

Assignments:

We will finish discussing topics for CofC MUN, narrow down the choice, and start working on draft resolutions. Be ready to give a brief overview of your 3 topics for CofC MUN. For each of the three topics prepare 1-2 paragraphs describing the problem.

Week 3

September 4

How to prepare a resolution: Step-by-step process

September 6

Resolution writing, step – 1. Students should define the problem and provide a 500-word background sheet on the problem.

Drafts of problem definition are due in Dropbox (OAKS) by 4pm

Week 4

September 11

Resolution writing, step – 2. Prepare a list of solutions to the problem and be ready to share them with class.

Drafts of solutions are due in Dropbox (OAKS) by 4pm

September 13

Introduction to parliamentary procedure and rules of debate (Roberts Rule of Order)

Proper MUN terminology and committee work

Mock debate using parliamentary procedure. Topics TBD

Watch SRMUN training videos <http://srmun.org/videos.php>

Week 5

September 18

Resolution writing – step-3. Put everything in the clause language.

Drafts resolutions in the clause language are due in Dropbox (OAKS) by 4pm

September 20

Mock debate using parliamentary procedure. Topics TBD

Watch SRMUN training videos <http://srmun.org/videos.php>

Group presentations of resolutions and discussion

Part 2 Preparing position papers for SRMUN

Week 6

September 25

How to write a position paper – step-by-step process

Revised draft resolutions in the clause language are due in Dropbox (OAKS) by 4pm

September 27

Students should review the list of committees/issues for SRMUN. We will divide committees among students.

Week 7

October 2

Student presentations on France.

- Country basic information
- Current/previous important issues: Why is this country interesting?
- Regional and global relations
- Major past UN resolutions involving the country
- Discussion of friends and foes

October 4

Students should start working on position papers for their committees

In-class editing and review

Preparing draft position papers

Week 8

October 9

Student presentations and discussions of position papers

Draft position papers are due in Dropbox at 4pm

October 11

TBD

October 16

Fall Break. No class.

October 18

Revised draft position papers are due in Dropbox at 4pm

Part 3 Model UN

October 24
Training CofC delegates

October 26
Training CofC delegates

October 31

October 30 - Position papers for SRMUN are due (deadline is subject to change)

November 2
Final preparations for CofC Model UN
Training CofC delegates

November 3-4 (Friday-Saturday) College of Charleston Model UN

November 7
TBD

November 9
Mock debate

November 14
Preparing for SRMUN
Mock debate

November 16
Preparing for SRMUN

November 16-19 (Thursday, Friday, Saturday) Southern Regional Model UN. We will leave Charleston Thursday AM and return around 3pm on Sunday.

November 20
No class.

November 22
THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS

November 27
Review of SRMUN. What worked? What didn't?
Preparing suggestions for next MUN classes.

November 29
TBD

December 4
TBD