



Yale Model United Nations 50

January 18 - 21, 2024

Welcome to YMUN 50!

This year marks our 50th iteration of YMUN, and we couldn't be more excited that you are joining us. The reason YMUN is so exciting is because we have a strong commitment to education, and our slogan "Learn today, lead tomorrow." Before everything else, this conference is a chance for you to engage with new perspectives, have conversations about global issues, and meet and work with peers from around the world. We hope that at the end of these four days you have a better cultivated understanding of the world and the interactions that take place among nations and between individuals within it.

In this document, you'll find a breakdown of what YMUN is, what to expect from committees, and most importantly, your committee's topic guide. Please take the time to go through this document to understand what makes YMUN special and what to expect from our conference.

The United Nations

The United Nations was founded in 1945 with 51 member states, and has since grown to 193 member states today. The UN is an intergovernmental organization, which means that each of its members is a different country from around the world, and it describes itself as, quote, "One place where the world's nations can gather together, discuss common problems, and find shared solutions." In other words, the UN is a forum intended to help maintain peace around the globe and promote cooperation on some of the most important issues facing our world, from global warming to food insecurity.

Model United Nations at Yale

Model United Nations (MUN) is a simulated version of the real United Nations. Delegates will pretend to be someone else, usually the representative of a country, and will debate different issues related to the committee topic. Delegates bring their country's viewpoint on the issue to the floor during speeches, and use the research they conducted before the conference, as well as your teamwork skills, to develop solutions to challenging problems.

There are many MUN conferences out there, so thank you for choosing YMUN. YMUN is such a special conference because it's the largest MUN conference held on an Ivy League campus. This means that you will join a community of 2000 other high school students and advisors, each with their own ideas and perspectives to bring, while attending the conference on Yale's actual campus. Committee sessions and events will be held in Yale classrooms and spaces, committees are chaired by Yale students, and Yale's entire student body will also be on campus at the same time, which means that you will truly feel like a Yale student for 4 days.

In honor of our 50th year, we have 50 committees for delegates to choose from. You can find a full list of them on our website and read more about their topics. Each and every committee is unique in their own way and you will have an amazing experience in any.

Our committees are divided into five groups called organs. The main differences between them are their size and topic, which you can also read about on our website. In any committee, you will take part in the same global cooperation that helps maintain international peace and makes the world a better place.

Position Papers

In preparation for the conference, you will write a position paper. We'll send out instructions for how to submit your position paper closer to the start of the conference.

A position paper is a paper which clearly and briefly explains the policies of your country or organization relating to all the topics of your committee. Position papers are important because they require you to learn and understand the context of your country or organization's exact point of view and they can serve as a reference document for you during the conference. They also help other delegates understand what your position will be during the conference which helps them know whether or not to ally with you.

To start writing your position paper, we recommend conducting general background research on the topic. Begin by consulting your topic guide, and then broaden your scope to include, for example, the resources in the topic guide, or others you can find elsewhere. Once you get a general sense of the topic, go into more detail. Consider the history and timeline of the topic, including past policies, where the issue is most prevalent, who the main actors involved are, and the impact of the topic. Specifically, try to understand the power dynamics at play, why and how these dynamics have developed, and what is at stake if no action is taken.

Not only do you need to learn about your topic, you also need to connect it to your country. Once again, use reliable sources to present a detailed idea of what your country's policies have been in the past. The point here is to know what a representative of your country would surely know. This way, you will always be able to stay in line with your country's policies in committee.

The final part of your position paper should deal with solutions to the issues discussed. You're going to want to think of the country's history and past actions in order to come up with similar – or radically different – solutions for the problem at hand. Clearly, you want any solution you advocate for to benefit your country, but in order to do so, it is likely it will also have to benefit other nations. MUN is like a team sport. And one skill to play this sport is diplomacy. Diplomacy should be used both with countries your nation works with – who you should know – and countries it doesn't work with, and it should allow you to develop a bunch of excellent ideas that you can draw on to form resolutions in committee.

Position papers should be a page long, written in the third person. Make sure to cite any source that you used in your research. If you would like to receive feedback, the deadline is January 5, 2024 11:59PM EST time. If you don't want feedback, the final deadline is the first committee session. **Position papers must be turned in by the final deadline for the delegate to be considered for awards.**

Committee Session Flow

Your committee will have a dais of 3-5 Yale students. They are referred to as Chairs and Vice Chairs. The Chairs will say the phrase “Are there any points of motions on the floor?” many times, at which point delegates should raise their placards to indicate that they have a point or motion. **Points relate to the workings of the committee and do not require a vot. Motions allow delegates to determine what happens next in the committee and generally require a vote.**

There are four points you should feel comfortable using:

- 1) **Point of Inquiry:** use it to ask about parliamentary procedure. This is a question from a delegate to the Dais
- 2) **Point of Order:** use it when you believe the Dais has made a procedural error. This is a question from a delegate to the Dais, specifically about the order of debate or the schedule for the session or the conference as a whole
- 3) **Point of Personal Privilege:** use it to express concerns about comfort such as temperature of the room or ability to hear a speaker
- 4) **Point of Information:** use it to ask a question about the content of something which another delegate is putting forward.

However, don't worry too much about points, because **the majority of the time you will be making motions.** Two important motions are for a moderated caucus and for an unmoderated caucus. We will further show you how these caucuses work in a mock committee session later in the training program, but for now we will introduce you to what they are and how to motion for them.

For one, a delegate may introduce a motion for a moderated caucus, which is a more formal format to debate a specific subset of the topic

- A delegate must propose a set topic, duration, and speaking time (which will be voted on)
- For example, a delegate may motion for a 10 minute moderated caucus with 1 minute speaking time on the topic of fossil fuels and the environment
- This means that if the motion passes, there will be 10 delegates who speak for 1 minute for a total of 10 minutes on the topic of fossil fuels and the environment

You can also motion for an Unmoderated Caucus:

- The least formal debate format – as the name suggests, the Chairs don't moderate which means people can speak freely
- An unmoderated caucus must have a duration and topic
- For example, a delegate may motion for a 10 minute unmoderated caucus on what to do next after the most recent crisis update
- This means that for the next 10 minutes, delegates will move around the room and speak freely to one another
- Unmoderated caucuses are also used as time to draft resolutions, which you'll learn about in the next section
- Delegates may not leave the room without permission from the committee director

Another part of debate is The Speakers' List, which is the **default format of committee if there are no points or motions**

- After debate is opened, the first motion is usually to open the Speaker's List
- A country may only appear on the list once at any given time
- A delegate can be added by raising their placard when the Dias asks or by sending a note to the Dias
- The speaking time will be set by the delegate who moves to open the Speakers' List, but a delegate may move to change the speaking time
- If there is still time remaining when a delegate concludes their speech, they must yield their time (to the Dias, to another delegate, or to questions, by saying either "I yield my time to ...")
 - Yielding to Dias ends the speech, yielding to another delegate allocates the remainder of the time to that delegate (the second delegate may not yield to a third delegate), and yielding to questions allows for feedback from other delegates

To summarize, the general flow of debate goes as follows:

- Motion to open the speaker's list
- Moderated Caucuses
- Unmoderated Caucuses

- Resolution Writing

In the latter half of our committee sessions, delegates write and vote on working papers and resolutions. These documents are the written culmination of ideas introduced and argued during committee sessions. Usually, the first step to begin working on resolutions is calling for an unmoderated caucus. During this time, delegates can move freely and talk to each other to start shaping policy points into written clauses. This draft document is called a working paper. After various coalitions have written draft working papers, delegates will debate the working papers, suggesting amendments or convincing other delegates to merge two or more documents together. Ultimately, the goal is to produce two or three draft resolutions which are final versions of policy papers that delegates can vote on by the final committee session. The papers that pass the vote are adopted as resolutions.

Working papers and resolutions follow a specific format. Each working paper has a specific number of sponsors and signatories. Sponsors are the delegations that actively participate in drafting the working paper. Usually, the number of sponsors on a paper is limited, and your chairs will decide on an appropriate number of sponsors for your committee. Signatories are delegations that want the paper to be debated. Signatories do not have to agree with every clause of the working paper; they just want the sponsors to present their paper and participate in the ensuing debate.

Working papers often begin with a preamble that explains the reasons for writing this specific paper. The preamble is a collection of single phrase, preambulatory clauses that begin with words such as affirming, aware of, deeply concerned by, etc. signaling the committee's recognition of the issue at hand. Then, the main body of the working paper comes in the form of operative clauses. These clauses are the policy points that delegates want to introduce on the voting floor. Operative clauses, as the name suggests, are the recommendations of actions that the committee wants to make. These clauses begin with phrases such as approves, calls for, requests, recommends, reminds, etc.

As mentioned earlier, delegates write working papers during unmoderated caucuses in committee sessions. In YMUN working on drafts outside of committee sessions is not allowed. All debate, drafting, and editing must be completed during unmoderated caucuses in committee sessions.

Once delegates decide they are ready to present their working papers to the rest of the committee, they will submit the paper to the dais. Then, once all coalitions have submitted their papers to the dais, a delegate can motion to introduce working papers. The format in which delegates present their working papers and debate the clauses will be decided by the delegates themselves when they motion for the introduction or, if delegates do not have a preference, at the discretion of the chairs. Once each paper is presented and debated, delegates will usually break

into another unmoderated caucus to merge working papers into draft resolutions or fine tune their existing working papers so that it is ready for voting procedure. Again, when the delegates are ready, they will motion to enter the voting procedure. At this point, the sponsors of each draft resolution will present their draft, and the whole committee will vote on whether to pass or fail this draft resolution. If the draft resolution passes, it becomes a resolution adopted by the committee. Each committee can pass multiple resolutions, but we encourage you to merge draft resolutions together into one resolution instead of passing multiple, similar resolutions.

If, during the voting process, a delegate agrees with the resolution as a whole but takes issue with one or two clauses, he or she can motion for an amendment. Amendments are small changes to a draft resolution. The sponsors of the paper can decide to either adopt the amendment, thereby changing or inserting one or two clauses in their paper, or reject the amendment.

Awards

Individual awards are given to delegates on the basis of their performance over the 3 days of committee and decided by the Chairs of the committee. The number of awards varies across committees depending on their size, but all committees will award at least one Best Delegate, Outstanding Delegate, and Honorable Delegate.

At YMUN, we adopt a holistic approach towards awards. While there is no set formula, they are generally given to those who have performed well in all aspects of committee, primarily speaking, lobbying, and writing. Depending on which type of committee you are in, your Chairs may weigh the various award criteria differently. We also believe at YMUN that exceptional diplomacy also entails being respectful in your communication with your fellow delegates, advisors, and YMUN Staff inside and outside committee, and your Chairs will factor this in when determining awards.

Delegations Awards are decided based on the overall performance of delegates within a delegation. This year YMUN will have 4 Delegation Awards in total, with 2 for each category of delegation. Small Delegations are delegations with 15 students or fewer participating in YMUN. Large Delegations are those with over 15 delegates participating in YMUN.

We would like to emphasize that awards are only additional incentives and act primarily as recognition for the exceptional work delegates have done before and over the course of the conference. Every year, we meet absolutely incredible delegates at YMUN, but unfortunately, we cannot give everyone an award. This is why we want to stress that not winning an award is not reflective of your success as a delegate and in no way determines your ability to win awards at future conferences.

Competitions

YMUN has three competitions and challenges. Our first competition is the Essay Contest, in which delegates will be tasked with writing about an unlikely global partnership, either in the past, the present, or one they predict will happen in the future. Some examples are the United States and the Soviet Union united against the axis powers or Greek Unification against Persia or JFK and LBJ's joint campaign. The second contest is the arts competition, in which delegates will submit art under the theme "coming together." Art can be visual, performance, creative writing, or interdisciplinary work. The final challenge is the social impact challenge. The prompt for this year is to identify a topic in your community where there is a strong difference in opinions. After identifying this topic, work to create a solution for effective and productive conversation in which peers can learn from others and hopefully come out with more of an open mind. I can't wait to meet all of you and see the wonderful work you submit!

Yale Day

Yale Day is an incredibly unique program set up by the YMUN Secretariat in coordination with many Yale undergraduate organizations and faculty to showcase what exactly being a student at Yale entails. Yale Day is a perfect opportunity for delegates to acquaint themselves with clubs at Yale in addition to the vast scope of intellectually stimulating classes that are offered here. So, on the Friday of the YMUN conference, this program will take place in lieu of committees and you'll be able to partake in it. So EXCITING! OH? And did I mention that this is the first time in 3 years that this experience will be happening in person? Seriously, you don't want to miss it. Attending lectures by Yale professors, watching Yale student groups perform, attending workshops for those student groups, and touring the campus is an essential part of the YMUN conference—something that makes this conference so special—and I'm utterly exuberant for you all to experience this yourselves very soon!

Global Exchange Program

The Global Exchange Program (GEP) presents the opportunity for YMUN delegates to interact with distinguished Yale faculty in small seminar formats. Each year the GEP has a different theme that relates to the work of both the professors leading a specialized seminar and the keynote speaker. In order to facilitate personalized discussion, the program requires an application and typically selects about 30-50 applicants. We will have more information, including the link to the application, on our website very shortly. Overall the GEP aims to foster meaningful dialogue among delegates and professionals in a variety of fields, providing an opportunity not only for YMUN delegates to learn from and get to know Yale faculty, but also to learn from fellow delegates who are from all over the world. We hope to see you as a part of the Global Exchange Program this year!

You've made it to the end of our YMUN breakdown. After this page, you'll find your committee's topic guide. Happy prepping and welcome to YMUN 50! See you in January! If you have any additional questions, please reach out to Evelyn Jiang (dg.committees@ymun.org).