

Metro Detroit Model United Nations Rules of Procedure

Section 1: Introduction

A. Scope of the Rules

These rules, laid out before us, are the governing principles for the Metro Detroit Model United Nations Conference, hereafter referred to as MeDMUN. These rules apply to all MeDMUN committees, unless stated otherwise in advance of the committee. The Secretary General is the final interpreter of the rules.



B. Official Language

English is the official language for all committees. If delegates need to conduct committee business in a language other than English, they must supply a translation. If a translation of preparatory materials is needed, please ask the Secretariat two months in advance of the conference.

C. Credentials

Delegates must wear their provided identification badges above the waist at all times. Failure to do so may result in losing speaking and voting privileges. The credentials of all delegates are assumed unless challenged by another delegate through a Point of Order.

D. Delegate Conduct

Delegates should be dressed in Western Business Attire. Delegates should be respectful of other delegates and conference staff members, and if they are found to be acting disrespectfully, they can be expelled from the conference at the discretion of the Secretariat. Appropriate delegate conduct includes:

- Respect for other delegates and staff members.
- Adherence to staff decisions at all times.
- Awaiting recognition from the Chair before addressing the committee.
- Refraining from inappropriate language or behavior.

E. Committee Membership

The country arrangement and the delegates representing each country will be selected by the Secretariat before the conference.

F. Role of the Chairs

The Chair is responsible for:

- Declaring the opening and closing of each session.
- Directing committee discussions.
- Ensuring observance of these rules.
- Granting the right to speak and ruling on points of order.

- Putting questions to a vote and announcing decisions.
- Maintaining control of the committee proceedings.
- Explaining any unclear rules during debate
- Maintaining personal neutrality and allowing delegates to lead the debate

The Chair has the authority to entertain, deny, or question the competence of any motion. While the Chair cannot propose motions themselves, they may encourage delegates to present specific motions. The Chair does not have voting power in the proceedings. There may be exceptions to this expectation in the event it is a specialized or crisis committee where the Chair is a specific character, such as a US Senate debate where the Chair could take the form of the Vice President that does cast tie-breaking votes

Section II: Committee Proceedings

A. Roll Call and Attendance

At the beginning of each session, the Chair shall call the roll of all present states. Delegates must respond with:

- "Present" (to retain the right to abstain)
- "Present and Voting" (which forfeits the right to abstain on all matters for that session)
 - Delegates should be aware of the consequences of forfeiting their right to abstain

Delegates arriving late must notify the Chair in writing to be marked as present or present and voting. Failure to do so may result in the delegate being marked absent for that session. The Chair will maintain attendance records throughout the session.

B. Quorum

A quorum is necessary to conduct committee business. A quorum is established as follows: One-third of the total member delegations must be present to open the session.

A majority (one-half plus one) must be present for substantive votes.

If a delegate believes a quorum is not present, they may raise a Point of Order to call for a quorum check, which the Chair will conduct by a show of placards. Quorum is assumed unless specifically challenged.

C. Voting Privileges

A committee's delegates will have only one vote on all matters. Observer members will only be allowed to vote on procedural motions and are not allowed to vote on substantive motions.

D. Opening Speeches

At the beginning of each topic, delegates will have the option to make an introductory speech lasting no more than 45 seconds. Introductory speeches should introduce the country or character and describe their general views on the topic or what they hope to accomplish during the session. Chairs will use their discretion to facilitate opening speeches.

E. Motions

The Chairs may rule any point or motion as dilatory if it is out of order according to these rules. They may also rule points out of order if they have recently failed or are intended to disrupt the committee's proceedings.

Section III: Debate

A. Setting the Agenda

The order of the topics shall be set before the conference by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chairs. Delegates will not be able to alter the order.

B. Speaker's List

After the conclusion of roll call and opening speeches, the Chairs will accept a motion to open the speaker's list. Once the speaker's list is opened, the Chairs will ask for delegates wishing to be added. They will then randomize these names. If a delegate wishes to be added or re-added after he or she has spoken, the delegate can use a point of personal privilege, or hand a note to the Chairs, at which point they will be added to the bottom of the speaker's list. A point of privilege or a note is also necessary if a delegate wishes to be stricken from the speaker's list. Once the speaker's list is exhausted, the chair will call for more speakers. If there are no willing speakers then the session will immediately enter an unmoderated caucus of 5 minutes.

C. Closing the Speaker's List

The speaker's list can be closed at any time, meaning that no more delegates can be added to the speaker's list. A delegate can motion to close the speaker's list at any moment. A simple majority is needed to close the speaker's list.

D. Time Limit on Speeches

Speeches made from the speaker's list are automatically limited to 10 minutes at the beginning of the committee. This time limit can be changed, but can never exceed 10 minutes. To set a new time limit, delegates must motion to limit the time on speeches. This motion requires a simple majority.

E. Yields

At the end of a speech from the speaker's list, delegates may yield their remaining time in one of the following ways:

- **To the Chair:** Time is forfeited.
 - **Procedure:** Automatically accepted; no second required.
- **To another delegate:** The chosen delegate may speak for the remaining time, but can only yield their time to the chair at the end.
 - **Procedure:** Requires acceptance by the delegate receiving the time; no second required.
- **To questions:** The delegate agrees to entertain Points of Inquiry.
 - **Procedure:** Time continues consumed in answering questions does not count against their speaking time.

If a delegate does not explicitly yield their time, it will be assumed they yield to the Chair, and any remaining time will be forfeited

Section IV: Points and Motions

A. Point of Order

A point of order is used to call attention to a potential procedural error made by a member or by the Chairs. Points of order can interrupt speeches and Chairs, but should be made immediately after the potential procedural infraction. When raising a point of order, a delegate cannot speak about the topic, but must speak about the suspected infraction.

B. Point of Personal Privilege

A motion that allows the delegate to be added to the speaker's list, request a change relating to personal comfort, such as the volume of the speaker or the temperature of the room, or the conduct of a staff member. May not interrupt a speech.

C. Point of Inquiry

- A) A point of inquiry to the chair- a point of inquiry to the Chairs is made when the delegate has a question regarding parliamentary procedure and their application. Cannot interrupt a speaker.
- B) A Point of inquiry to a speaker- a point of inquiry to a speaker is only in order after a delegate has yielded to questions after being recognized to speak from the speaker's list. A point of inquiry to a speaker must be formed as a concise question.

D. Right of Reply

The Right of Reply allows a delegate to respond to comments perceived as personally or nationally insulting. The request must be submitted in writing, the Chair has discretion to grant it, the reply is time-limited to one minute, must focus solely on the objectionable statement, and cannot involve further yields or inquiries.

E. Motion to Recess

A motion to recess temporarily suspends the session. It requires a second and simple majority. It requires a second; passes with a simple majority; non-debatable.

F. Motion for Moderated Caucus

When the floor is open for debate, such as when Chairs ask for any points or motions, a delegate can motion for a moderated caucus. Delegates must motion for a caucus on a specific topic. The topic for a moderated caucus must be a precise subsidiary topic of the current bigger issue. During a moderated caucus the Chairs shall recognize all members wishing to speak. It is not possible to yield after making a speech in a moderated caucus. To pass, a simple majority is needed.

G. Motion for Unmoderated Caucus

When the floor is open for debate, such as when Chairs ask for any points or motions, a delegate can motion for an unmoderated caucus. Delegates should specify the duration and topic of the unmoderated caucus. No unmoderated caucus shall exceed 15 minutes and it is at the discretion of the Chairs whether to accept a motion for an unmoderated caucus. In an unmoderated caucus, delegates can leave their seats and discuss with other delegates. As an informal form of debate, delegates will usually write resolutions and amendments during this period and find supporters for their existing resolutions and amendments. To pass, a simple majority is needed.

H. Motion to Extend Caucuses

Made to extend a moderated or unmoderated caucus. Must be made before the end of a current caucus, or immediately after one expires, but before moving on to the next order of business. An extension cannot be longer than the original caucus. This cannot happen consecutively (no extending an extension). The Chair must find this to be in order (Chairs have the discretion to find this appropriate if they feel this will be productive for debate, but can find them dilatory if the Chair believes an extension will not benefit the debate). Passes with a simple majority.

I. Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

A motion to enter Voting Procedure should be made near the end of that session's topics. If the chair rules it is in order, it requires a simple majority to pass.

J. Dilatory Motions

Chairs can, at their discretion, rule out of order any motion that violates the rules laid out in this document. They can also rule motions dilatory, or out of order, if they have recently been tried and failed, or disrupt the proceedings of the committee, rather than help progress the committee towards its goals.

K. Appeal Decision of the Chair

The Chairs' decision on procedural matters, when not an enforcement of the rules, but rather an exercise of the Chairs' discretion may be appealed by a delegate. The appealing member is recognized to speak in favor of overturning the decision, and then the Chairs will briefly explain their decision. The Chairs shall then ask: "Shall the decision of the Chair be overruled?" A "yes" vote of two-thirds overturns the Chair's decision. The final authority in disputed cases shall be the Secretary-General, who has the power to overturn any appeal or decision.

Section V: Resolutions and Amendments

A. Resolutions and Amendments

A resolution is the goal of a Model UN Committee. A resolution lays out past actions taken on the topic in the pre-ambulatory section, while actions the committee wishes to take are written in the operative clause section. All resolutions must be the product of the committee and may not be written beforehand. Approved amendments can change or alter the resolution by striking or adding pre-ambulatory or operative phrases. Amendments must be submitted to the chair in writing.

B. Approval of Resolutions and Amendments

Before resolutions or amendments can be motioned to the floor for debate they must be approved by the Chairs. The approval of the Chairs is contingent on several factors: appropriate formatting of the resolution, a sufficient number of signatures (as determined by the Chairs), a resolution or amendment that is not identical to another resolution or amendment, and proper grammar and spelling.

C. Introduction of a Resolution

To successfully introduce a resolution a delegate must raise their placard and be recognized by the Chairs to make a motion. Upon motioning to introduce a resolution, another delegate must second the motion. After the motion is seconded, the Chairs shall read and, if possible, visually display the resolution. After it has been read, the committee will vote to bring the resolution to the floor for debate. If at least one-third of the body supports debating the resolution, then it shall be brought to the floor and debate shall commence. If the resolution fails to be introduced, it cannot be reintroduced, unless it is significantly revised.

D. Introduction of an Amendment

Amendments can be introduced in two ways:

- **Friendly amendments** must be introduced via a motion and can be added to the resolution with the consent of the resolutions listed sponsors. No vote is required if all sponsors agree to it.
- **Amendments** must be introduced via a motion and require a second and a vote of at least one-third of the body to be brought to the floor for debate. Amendments can be brought to the floor with or without the support of some or all sponsors of the resolution being amended.

Amendments must be submitted on the forms to the chairs. A motion for an amendment cannot be made if the resolution that the amendment is being added to is not already on the floor. If the amendment fails to be introduced, it cannot be reintroduced, unless it is significantly revised.

E. Withdrawing Resolutions or Amendments

To withdraw a resolution or an amendment, the individual who motioned to bring the resolution or amendment to the floor must motion to withdraw it. The Chairs will then ask if the individual who seconded the resolution or amendment agrees to withdraw the resolution or the amendment. If this person agrees, then the resolution or amendment will be withdrawn. Withdrawn resolutions and amendments cannot be reintroduced.

Section VI: Voting

A. Procedural Votes

Procedural votes, or votes which concern motions about the function of the committee, bringing resolutions or amendments to the floor, setting a new speaking time, moving to a moderated caucus, etc., are compulsory and all delegates may take part. Delegates may not abstain on procedural motions, needing to vote either yes or no.

B. Substantive Votes

Substantive votes are votes held on amendments or resolutions which occur only during formal voting procedure. After the committee enters voting procedures, no delegates may enter or leave the committee room.

C. Abstentions Explained

In Model United Nations, abstentions occur when delegates choose not to vote either in favor or against a resolution. Only "Yes" and "No" votes are counted when determining whether a resolution passes, meaning **abstentions do not affect the total number of votes needed for a majority**. Delegates marked "present and voting" may not abstain, while those marked "present" may. Chairs should calculate required majorities (e.g., simple or two-thirds) based solely on the number of affirmative and negative votes cast, excluding abstentions.

D. Handling Multiple Motions

When multiple motions are presented during a committee session, the following procedure shall be followed to ensure orderly consideration and voting:

Order of Precedence:

- The committee will follow an established order of precedence for points and motions, which the Chair will communicate to all delegates at the start of the conference.

Presentation of Motions:

- Delegates must raise their placard and be recognized by the Chair to present a motion. The motion should be stated clearly and concisely.

Voting on Motions:

- Motions will be addressed in the order they were introduced unless a higher precedence motion is raised. The Chair will call for votes based on the potential disruption each motion may cause, from most to least disruptive (e.g., a motion to close debate takes precedence over a motion to extend debate, longer caucuses take precedence over shorter ones).
- The first motion to receive a majority vote will be adopted, while others will be removed from consideration but can be reintroduced later. If a motion fails, it cannot be reintroduced unless significantly revised.
- If no motions pass, the committee will return to the previous speakers' list or the ongoing proceedings.

Chair's Discretion:

- The Chair has the authority to rule on the appropriateness of motions and may consolidate similar motions to streamline proceedings.

E. Voting Rights

Each committee member has one vote; observer delegations may only vote on procedural matters. Procedure: Each member casts one vote; observer states may be excluded from substantive voting.

F. Voting Procedure

The Chair may conduct a substantive vote by roll-call or by placard. Delegates may vote in favor or against, or abstain. Chair decides on voting method; delegates must respond according to the established format.

G. Roll Call Voting

A motion for a roll call vote is in order only for substantive motions and is made directly before voting commences. The chair determines whether this is in order. The motion requires no speakers or second and the vote is conducted alphabetically by the Chair.

H. Division of the Question

While voting on amendments, a delegate may motion for a division of the question. A division of the question allows delegates to vote on two parts of an amendment separately, allowing one section to pass, while the other fails, or passing both. An amendment can only be divided in a single place. To successfully divide the question, a simple majority is needed. After the question has been divided, both parts of the amendment are voted upon.

Section VII: Procedure in Crisis

A. Scope of Crisis Committees

Crisis Committees are different in scope than regular committees. When entering a crisis session, delegates will take on the ability to exercise personal actions. As the crisis breaks and updates are given, delegates will be forced to react within the scope of the powers for their person or representative. These powers will be clearly defined in each background guide. If delegates are in a committee in which they represent people, rather than countries, small biographies and past actions as it relates to the topic will be given.

B. Personal Actions

Personal actions are actions that individual or small groups of members take to affect the crisis. These are written as notes and sent to the crisis room. Personal actions must contain what the delegate wishes to accomplish, how they will accomplish it, and with what resources they will use to accomplish it. If personal actions do not meet these requirements, the crisis staff will send a note back asking for further details.

C. Directives

Directives are actions that the whole committee agrees to take. These are short, 5-6 lines, resolutions. A directive does not contain pre-ambulatory clauses, only operative clauses.

Directives are more powerful than personal actions as their passage signifies the agreement of the whole body. All directives must be named and have a minimum number of signatories as determined by the chairs. They are motioned to the floor just as resolutions, needing a third of the body's support. To pass a directive, delegates must motion for voting procedure.

Directives cannot be amended. If a directive fails to be introduced, or fails to pass, it cannot be reintroduced at any time.