



## ***Instructionally Related Activities Report Form***

SPONSOR: ANDREA GROVE AND CHRIS SCHOLL

DEPARTMENT: POLS

ACTIVITY TITLE: MODEL UN

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: 14-16 FEB AND 10-14 APRIL

E-mail to the IRA Coordinator with supporting documentation at [lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu](mailto:lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu) within 30 days after the activity.

*Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!!*

### **A. ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- (1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;
  - (2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?
  - (3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?
  - (4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?
  - (5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?
  - (6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?
  - (7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)
  - 8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.
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### **B. ATTENDEE LIST- SUPPORTING DOCUMENT:**

In addition to the report form, *in a separate document*, attach to your email a list of attendees complete with each student major and grade level. This for IRA Committee reference only and will not be published on the IRA website. Include your name and the title of your IRA activity on the document.

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### **C. IMAGES FROM ACTIVITY:**

Finally, attach to your email up to 6 images demonstrating student participation (under 2 MB total) with captions/titles. (attach these photos in JPEG format directly to email).  
Thank you!



**(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;**

WE ATTENDED 2 MODEL UN CONFERENCES IN WHICH STUDENTS ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH DELEGATES FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES REPRESENTING OTHER COUNTRIES. EACH STUDENT IS ASSIGNED A COUNTRY ON A PARTICULAR COMMITTEE, AND THE ISSUES THE COMMITTEE DEBATES ARE POSTED MONTHS PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE. STUDENTS RESEARCH THEIR COUNTRY POSITIONS AND TURN IN PAPERS; THESE PROVIDE THE STUDENTS WITH BACKGROUND TO ENGAGE IN THE CONFERENCES.

**(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?**

THE WORK AT THE CONFERENCE GIVES THE STUDENT A CHANCE TO USE THEIR RESEARCH CONDUCTED FOR POLS 490: SPECIAL TOPICS MODEL UN; ACTIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES SUCH AS THIS CONSTITUTE HIGH-IMPACT TEACHING PRACTICES.

**(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?**

STUDENTS GO DEEPER INTO ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS AS THEY ENGAGE IN MUN. THEY COME AWAY WITH A MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT UNDERSTANDING OF GLOBAL DEBATES AND GLOBAL ISSUES, AS WELL AS WAYS OF VIEWING ISSUES FROM MULTIPLE PERPSPECTIVES. WE ALSO SEE INCREDIBLE GROWTH IN STUDENT CONFIDENCE, LEADERSHIP, AND MENTORING SKILLS.

**(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?**

THE TIME STUDENTS HAVE TO RESEARCH AND WRITE PAPERS IS SHORT; OTHER THAN THAT, NOT MANY WEAKNESSES.

**(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?**

USUALLY I MIGHT SAY WE HAVE TO PUSH SOME STUDENTS TO BE BETTER PREPARED, BUT THIS SEMESTER THE STUDENTS WERE DEDICATED, HARDWORKING. IT REALLY SHOWED—WE WON MANY, MANY AWARDS!

**(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?**

I LEARNED THAT EVEN OUR WEAKER STUDENTS CAN BE MENTORED TO “STEP UP TO THE PLATE,” BE PUSHED BEYOND THEIR COMFORT ZONE, AND WORK HARDER THAN THEY EVER EXPECTED TO.



(7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION) PLEASE SEE ATTACHED REACTION PAPERS.

8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.

**NATIONAL MUN-NORTHWEST (FEBRUARY)**

REGISTRATION FEES: \$925

HOTEL: \$1501.11

ADVISOR PER DIEM: \$200

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION:  $\$1036 + \$95 + 325 = \$1456$

FLIGHTS: \$10,390

TOTAL: \$14,472.11

**MODEL UN OF THE FAR WEST (APRIL)**

REGISTRATION FEES: \$1735

HOTEL: \$4454.40

ADVISORS PER DIEM: \$500

ADVISOR MILEAGE: \$436.18

Total: \$7125.58

GRAND TOTAL: 21,597.69

(AVP OF ARTS AND SCIENCES PAYING 1/3)



California State  
University

**INSTRUCTIONALLY  
RELATED  
ACTIVITIES**

C H A N N E L  
I S L A N D S



LIBERIA DELEGATION



PORTUGAL DELEGATION





COUNTRIES REPRESENTED BY CI AT NORTHWEST MODEL UNITED NATIONS



THE TEAM IN ACTION



California State  
University

**INSTRUCTIONALLY  
RELATED  
ACTIVITIES**

C H A N N E L  
I S L A N D S



SWEDEN DELEGATION



California State  
University

**INSTRUCTIONALLY  
RELATED  
ACTIVITIES**

C H A N N E L  
I S L A N D S



TEAM MEMBERS ENGAGED IN THOUGHT



## Model UN Reflection

This semester of Model UN has been the most rewarding, most informative, and most *fun* by far. Before getting into answering the prompt, I want to say one thing irrelevant to reflecting upon this particular semester. Dr. Grove and Dr. Scholl, you both have had such a large impact on my life and my outlook on the world, I truly cannot thank you enough. While I know I will still see both of you after graduation (I better!), knowing that I will not be able to sit in your classes discussing the Middle East Peace Process, American foreign policy, developing nations, or the countless other subjects on which you have informed me leaves me a bit sad. I really can't verbalize the impact you have had on me both academically and personally. When I first came into Political Science I was one of those stereotypical ideologically-driven liberal students focused on the R vs. D domestic debate and for the most part I disregarded international politics as pointless. Looking back I can't imagine how I could even justify such a thought! But your impact on me does not end on simply giving me the tools to analyze global issues - your passion to educate, your desire to facilitate real discussions (rather than simple recitation of a reading), and your personalities have made my college career everything I've ever wanted it to be - and so much more. I know it sounds cliché, but you have truly changed my life. Thank you.

These past two conferences I represented the United States in the Security Council and Portugal in the United Nations Development Programme Executive Board. While I had previously understood that the US is the most significant contributor to the UN and one of the most vocal actors within the Security Council, researching US policy on the issues showed me that the US, unlike what many claim, is one of the most proactive and mission-driven states within the entire United Nations. Whether politically-driven or not, the US is a significant contributor to peacebuilding operations, the largest contributor of ODA funds, and the US



continually outpaces other states in global efforts to address issues of poverty, human rights, and security. I will be completely honest and say that I am quite critical of some (many) policies of the US, but researching and subsequently representing US policy in the Security Council made me (oh boy I can't believe I am going to say this, I'm not a big fan of nationalism and state-based pride) proud to be a part of this country.

I've represented major powers in the past and have been on the Security Council (and Reformed Security Council) before, and the tendency for other states to simply accede to your requests is common, however as the US I had to not only represent my state's policy, but also fend off the many complaints from other states angry over particular US policies. Many states were distrusting of my intentions and believed I was only operating with my state's sole interests in mind, and this showed me first hand the barriers US delegates and representatives (whether they are in the State Department or even Peace Corps) have to face when discussing their beliefs with other countries. Therefore it was necessary to show these states I intended to work with them directly and I had to constantly curry favor among the various delegates to ensure my policy was ultimately enacted.

As Portugal I did not have to deal with the issues of distrust but rather those of representing a state with a lot of great ideas... but no money to implement those ideas. Therefore I had to play the diplomatic field and get other states to agree with my proposals, make them commonly accepted among the body, and in that way make it politically destructive for the larger states to disagree. In the previous few conferences I had represented strong states (France, the UK, the US) and for the most part the policy I proposed was the policy adopted. But going into the conference as a smaller, less-influential state, I had to mold my proposed policies to those of other states, but more importantly, make the case that the policies I wanted implemented were in

the best interests of the larger states. In the case of one of my proposals, a set percentage of a state's GDP to be directed toward a particular developmental fund, not many states showed interest in the policy until I was able to get the US and France on board by showing them that contributing a (small) amount of their GDP would be more beneficial to them in the long run than the economic issues and political blowback that would arise should they not adopt such a policy.

I would have to say that I am most proud of the fact that in both conferences I was able to spark a debate about microfinance and social business. As they are relatively new concepts many delegates were initially wary of incorporating the ideas into the working papers we drafted, but in the case of San Francisco, my initial proposal led to the entire committee sitting in a moderated caucus and discussing the benefits and detriments of both microfinance as a tool of sustainable developmental aid as well as social businesses as tools to use declining monetary contributions as efficiently and effectively as possible. Just the fact that such a debate was had showed that we are moving forward - right leaning delegates did not immediately turn down the proposals as unsustainable, and left leaning delegates did not immediately decry them as business taking over social causes. It was an awesome thing to see these students listen to these new theories, do research on their own, and come back to the table with questions and ideas of their own regarding the efficacy of social business. While certainly not a 'silver bullet' that can solve all social problems, just the fact that an in depth discussion was sparked shows we are progressing forward and looking to incorporate new ideas in our attempts to make the world a better place.

While I have certainly improved from my first conference to today, there is always room for improvement. Mainly, I have an issue with conveying my policy to other delegates who may

not completely understand it, and I tend to get a bit frustrated when trying to describe a policy to students who for one reason or another do not understand it. While I have gotten better at taking the time to explain my policy and answer any questions other students may have, I still found myself walking away from some delegates who could not grasp a subject. Rather than ignoring them and moving on to others, I need to improve my patience and ability to calmly and clearly explain a situation without simply considering those who don't immediately understand a subject a lost cause.

Every MUN conference begins as a stressful and sleep-depriving situation and ultimately ends up as a vital introspective learning experience. I've certainly learned that I know more about many subjects than I initially thought (social business is one example) but I am equally lacking in knowledge in *many* other fields such as environmental issues and sustainable agriculture. Through MUN I was able to educate others on *my* passions while at the same time being educated on *their* interests, and this collective sharing of ideas perfectly embodies for me what the UN stands for - global discussions and collaboration for every individual state to bring to the table *their* expertise and show others new and innovative ideas.

It has been an honor to be a part of the MUN team these past few years, and everything I've learned about international relations, understanding the rationality of [perceivedly irrational] states, and diplomacy cannot be condensed into one paper. Whenever I am asked what I do on campus I invariably begin with MUN because to me, MUN is more than just a conference in which students role play a state's policy, it is a way for students to *experience* international relations and learn firsthand what it means to be not only a diplomat, but a global citizen.

Model United Nations

Spring 2014

CSU Channel Islands

### Reflection Paper

Prior to becoming a member of the Model UN team this spring, I held the same viewpoint that many Americans have about the United Nations: the UN is an international organization that cannot get anything done and does not have our interests in mind. While I can see where this viewpoint comes from, I have gained a new appreciation for the UN and I now understand that they do much more than what is covered by the media. I have learned first-hand that international relations and diplomacy is a very complex endeavor that required a vast depth of knowledge and a great deal of patience when it comes to negotiating resolutions with countries. Although some nations have very idealistic views of the world that involved lots of international cooperation, there are others that wish to be more independent and give up as little of their sovereignty as possible. The incredibly difficult task of the United Nations is to find a compromise between the idealist nations and the realist nations. This was perhaps the most eye-opening concept I learned from participating in this course; realizing the immense hurdles that have to be tackled in order to reach international cooperation. With respects to diplomacy, there are times when it is difficult to be diplomatic with other nations. For example, during the first conference in Portland I was representing the United States in the General Assembly, which meant there were certain nations that I had very formal and cordial relations with and there were those that I did not. However, in the spirit of diplomacy and cooperation, I found myself working on a resolution with Qatar, Palestine, the Russian Federation, and the Peoples' Republic of China. We all collectively realized that the issue we were discussing (disarmament and



development) affected the entire globe and not just one nation or region. Negotiating with other countries on different issues proved to be one of the most challenging and fun parts of the conferences. For the San Francisco conference I was representing Sweden in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and in this committee, Sweden has very strong feelings regarding nuclear energy and I found myself and other developed nations divided against the developing countries in the room. Only through careful and tactful negotiations were we able to pass resolutions and tackle the issues we were presented with.

I am most proud of the immense amount of work that our team put into preparing for both of the two conferences we attended. We were able to claim awards at both conferences and bring them back to our campus in an continuing effort by our school to put ourselves on the map. I am also proud of all of the new members, myself included, and how we were able to step up to the plate and tackle the challenges in our path that came with preparing for these conferences and our valiant efforts during the conferences to establish ourselves as a force to be reckoned with in the Model UN community. I am also proud of the Model UN veterans on our team that took the new members under their collective wing to show us the ropes and helped us establish our footing in an unfamiliar environment.

Given that this was my first semester on the team, there were a few areas that I certainly could improve on. For the first conference in Portland, I felt slightly unprepared for the conference. I also found myself in conversations where the other delegates were referencing previous resolutions and treaties that I was not very familiar with. If I would have prepared better for that conference, I would have been able to hit the ground running at the conference rather than having to start slow before I took off. Additionally, as the United States, I should have been the one leading a lot of the conversations and drafting resolutions. While I did help draft a

resolution that did pass, I did not work with other groups to try and get more points across or try to get other points of view from other nations. For the second conference in San Francisco, the main thing I could have improved on was my negotiating. For the first topic we discussed, I worked with other developed countries such as Germany, France, and Australia to draft a resolution to address the issue. I wrote most of the document and developed a lot of the language used in it as well. To me, it became my work and something that I worked very hard on with others. When people who did not work on it with us tried to offer suggestions I tended to push back or give very little compromise. This turned out to be my downfall and the resolution failed in voting bloc. At first I was defeated, however, myself and the rest of the committee rallied and introduced and passed three resolutions on the second topic. Through negotiations, I was able to get a few key points from my first paper passed in other papers on the second issue. If I would have used the same level of negotiation tactics in the first two days of the conference, perhaps my resolution would have passed.

These experiences taught me a great deal about myself and helped me refine my outlook on politics, specifically international relations. As I said in the beginning of my reflection, I used to hold the opinion that the United Nations did not do anything useful, however, through this course and the two conferences, I learned about the various bodies of the UN and the many tasks they perform on a daily basis. I was able to appreciate the work of this international body and I learned that I was taking the UN at face value that has been presented to me by the media and the opinions of others. I also learned that I had a very narrow-minded view of international relations. I used to believe that the goals and methods of the United States were what was best for the world, after all, I was born and raised here. However through this course and the research I have done in preparation, I have learned that there is not one grand plan that works best for

every nations. Each nation has their own needs and desires that cannot be accomplished through one method. That is where the United Nations comes in. I have learned that the United Nations acts as a forum for all the nations of the world to come together and attempt to tackle the world's problems in a way that is agreeable for all nations. I learned that this was not how I was thinking, and through this course, I was able to refine my beliefs and continue to learn more about how other nations strive to make our planet a better place for everyone.

## Model United Nations Reflection

Spring Semester 2014 was tough but nonetheless extremely rewarding. It was the first time I participated with Model United Nations, as a result coming into this class I didn't know anything whatsoever about writing policy papers and resolutions. In the past I joined the Young Senators Program and thought I had somewhat of an idea as to what it might be like to write the assignments, I was completely wrong. International policy is much more complex and intricate, these conferences helped me learn just how difficult it can be for a country with limited resources to have their basic needs met by the international community. Advocating to the other influential states what the country being represented requires in order to be a prosperous state is the easiest task of the processes, convincing why they should donate aid is the difficult detail. Some states with developed economies don't see the point in giving assistance to another state that won't benefit their own gains, if indeed they do give aid it's under their own terms and conditions regardless of what the receiving state deems the most efficient. These issues were discussed in the lower division international politics classes and being in person participating as a delegate it facilitated the understanding of this concept. I always asked myself why states didn't set aside their own goals in order to render their service to the states in need when it was clearly seen that it was crucial to the prosperity of the international community. I learned that even though these states may have the ability to give aid it always came down to their own best interest. If they gave aid to a certain state then it might impair relations with another state that is against the government of the country receiving aid. Or as already mentioned it just isn't in their best interest to give aid since it won't benefit them in any way. In addition representing a state with limited resources did have its benefits, although they might not be great powers as the other authoritative states of the international community they can be regional powers. States that are



regional powers are a vital component to the international peace that all states work to attain with one another, as a result these less developed states can get some of their legislation passed in the resolutions if they are regional powers and know how to precisely articulate their needs.

This semester I am most proud of the enhancement of my communication skills. It was at the first conference I attended in Portland that made me realize that in order to get productive resolutions done, the stance on the country you represent must be heard to all the states on the floor. This seemed extremely intimidating because there were delegates in the room that clearly had under their belt more than one conference and were highly experienced, yet these thoughts didn't get the best of me and when I took the floor to state the issues concerning my country it became easier to see that several states also agreed with my country's views. The progress that I have made in improving my communication skills will not only help me in these future MUN conferences I hope to take part in but also in my school work. In order to be successful it is vital that what your thoughts may be understood to everyone not just a select few. These two conferences were the stepping stone that I needed to be more eloquent in the articulation of my thoughts on paper and when speaking. I am also highly proud of the resolutions that although some did not make it to voting block were nonetheless valuable to presenting new solutions to issues that seemed unresolvable. It was the first time I experienced first-hand writing resolutions and I'm proud that I still managed to be confident and pull myself through in order to properly address the issues that the country I was representing needed resolved.

In both the conferences at Portland and in San Francisco I struggled with the writing of the assignments. International relations have always appealed to me and so discussing the issues that influence the international community is not a difficult job yet writing the policies of the state that is being represented and finding reliable sources was not as effortless. Being a delegate

for a LCD country can be complicated because the state may not have the resources to sustain their population let alone to publish their needs in the media. Usually what tends to occur is that NGO's are the entities that come in to aid the state and thus they publish their works, this act of kindness by the NGO's comes with a bias however. In their publications they will not mention what they failed to accomplish in the state that they aided and if they do it is quite minimal as an outcome what the NGO's failed to do in the state is where the states still need help. An improvement that I plan to make from both the conferences that I attended is to develop better ways of finding research in order to increase the quality of the policy and resolution papers. Since I already know what the complications can be from representing a developing nation as already mentioned it is just a matter of targeting better research methods to find the solution.

Through these experiences at the conferences I learned about myself that patience is key to a favorable outcome. In general I tend to be a patient person but these conferences proved that not everyone will be patient. To deal with these people it is essential to understand what is the reason behind their impatience is and in many cases it's the lack of support from the body on a certain resolution or the lack of acknowledgment by the body on key parts of the delegates policies that are being advocated. Patience is also necessary when on the floor due to the fact that not all states will conquer with the countries' position that you're advocating for. Also I learned that being less hard on myself is something that I should take into practice more often. When the resolution that I worked very hard on with the other bordering states of my country didn't make it to voting block I was deeply disappointed in myself but then I realized that there are just issues that are out of your control. These conferences and the class have been a great experience in my education and I won't deny that they take hard work and dedication yet the outcome is

rewarding. Not only do you get to have intellectual discourse to other students about issues that affect the world but you enhance your own skills as well.

1. What are the most important things you learned by participating in the two Model UN conferences? Please focus on what you have learned about international relations, diplomacy, negotiations, etc.?

This semester was my first time participating in Model UN in any way. I wasn't sure how the process of a Model UN conference went but I had ideas from how I had seen them portrayed in media. As it turns out, it is completely different to see a conference than it is to actually participate in one. Model UN provides a great way to study a country. Not only do you study a country's history but you also look at how that history has affected their current policies. You get an accurate idea of how current governments operate and of how these governments interact and affect one another. With this knowledge, you yourself interact with other students representing other countries and are able to make your own policies. One of my favorite parts of being at a Model UN conference is seeing how students interact with each other based on what country they are representing and what allies and enemies that country has. This is very representative of how real delegates are likely to act at the actual United Nations. Some delegates refused to work with other delegates while others were automatically devoted to agreeing with a country purely based on past alliances alone. This showed that history really does have an effect on international relations and that it is important to place emphasis of study on the past so that political progress can be achieved in the future. In addition to learning how the real United Nations works, Model UN gives you the chance to meet new people who have similar interests in international politics. Had I not had the opportunity to participate in Model UN I would never have been able to gain this perspective on how different each country is and how international politics really work.

2. What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of the fact that I went out of my comfort level and tried something new.



Political science classes were always some of my favorite courses each semester and they made me want to become more involved and Model UN was that perfect opportunity to do so. I tend to be a very quiet person so even thinking of joining something like Model UN was a completely new experience and I knew it would be a personal challenge for me. Luckily, I was greeted by a supportive community made of both students and professors who made the transition to this new world so much easier. I was also proud of the new research methods I learned to use and how I implemented them both in and out of Model UN. Prior to being in this class, if I wanted to learn more about international politics I would have no idea where to start looking for information and sources. Now I know where and how to find background information and actual press statements relating to any country. Using this knowledge allows for me to see how each country is affected by any one international issue.

3. What could you have done better at

a) NMUN-NW

Since this was my first conference ever I was pretty nervous. I was afraid that everyone on our committee would be conference veterans who would see right through me. Instead, I was relieved to see that most of the people there were new to Model UN and also learning the process. Since this was my first conference, I was passive at first since I wasn't sure of how my ideas would be received by others delegates. I represented a developing country on the Human Rights Council at this conference so I didn't have resources like financial aid to offer. Due to this setback, I thought my country did not have a voice even though most of the human rights issues at hand did affect my country. While my country could not have offered financial aid, I personally could have offered more ideas. During this conference I could have worked harder and been more determined to truly represent my country's interests. I definitely could have

prepared better for this conference when it came to actually discussing the topics at hand in front of everyone because I do not perform too impressively when nerves mix with improvisation. At this conference I could have taken more time to write out opening statements and to practice how I would present them. Had I done this, it would have been easier for my country to find alliances with other countries who had similar infrastructure goals rather than just being a player in the background. However, during the resolution drafting portion of the conference I was able to gain a better understanding of how the process of Model UN worked and how to represent my country off-stage.

b) MUNFW?

Since this was my second conference I did feel that I had a better understanding of how the general process went. Even with this knowledge though I was still somewhat passive during the beginning when I felt that a topic did not truly relate to the country I represented. It was because of this that I was more of a follower during the beginning stages of the conference rather than being a contributor and collaborator. When we eventually moved on to a topic that was more relevant to my country I was able to become more involved which allowed for me to feel like a true delegate. At this conference I still would have liked to have been more active during the various unmoderated caucus sessions so that I could have contributed more to resolution writing and negotiating.

4. What did these experiences teach you about yourself?

These experiences taught me personally not to be so hard on myself and to be proud of what might seem to be little achievements. I learned that I should stop comparing myself to others because in reality everyone has a different background and different types of knowledge because not everyone is the same person. Instead of putting myself down for not being as

assertive as someone else, I can instead join forces with that person and strengthen my voice.

Being a part of Model UN and being on this team has also made me want to work harder both in and out of conferences and to perform to the best of my potential. Model UN is a real team and we all depend on one another whether it is for personal support or for background information on an agenda item. Being a part of this Model UN team has been a truly enriching experience that I am so glad to have had and look forward to continuing.

### Model UN Spring 2014 Reflection Paper

The NMUN-NW conference in Portland was the first time that I had a chance to write a resolution almost entirely on my own. This was quite a different experience compared to my one previous conference where I took a mainly back-seat role in creating working papers to make sure that my represented state agreed with the material. The resolution that I wrote was fairly complex in nature, suggesting that a localized Bolivian economic exchange system be expanded internationally in order to solve disputes over trans-boundary water systems such as rivers and lakes. This was my main challenge at this conference: trying to explain exactly what was being proposed in a clear and efficient manner so that there is time to both make modifications my working paper as well as look at other states' working papers. Eventually, I learned that the most efficient way to do this was to separate myself from the rest of the committee for a short time during un-moderated sessions to complete modifications, then approach other groups to both inform them of the changes to my working paper and to learn about the changes made to other papers. Although this sounds like a fairly obvious method of creating papers, I would learn it is absolutely necessary at the MUN-FW conference in San Francisco.

The other main challenge I faced at the Portland conference as well as all the other conferences I have been to so far is making speeches during formal session. Although this is more of a personal issue, I have come to realize it is essential to make formal speeches not only for the purpose of informing the body of your work but also to gain recognition; to at least look like you know what you are doing. As much as I dislike this aspect of politicking, I understand that people are drawn to delegates' confidence in their work and eloquence in their speech. Although I have confidence in my work, I seem to lose confidence in my ability to explain it

thoroughly in a formal speech and thus usually avoid making them altogether. Although I have improved in each conference, this continues to be the largest challenge for me.

My experience at the MUN-FW conference in San Francisco was quite different than my previous conferences as it was the first time I represented a developed state. As the delegate of Sweden there was much more flexibility in potential partner states for working papers and, as an extension of this broader spectrum of prospective support, ambitiousness of the material proposed. Representing Sweden was overall an enjoyable experience, as its international policy reflects many of my own beliefs such as providing opportunities for everyone, specifically the less powerful states. For example, I played a crucial role in delaying movement into substantive debate to allow for a group of developing states to finish writing their working paper. Since Sweden holds sway with the more powerful states that wanted to move forward, I was able to convince them to wait a few more minutes. The resulting resolution was eventually passed by the committee.

This same resolution, however, taught me an important lesson. Whenever I talked with the group, the ideas they expressed were solid and agreeable. However, they kept saying that they were still in progress with writing the paper. When it was obvious that we were nearing the end of the topic's formal debate, it looked as though they were not writing anymore and I thus assumed they had completed the paper. When I finally looked at the paper it was jumbled and incomplete. I realized that the group was mostly talking about their ideas and not getting down to writing them. As a result, we decided to start from scratch with me doing the writing. Although I had to let another state take over writing so that I could address questions about my own draft resolution, I learned it was crucial to physically see working papers in person rather than taking the group's verbal explanation at face value. This also solidified my method of

separating myself from the committee for a short time as to not be distracted by questions in the middle of writing papers.

Overall, I am most proud of my actions during un-moderated sessions. I seem to excel at adding in aspects to working papers that many delegates gloss over. I also always try to push for more interaction among working paper groups to create a comprehensive resolution which is something that I feel is usually neglected at each conference I have been to. Although there has never been a topic where only one comprehensive resolution has been passed, encouraging interaction makes sure there is less redundancy among working papers. Although it further complicates the already rushed process of creating papers, I feel that this point should be emphasized more at each conference, as no state wants redundant legislation in the UN no matter their involvement in the process of making it.

I have learned a lot about myself over these two conferences. I seemed to open up much more to other delegates as well as the other students from Channel Islands. I never imagined that I would be good friends with the other delegates after the conferences, but have been pleasantly surprised at the way I have been able to bond with the COPUOS delegation in San Francisco. Also, I have become less and less nervous about making formal speeches over the conferences. Hopefully I can further improve my confidence when speaking at my next conference.

## Model UN Reflection

Since joining the CSU Channel Islands Model United Nations Team, I can honestly say that it has been an incredible experience that has helped me find what I truly want to do with my life and has made me a more compassionate individual. My involvement this semester was very different than the past two semesters and I can see that I have improved immensely in regards to my public speaking skills and my skills in writing resolutions.

At the NMUN-NW conference in Portland I represented Saudi Arabia in the General Assembly. One of the topics we discussed was disarmament and development, which was also one of the topics at the MUNFW conference. The resolution I worked on with other delegates focused on allocating funds to development programs through the UNDP. The role I had in this conference was talking to delegates about our resolution and getting them on board to sign with it. That was fun to do because delegates would give me a long list of why they couldn't sign with it even though our resolution was simply encouraging them to consider our requests. In this conference I would of liked to contribute more in the writing aspect of the resolution rather than simply just contributing ideas but I did enjoy promoting the resolution.

I enjoyed the MUNFW conference much more than the conference in Portland being that I had a more active role. In this conference I represented the Kingdom of Sweden in the First Committee, which was very interesting to represent seeing that they usually take a more neutral stance on international issues and proclaim peaceful ways of solving problems. I started writing a resolution on our second topic, disarmament and development with Portugal and Zambia that focused on the post-Millennium Development Goals, military expenditure and the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) program. I got somewhat frustrated that one of the chairs and other delegates were pulling away from the key element on the topic of disarmament

and development. No one wanted to include anything about military expenditure in their resolutions because it was violating sovereignty and the delegates wouldn't sign on to it. I understood where they were coming from and that their countries were huge spenders on the military but if they didn't make even a slight effort to put it on the resolution, even if it was just mentioned briefly, then how can we really find a solution to the problem.

Representing Sweden, I tried to maintain control of my emotions but sometimes it's just hard to watch how things don't work out. I could only imagine how much harder the negotiation process is at the actual United Nations. After taking a short break from the writing process, I continued to write the resolution with Portugal and Liberia and we decided to focus on the role of women in disarmament and instead of including something about military expenditure we included an operative clause that encouraged countries to donate 0.7% of their annual GDP to the UNDP to implement disarmament programs. I still believe addressing military expenditure is crucial in order to reach complete disarmament. Regardless, I was satisfied with the operative clause that replaced that, as well with including more specific operatives about women's roles in the disarmament process. Another chair revised our resolution and he was very pleased with the operative clauses on women, which made me feel really good since I was feeling like I wasn't doing a good job. Writing my own resolution in this conference was my biggest accomplishment because I had never done that before. I have contributed to other resolutions and had had a minor role in the writing process but this resolution, along with Portugal and Zambia, was our own complete work. I was disappointed that we didn't get to vote on it since we ran out of time but I had talked to other delegates about signing on to it and everyone I talked to said that they would sign it. The second day of the conference I was able to get on the speakers list and I spoke about the resolution and afterwards people came up to me and told me that they really liked my speech



and wanted to work with me. Overall, the MUNFW conference made me feel accomplished and renewed my faith and hope that I briefly lost to frustration.

When I first entered college I had this mentality that I would just go into college, complete my major, graduate, and leave. I didn't really think of developing relationships with my classmates or being too involved. I still remember the day Dr. Scholl talked about Model UN and I told myself that I was going to try something new out of my original plan. I applied and I got in and it has been the best thing that has happened to me at CSUCI. Through Model UN, I've met a number of fascinating individuals that I see myself keeping relationships after college. I still plan on going to law school after I graduate from CSUCI and focus on international law. The public speaking and writing skills will definitely help me in law school. I'm extremely excited for Seattle and I'm ready to start writing resolutions. It's my last year at CSUCI so I plan to take advantage of it and continue meeting new people.

## **My First Model UN Experience**

My first experience with the Model United Nations (MUN) class at CSU Channel Islands was when I met Dr. Grove for the first time. I waited by her office before the end of the fall semester in order to pick which countries I would represent and what committee my country would sit on for the two conferences the class would be attending the upcoming spring semester. Picking which country I wanted felt like trying to win a stuffed animal out of a crane machine game. I had no idea what the right move was, so I did what any MUN student would do and picked countries and committees that simply seemed interesting to learn about. And so my diplomatic career at CI began.

Walking into the classroom that first Friday for my first Model UN class was exciting and nerve-wracking. I had absolutely no idea what these upcoming MUN conferences would be like and I was utterly confused about how to write a position paper. When it was my turn to introduce myself to the class I even admitted that I had *a lot* of questions about what we would be doing in the future weeks. Thankfully, I got it together as time passed from the help of my classmates and completed what I quickly learned to be the hardest part of preparing for any MUN conference, writing a position paper. Several weeks before every MUN conference begins each student who will be attending the conference is required to write a brief summary about what his or her country's stance is in regards to a list of topics assigned to their committee. In writing these position papers throughout the semester I discovered all sorts of United Nations websites and databases. Frankly, it was exhilarating to be introduced to brand new information in international relations, an area that I am already interested in. Doing this web-based research also helped me to mentally prepare for the conference when I would slip into the role of a UN delegate.

Once I got over the hurdle of submitting my country's position paper, less than a month later I was on a plane flying up to Portland, Oregon where the National Model United Nations Conference of the Northwest was held. The moment I stepped into that conference room I became the delegate of Indonesia on the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The first night sitting in my committee room I learned that I had made a mistake. As delegates from other countries stood up to speak about what they believed the topic agenda should be ordered to I realized that the topic I had felt most passionately about, the reason I chose to be on ECOSOC would not get discussed. When a vote was taken the topic dealing with women in the developing world was placed last on the list. This topic was the one that I had dedicated the most amount of my time to researching and now I would have to voice Indonesia's thoughts on humanitarian assistance instead. As I listened to my fellow delegates in the room get up and speak I felt intimidated. I was clearly not as knowledgeable as them on the topic at hand. This mistake caused me to not have as successful of a conference as I could have had. The first night of my very first Model UN conference I learned that one cannot dedicate more time to researching a topic any more than the others. Thorough preparation is key to having a good MUN conference.

Having learned from my mistake, I had more confidence walking into our second conference in San Francisco. The Model United Nations of the Far West conference required not only position papers, but also a country background guide written between several students. I enjoyed being able to work together with my peers who were representing the same country as me, Liberia. I found that talking about the country's facts and background information helped me to have a more successful time researching Liberia's stance in regards to the topics of the first committee of the general assembly. At this conference instead of being in a small room of thirty countries like I was in Portland, I was now in a banquet hall with seventy other countries. I found

that I liked being in a bigger group since the larger numbers meant more countries to speak with and learn about that country's opinion. This larger group allowed for more diplomacy to be practiced as multiple negotiations were being had throughout the course of the conference between different areas of the world. As the delegate of Liberia I was able to come together with other allying African state delegates and discuss our ideas about international security with them. Together we were able to negotiate agreements with other regions of the world, such as our agreement with the Middle Eastern countries that the African Union would support their resolution paper only if they agreed to support our ideas for the next topic of discussion. Over the course of that weekend I was able to experience what only felt like real world international relation discussions.

Not only did I have a great conference, but so did my classmates as well, and it was made apparent by the three awards CSU Channel Islands received for good diplomacy across all three countries CI represented at this conference. The night we received these awards was the best feeling for not only myself, but for my classmates, and our two professors who teach the course. It felt as though all of our hard work we had put in this semester paid off. This achievement marked a milestone for all of the students in the class. For those like myself, this marked the end of our time as inexperienced "newbies" to the Model UN class. For others, this conference was the last one they would ever participate in before graduating. While winning these awards made for happy memories, it was also a bittersweet moment.

Now, getting the chance to look back and reflect on my time spent participating in Model United Nations conferences I have a fondness yet also frustration for the matter. I have learned that international relations is an area of study I could spend hours learning more and more about. I know that this is the field that I dream to one day have a profession in. Yet, I now know how

hard it can be to try to get a whole room of people (especially people representing the world) to agree on something. I now know that I have a personal preference to work in committees that are larger in size because I can more easily talk to other delegates. And finally, I know what mistakes I have made and I know that I will learn from experience in order to better my time at the next conference in the fall semester. I am very lucky to be able to have this opportunity, and will never take this class for granted as it has proved to be one of the most memorable university experiences so far.

POLS 490  
Model UN

### Reflection Paper

"We shall never be able to remove suspicion and fear as potential causes of war until communication is permitted to flow, free and open, across international borders." The United Nations serves as an open forum where all Member States have the opportunity to voice their opinions within various UN organ bodies. In this manner the UN can help ease tensions among States and assist through developmental programs too. Participating in Model UN allows students to play the role of different countries allowing them to learn about international relations.

This semester participating in two Model UN conferences has taught me so much. Since this was my second semester as a delegate I was not as anxious as the first time. This time I knew the rules and procedure, for the first conference at least because the second one the rules were a little different. The first conference I was representing Bolivia and in doing so I came to realize how different their views are on certain issues, compared to Western States. As a representative of Bolivia it was difficult to ally or go along with certain situations I personally do not agree with. In these conferences, even in this class, one really learns the opinions and stances of many countries, where one reconsiders personal opinions and avoids them altogether. As a delegate from Bolivia I learned how important it was to create and have good relations within the region of the country. I also learned about the close relations between Bolivia, Venezuela, and Cuba because of the policies set in place by the respective governments. The General Assembly is the place for all countries to voice their opinions regardless of their economic standing or

power in the international community. In this manner, negotiating and building alliances to achieve some kind of consensus is required for resolutions to get passed.

Throughout the conference, negotiations are always in the process because Member States can be looking into their own interests and the GA as UN body has the task under the UN Charter to make this world a more peaceful and better place. In addressing certain issues, I learned to communicate civilly with other Member States, because some issues can certainly escalate into controversial situations. For example, on the topic of the resource allocation in the Golan Heights, Palestine, Israel, Syria, and Iran about disagreed on how the problem should be dealt resulting in tensions among them. Thus, diplomacy is key in trying to diminish the problems the international community faces today. Yet, it is very hard when Member States have a clear stance on an issue and are determined to resolving it by their means. Consequently, consensus is very difficult to achieve among the body. At one point during the conference there were five to six draft resolutions circulating the room trying to get States to sign on. On the other hand, having various opinions gives delegates more ideas about dealing with a certain issue. For example, in the relationship between disarmament and development, Latin American countries who already are within a nuclear free zone proposed investing in educational programs.

Participating in these conferences has been a very helpful in many ways. Approaching other delegates and being able to address my country's stance is such a great way to improve communication skills. At times it can get hectic with various ideas and resolutions making it hard to be part of the resolution writing process. At the second conference, as the delegate of Portugal it seemed that I had more of a say and influencing power as a member of the European Union. At the beginning we got most of the EU together in trying to write a resolution in regards to the elimination of nuclear weapons. Yet again, with so many ideas circulating and mergers it was

difficult to get each country's ideas. Therefore, for the next topic of disarmament and development, I got together with Cote d'Ivoire, Netherlands, Sweden, and Zambia to discuss potential ways countries could be successful in this area. We then began to write our resolution. Being able to recommend ideas and put them into writing is one of my proudest moments. Having written a resolution in class before the conference was very helpful. Unfortunately we ran out of time and did not get to substantive debate on the second topic, but we still got our draft resolution printed!

The world is a complex one, where economics, religion, politics, and languages make every State different. Thus relations between the States are not always as smooth as one wishes them to be. Things I could have done better include being more vocal in addressing my country's position. I was able to meet with people during unmoderated causes and discuss and express my ideas there. Although, I was involved in writing a resolution for the second conference, having greater influence in the resolution writing process for the first conference would have been something I could have done better. Thus far, I became so knowledgeable about many countries, especially those that I have represented including Turkmenistan, Bolivia, and Portugal.

Also, with this experience I am even more inclined stay up to date on what is happening in the world, especially how the United States gets involved. I have learned that I really do like to discuss issues and resolutions with others that are also interested in international relations. For most of my undergrad career I focused on American Politics, but lately becoming more knowledgeable about the rest of the world is just as important. Doing the research in order to understand a country's stance has given me the ability to think in different terms and continue to expand my understanding behind the interactions of States. With this in mind I can be more vocal and feel more confident because I have learned so much in doing research, presenting



information, and playing the role of a delegate. As always there is room for improvement, but this class and the conferences has given me the extra boost I needed. I wish I had become part of the Model UN team sooner!

Thank You Dr. Grove and Dr. Scholl for such a great opportunity!

MUN (PoS 490)  
28 April 2014  
Dr. Grove/Dr. Scholl

**1. What are the most important things you learned by participating in the two Model UN conferences? Please focus on what you have learned about international relations, diplomacy, negotiations, etc.?**

The most important thing I learned about international relations at the two MUN conferences is that African nations have a certain type of stigma on them. The more I learned about Kenya and Liberia, the more I saw neocolonialist relations with the developed world. I learned a lot more about Europe's role in shaping what Africa is today, and how they continue to influence African politics. However, Kenya and Liberia are two different states. Kenya is rising in its autonomy while Liberia is still struggling (albeit not as much as the 1990's). Another thing I learned about international relations is the UN's direct effect on developing states. I have never had a developing nation before, and I was lucky to get two nations in Africa that are in two different stages of autonomy. The most important thing I learned this time around with diplomacy was to be calm and confident in everything I did. In the beginning of the committee in SF I was really shy, and after the first day I really relaxed and enjoyed the conference. Being calm and confident, I found that the other delegates were more relaxed as well. I led multiple groups of people during that conference, and I was really proud to see how far my delegating skills have come. When it came to negotiations, I learned that many of the delegates were more interested in the finished product than what it was going to be comprised of. There were so many times when the body wanted to streamline the paper instead of actually creating a resolution with the entire body's ideas. It was frustrating, but because the bodies I worked with (except for topic two) did not do that, our resolutions turned out really awesome.

**2. What are you most proud of?**

I really would like to use this opportunity to write about what I am proud of during my experience as a whole in MUN, and then I'll get specific about the last two conferences. To put it lightly, I am always proud of myself when I go to Model UN conferences. I always impress myself with how much I know,

not just about my country, but with other states as well. From Santa Barbra 2013 to San Francisco 2014, I have learned so much. I am so grateful for this experience. I am very proud of my negotiating and delegacy skills I learned from all of this, as well as the social skills! MUN helped me become more social and more confident in myself, and that's probably what I am most proud of. I was most proud of myself at the San Francisco conference because I was a lot more relaxed. In Portland, I was really wound up with school and life, and I let it affect my performance in committee. In San Francisco, I was fully committed to my committee and the resolutions I helped to pass (I think) are really great and creative. The resolution I helped create for the Ukraine special topic is one that I am most proud of from this semester. Liberia doesn't have a solid stance on the Ukraine situation; however their news agencies were publishing anti-Putin articles, and articles discussing the collapse of Ukraine's territorial integrity. Using this and going off of Liberia's successful and lengthy relationship with the UN, I decided a UN task force that would validate or invalidate Ukraine's claims against Russia would be a really great idea. I am also very proud of the study habits MUN has helped me create. Before MUN I was very disorganized and very unmotivated, and although I am not as organized as I can be, I am way better off than I was before MUN.

### **3. What could you have done better at a) NMUN-NW and b) MUNFW?**

At NMUN-NW I could have been more focused on the committee. My mind was elsewhere for that conference, but I did have a great time. When I went up to speak I would lose my train of thought mid speech, and goof up. The same thing happened in San Francisco, but that was mainly because of nerves, and I slowly redeemed myself after embarrassing myself in front of the committee (and Dr. Scholl). I also could have done better with keeping organized in Portland. There were so many times when I really could have used the policy papers and country profile, which I usually prepare for conferences. I should have been more focused at this conference, but I still had a really nice time getting to know everyone and spending some time in the beautiful city. At MUNFW I could have tried harder to

get on the Speakers List. I didn't get to go up once, and at one point I was next on the list when we moved into voting bloc. I should have spoken to the general body more; instead I was busy negotiating with everyone and writing. If I had spoken up more, maybe we wouldn't have had 44 abstentions on our last resolution. I knew what I was talking about and I was confident in my working paper, but the delegates were mentally checking out one by one and it was hard to keep their attention (hence the 44 abstentions).

#### **4. What did these experiences teach you about yourself?**

Model UN has taught me that I am intelligent, and that I have a passion for studying as many nations as I can. I would like to stress how grateful I am for MUN because it revealed this type of passion to me. Because of MUN I am now fully committed to applying for Peace Corps and bettering myself as an applicant during the next two years. Without MUN I probably wouldn't have applied to Italy or Japan, or at least I wouldn't have had the courage to do so. Not only have these experiences bettered my resume, they have opened up so many doors for me to go down, and I cannot wait to go abroad and further myself. I learned that I can be innately calm when everyone around me is stressing out, and I am really proud of that. I mentioned it already, but MUN has helped me out with my social life, and I am really grateful for it. I would say that the best part of these experiences is that I continue to surprise myself by how much I have changed for the better.

Thank you so much for these experiences. I really love what my life has become since I started studying international politics, and without the two of you I don't think I would have found the drive to go towards the subject. Both of you have helped to shape the beginning of my college career, and what I want to do with my life! I'll be missing you guys next year! Allie and I promise to take a bunch of pictures!

1 May 2014

### Reflection

This spring is my last semester at CSU Channel Islands and I am proud to say that CI's MUN team is a recognized distinguished delegation. This semester we were fortunate enough to get to compete in two separate conferences. The first was in Portland Oregon where I was the representative of the United States of America in the UN Environmental Programme. Being the representative of the United States was a really big challenge for me. This is because most delegates know the policies of the United States very thoroughly. It pushed me to be a leader and go outside my comfort zone when discussing pressing issues like transnational water ways and natural disasters. Sometimes it is difficult to play the role of the United States when you personally disagree with some of the policies. As an Environmental Science & Resource Management major, one day I want to make a difference in the United States environmental policy because I see serious flaws in regards to the environment. When playing the role of the US at this conference I tried my best to stay in character and act diplomatic even if I disagreed with it personally. I also acted very progressive in regards to sustainability because I believe that MUN is supposed to show change within the UN and not necessarily be an exact replicate of the UN currently. As the conference proceeded I found myself becoming more confident in environmental policy. Being the US you take on a huge role of responsibility and power. The ideas that I articulate about environmental sustainability were easily translated into resolutions. I enjoyed working with many different states and listening to the current issues in regards to climate change and what other states environmental issues are currently.

The second conference in San Francisco was a very different experience for me. This conference was much more formal with different rules so it took a little time to get acclimated to them. At this conference I was the representative of Sweden in the Third Assembly. The topics discussed were peoples with disabilities and Post 2015 Millennium Development Goals. Because my strength is environmental issues, this conference was really outside my comfort zone. Sometimes I asked myself how people could argue that peoples with disabilities don't have all the same rights, and if more rights, then people without disabilities? The Third Committee really opened my eyes to humanitarian issues and I really enjoyed learning about the different international perspectives. It really boggles my mind that these issues still exist. Sweden is a very progressive state in regards to sustainability and human rights. It was really fun representing them because they have really cool ideas that have been implemented and successful. Overall I really enjoyed stepping outside my comfort zone and debating about international humanitarian issues.

I am very proud of the CI delegation. We all worked extremely hard to impress our advisors. Professor Grove and Scholl expect a lot from every single one of us, and I hope that we made them proud. Personally I know that the expectations that they put on me push me to do better at each conference. I am really proud that at both conferences every single delegate in CI was awarded. This proves that we have no weak link, and we are all very strong representatives. I am very proud to be a part of the CI MUN delegation.

At NMUN-NW in Portland where I was the representative of the United States I could have prepared a lot more. I thought being the United States I would know the main policies in regards to environmental issues. This was very naïve of me; I should have done a lot more research so I would be more confident when I spoke about the particular environmental issues.

But I learned from my mistake and at MUNFW in San Francisco I was much more prepared as the delegate from Sweden. This truly benefited me, because I was much more confident when discussing the humanitarian issues. It was my personal goal to receive an award, and I didn't get an individual award but I was recognized for my hard work. At MUNFW I could have spoken a lot more. I was intimidated by the fancy P rules and it took a while for me to get acclimated to them. I also was intimidated that people could ask questions after you spoke. This scared me. Instead of making public speeches I was very active during unmoderated caucus and would discuss the issues with other delegations in small groups.

This will be my last semester with the CIMUN team. I am so sad about this. This past year has taught me a lot about myself and my passion for the environment. These experiences are really eye opening because of the HUGE gap between policy and science. I might know science well, but communicating policy is my weakness. And vice/versa for other delegates in environmental committees, they know how to communicate policy, but not the science behind the policy. These conferences open up opportunities for me to bridge the gap between policy and science. Communicating science to non-science majors is a very difficult task; but it needs to be done. I believe that representatives in UNEP need to understand science to be able to make world decisions! It is really frustrating to hear people misuse scientific terms! Model United Nations has shown me my future in policy. Ultimately I would like to conduct science to influence environmental policy. I do not know exactly what job that is, but I know it will be frustrating yet rewarding. I encourage the CIMUN team to find another passionate environmental science major to join the team, because I think that the ESRM department does not discuss the communication behind policy enough. If we want to make a difference we have to be able to communicate science to the world!

Thank you so much Dr. Grove and Dr. Scholl, this experience was truly life changing. I hope to stay in touch after graduation!



## End of semester reflection

This semester the two conferences we attended were unbelievably fantastic! It was a challenge to have two conferences in one semester, and having to write a resolution on our own. The pressure was felt the most during the process of turning in our papers for the MUNFW conference weeks after we returned from Portland. Throughout the two conferences, I am proud of being able to get my name on the speakers list, more than once this time! In the past conferences I felt like I was a very social and outspoken person during the un-moderated caucuses but strayed away when it came to the speakers list. In the MUNFW conference the UNDP committee was very small compared to the past committees like the GA. Each delegate was able to understand each other's stance on the topics presented, and to be frank, we all felt like a family, even the states that had opposing policies during the committee. The whole committee was very diplomatic, when our Russia decided not to support a resolution that was unanimously supported by the committee, every single delegate with great diplomacy made it clear that we had to come to a consensus and if necessary, accommodate to Russia's needs. After cornering Russia during the entire moderated caucus, we agreed to change some verbiage to the resolution and the resolution was passed. After that topic of discussion ended, we all gave Russia a hug and congratulated her on keeping her structure together and apologized for being too harsh. As the days concluded the UNDP worked with great effort and together we managed to pass all three resolutions for all three topics.

In every conference I've learned every delegate feels like they could have done better, whether it was more research, memorization, or addressing better issues in their speeches. At the NMUN-NW conference in Portland, an area of improvement I would need to work on is the interaction between the committee and myself when reading my opening statement. There were strong delegates that were able to keep their eye on the audience rather than the paper they were reading. After at the MUNFW I

was able to take that into consideration when speaking and this actually helped my voice become more firm and toned.

***“If one really wishes to know how justice is administered in a country, one does not question the policemen, the lawyers, the judges, or the protected members of the middle class. One goes to the unprotected—those, precisely, who need the law’s protection most —and listens to their testimony.”***

This particular quote that I came across during my research for MUN-FW from the Global Programme Annual Report 2011, caught my attention and to this day still continues to impact me. While doing research the meaning of these words meant to me, (acting out the state of Sweden), call for collective action, aiming at our third topic for the UNDP committee – Rule of Law. During my conference experience the meaning of these words transformed to a call to each and every state sitting in that committee urging for cooperation between citizens and state. Concluding the conference, like stated earlier these words stayed with me, each word then to me personally altered, to questions. Is there really testimonies? Is there freedom within states to share thoughts about their government? What does it really mean to be unprotected? What is the law that these unprotected people lie within? Not only did this lead me to question society as a whole, but it also affected me personally. I know that my twenty years of life has a testimony to tell, to those that have similar stories like mine, whom share the struggles of having first generation student issues, those who live paycheck by paycheck. We all have a testimony to release.

As each conference concludes, there is an abundant amount of experiences I take along with me; each conference teaches me the opportunities to look forward in the future committees assigned and I am so thankful by Dr. Grove and Dr. Scholl for setting aside their time in order for this class to run efficiently.

## **Reflection Paper**

The most important things learned during my participation in the Model United Nations conferences were to partake in a practical approach towards learning, and maintaining my position during the discussions whilst practicing diplomacy and maintaining decorum. It was evident from my first time in class that the Model UN course was going to be more than a lecture based classroom with students as open vessels, and professors feeding us the information needed to pass a test. Going through this experience, I learned about the differing bodies of the United Nation, as well as developed my abilities in making pragmatic decisions during my participation as a delegate of the bodies in the United Nations. As I transitioned into the group, learning from my predecessors and peers, I learned that confidence played a key role. It was productive to engage in discussions with other delegates about what would be best in the interest of our states and suggesting solutions that could help get the world on the path towards eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and many other important topics. We were aware of the issues prevalent around the world and putting our ideas towards the rest of our committee. I wanted my research and public speaking skills to be emulated through my first conference, and as I was a bit nervous, I could not have spoken up without the support of my group members. The class instilled within me a sense of belonging and reestablished my purpose in my set major. Being involved in issues that are prevalent around the world sparked a deep interest within me.

As a delegate, I learned to not include ones own personal judgments as we are representing a particular state. As such state, we are role-playing as one that is familiar with its

ideologies and interests. Among the imperative information gained, I also developed an understanding of the cultural integration within certain states and their allies. After the researching, caucusing, delegating I learned more from others than I could have learned in a single lecture session. During the whole process, I had to think of solutions that could help our pertaining state conditions in order to improve its infrastructures and maintain sustainability. As delegates, we were engaging in productive dialog and through collaboration with others, we were able to reach a consensus on the final resolutions. During both conferences, as a delegation of the ECOSOC body and the UNDP body, we had to keep in mind that our role was to make suggestions that a certain body take the set resolution and clauses in to account and focus its effort on the particular issues brought up.

I am most proud of my delegation in the MUNFW conference, the UNDP committee, we were able to pass through all the set topics and three resolutions. Within these resolutions, I produced two clauses with substantial information to support my reasoning. During the discussion there were other nations opposed to my idea, however I stood my ground because I knew that the clause I had brought up would help to better serve underdeveloped states. It was useful to be focused solely on one state and having to research every part of it in order to fully represent its principles and decree. It brought me with great pride as I represented these developing communities and forced me to think of ways that the body could serve these countries. As other delegates representing developed states wanted to overlook my input, I went back and reevaluated the situation objectively. Patience and persistence was key during this simulation and I continued looking for supporting research that could bring my case to reason. I conveyed my research and statistics regarding the educational aptitudes of those opposing nations in comparison to the state that I had been representing, Liberia. I pointed out an evident

inadequacy that had to be improved upon. Their argument was that education should be equal to all and as a body, we should not exclude developed nations. As I concur with the previous statement, I felt that it was in the best interest of our body to focus their efforts solely on the educational aspect of underdeveloping states to educate their citizens, as they were not reaching the MDG goals. Ways that would help this effort were to educate the developing states' citizens to be trained to enter the private sector and legislative sectors as our topic was focusing on reaching the 2015 development agenda and creating a sustainable development.

At the NMUN-NW, my first mistake was that I did not bring my computer. I felt like a sitting duck but through this time I was able to speak up more on behalf of my state, Bolivia and it helped that another delegate was generous enough to lend me hers however my involvement was mostly helping her develop her clause through supporting information. Through my first day, I felt a bit lost and was unsure of myself and so in this conference, confidence was a huge portion of where I needed to improve. I also needed work on the language used and the rules of procedure during the moderated caucuses. In the MUNFW however, I was more confident and had the experience of the previous conference to guide me through what to do and what to avoid. At the MUNFW, I could have improved on my public speaking skills. I knew the information I wanted to say however, I had a script in front of me because I wanted to make sure I did not forget anything important. It was helpful but I would like to work on speaking eloquently in front of other delegates during the speakers list. Viewing another delegate from our university, it was inspirational because everyone gravitated towards what he said and his confidence in himself and his information is what I would like to emulate in my next conference.

These experiences have helped me develop where I would like to see myself in the future. I had never been away from California and so traveling to another state brought up a different

outlook in itself. I would like to learn more about issues prevalent around the world, and more about foreign policy and how it relates to issues on the home front. This experience has given me the ability to gain a better understanding of how each entity in the United Nations functions and throughout my time off, I will use it to further prepare for the next conference. All in all, I am glad I was a part of this group because it has opened up many opportunities to grow further and to develop my skills as a learner, leader and team player.

## Reflection Essay MUN

Spring 2014

May 2, 2014

You know that recurring dream some people have of being glued down in front of an audience in their underwear as people point and laugh. Yeah...that is how I felt as I stood there at the podium overlooking a conglomerate of dressed up college students pretending to be diplomats, representing countries the average American doesn't even know exists, like Djibouti and Azerbaijan. I sure as hell didn't know they existed before Model United Nations. One thing to note is these students are feisty nerds who are not going to let you get away with anything, and I am more than a little scared of them, as everyone else should be, elementary school bullies got nothing on these guys. The interrogation continued for what felt like an eon, about my groups working paper, which I thought was relatively straightforward, and that's just it, nothing is straightforward in Model United Nations or in life. I swallowed, my mouth went dry "Could the delegate please repeat the question," I croaked. I remember chanting the phrase, this will soon be over, this will soon be over, this will soon be over, again and again in my head. Stumbling over my words, failing to understand questions being thrown at me, while jumbling around my head for ways to refer to myself in the third person, it was absolutely traumatizing! "Could the delegate further explain...", all I heard after that was blah, blah, blah, mind blank and palms sweaty, I looked over at Joey my teammate and confidant to see if he could answer the question. He stared at me mouth open and eyes blank... well I was on my own. Neither he or the girl standing next to me could save us from our humiliation.

I didn't think it could get worse until I looked up and saw our advisor Dr. Scholl walk into the spacious conference room with the scattered chairs in the back and start taking pictures. Our ignominy was on display and I was pretty much done after that, any chance of recuperating from my brain drain was gone. My stomach dropped, embarrassing myself in front of a bunch of scary nerds I would probably never see again was no a big deal, embarrassing myself in front of my professor was a whole other story. Especially a professor who I didn't want to let down. "Thank you delegates you may take your seats," walking down the podium steps and back to my seat was the ultimate walk of shame. I wanted to dig a big hole and bury myself in it. The disappointment I felt was overwhelming. "We will convene tomorrow morning at 10:00a.m., you are dismissed." Model United Nations is an all encompassing experience that gives you the opportunity no other class will, to develop professionally, academically, but most importantly personally, because it forces you to face terrifying experiences of having to defend yourself and your ideas to complete strangers, some of which are hell bent on making you feel inferior. This sounds intense because it is, but the reality is that life in its rawness is not for the faint of heart, and to be successful you have to learn to have faith in yourself and to improvise when things go wrong, easier said than done.

That night I lay awake replaying the mortifying moments in my head and reflecting on how I was going to face everyone in committee, but most importantly Dr. Scholl. I avoided him after committee, because I was fearful he would tell me what I felt was true, that I did horrible, and how I should not be in MUN. I had let myself down, but I didn't want to let down my advisors who had given me the opportunity to participate in MUN. That night I decided to just own up to my failure and not let it get the best of me. After thinking about it for most of the night I realized that what really bothered me was not being embarrassed in front of my fellow



delegates. I mean I embarrass myself on a daily basis. Flashback to the first day of committee when I climbed up the stage, because I didn't see the stairs, not to mention in the platform heels I decided to bring to MUN, not a good idea by the way. I mean, I felt absolutely no shame after that incident, in fact I laughed at myself as I gave my speech. I could only imagine what the rest of the delegates in the committee were thinking as I hoisted myself up on that stage, but truth be told I didn't really care. They placed stairs on both side of the stage the next day, they had me to thank for that convenience. No, what really bothered me was messing up in front of my professor, past experiences in life had conditioned me to believe that messing up was in no way an option. Those times when I did I was rewarded with shame, and being lectured as to how I was just not meant for whatever endeavor I had failed to do well. The anxiety of failing in front of those who mattered has held me back, and kept me from clueing certain people in, on my endeavors and at times life. It haunts me to mess up in front of people that matter to me, something I had always known and failed to fully accept as a problem. Personal experiences good or bad make you who you are professionally and academically, and can affect you in these areas, coming to this realization gives you that ability to work on that which affect you negatively.

I walked into committee the next morning with my head held high, and with the help and support of my fellow teammates Edgar and Joey, we lobbied the hell out of our resolution. When it was my turn on the speakers list I faced my doubts got up there and defended our resolution. We convinced countries that our working paper called for drastic changes within the security council, but was more symbolic than anything else, which was true, to an extent. In the end our resolution was the only one to pass in that topic, and if felt really good. The odds were stacked up against us, but that didn't matter. Negotiations can always be made and diplomacy

can always be reestablished. That is the beauty of Model United Nations you learn how important it is to work with others and how to go about it. The common factor in all negotiations is that they all require human beings, and it is this factor that makes them so elastic and flexible. People are never static they can change their minds, their perceptions of you can be remolded, which makes it so there is always a chance. Negotiations are a part of everyday life whether we realize it or not. We negotiate our pay, prices for things, for jobs, and with our parents, sisters, kids, professors. Learning to be diplomatic will only further your ability to negotiate and get your way.

What I learned about diplomacy is that it is a must for any concrete negotiation. When you are diplomatic you are more effective, yelling and screaming at someone does not further your cause. It is being considerate and listening to others that advances your goals. It is in my opinion that part of the reason why things don't get done as effectively as they could in the United Nations and in International arena is that our political leaders are not being diplomatic, even though their title suggests they should be. Not just our political leaders are at fault, but the everyday person who refuses to see the importance of diplomacy and what it means. It is easier said than done, I know this. Walking into a Model UN conference will make you come to the conclusion that people are complicated and can make things more complex than they have to be. This complication usually stemming from their refusals to listen or vice versa. Still, even with the obstacle of self-interest, diplomacy and negotiation is the only way to come to viable solutions. Until we learn to be more effective diplomats and negotiators problems will remain unheard, yelling matches will only continue, or worse things will escalate to violence. Diplomacy is equal to teamwork, and it is something that can be seen as rare these days, just look at our own political system here in the United States.

I was still waiting for Dr. Scholl to tell me how stupid I was for not being prepared, for embarrassing myself, and how I should quit while I was ahead, but he never did. I don't think he realized what I was thinking or feeling or why I was avoiding him. To come to the realization that not every adult thinks the same way as the adults I have been surrounded by do, was kind of mind-blowing even though it seems like common sense. The contributing factor to our Model United Nations team success is not the just the students, but our amazing advisors. Who don't drill us and add to the pressure and anxiety we are already having to deal with at these intimidating conferences, but who act as a support system. Who are always there to answer our questions, and vent with us when other delegates get on our nerves. Dr. Grove who goes to talk to chairs when injustices have been committed, and offers insights that are always needed. Dr. Scholl who helps us laugh at ourselves when things go wrong. Looking back at the text I received from Dr. Scholl after my fiasco at the podium only cements this very apparent truth. "Excellent," is what it said. I am proud to be part of a team in whose advisors place us, the students, at the center. Who dance on chairs when we win awards, and see the best in us when we sometimes don't deserve it. How liberating it is to be ok with messing up sometimes, thanks Dr. Scholl for teaching me this. We all carry with us personal baggage and experiences that can affect us in our academic and professional lives. It's overcoming them and having the chance to that is best kind opportunity and one that has been given to me. I understand that I have yet to overcome my fear of disappointing those who I care about, but I am one step closer, and plan on working on it. I am thankful everyday for having two advisors who I can call true friends, who support me and help me grow everyday. I love them very much, long live MUN!

## **Model United Nations Reflection Spring 2014**

It was extremely difficult for me to narrow down and finally choose so many positive and life changing aspects that happened to me during my conferences this past spring semester during Model United Nations. I probably changed my mind a good six times before I actually finished this response, but I will be discussing what the most important things I have learned because of my participation in the two Model United Nations conferences this semester, what I am most proud of from these conferences, what I could have done better at both the Portland conference and the San Francisco conference, and what these experiences taught me about myself.

The most important thing that I learned at the Portland and San Francisco conference was that even when other delegates did not play their role right, or did not act in a diplomatic manner, it was still important to keep interacting with the other delegates so that eventually the outcome of your hard work is seen. It is easy to spot who is not prepared for the conference or who isn't taking their committee seriously, and in my first conference in Seattle, these people were very discouraging. Luckily, now knowing better in Portland and San Francisco, and because of the great support system my team was, it was easier to form studious bonds with those who were dedicated to find solutions. During this spring semester I also learned that negotiations did not have to occur within the same group of people. In our San Francisco conference, it was wonderful to branch out and work with different delegates for each agenda item as well as being a buffer between the United States and the Russian Federation.

The thing that I am most proud of from both of my conferences this past semester is that all of the resolutions that I had worked on were passed. Having seen negativity from certain

delegates, I was initially worried that one of my resolutions would not get passed. This resolution was discussing the idea of building an international space center here on our planet to help developing nations grow a stronger national space program in hopes to better promote peace of space in the international community. This program asked developed nations to volunteer space technology, whether it was older or recent, to this center where experts would be willing and able to educate the developing nations that wished to learn. The delegate of the United States did not like that the delegate of Cuba contributed to our working paper and began to rally NATO states and other states with close ties to the U.S. against our paper. In past conferences, I would have crawled into a corner with extreme embarrassment; this conference I was able to find the balance between grace and anger, and then project that into assertiveness. I, as well as the other delegates working on this paper, were able to negotiate with Cuba, to have him recognized in the working paper rather than have him sponsor the working paper, and thus adding the support of the United States along with its allies. Being able to show determination through this experience, among others, is one of my proudest moments the conferences.

One thing that I could have done better for the Portland conference was to prepare, not more, but in a different way. Having accomplished one conference before hand, I thought I knew how to prepare myself, and prepared in the same manner as I did before. While I was ready for the conference, I realized that I was somewhat in a stagnate state. After talking to my team I learned that I didn't have to stay with one form of research. I was encouraged to try different research methods and thankfully I was able to use the new research methods that I learned when preparing for our San Francisco conference. I've always hated the cliché 'if it isn't broke, don't fix it' because it forces you to loose all sense of adventure and become mundane. While I was

not ill prepared for the Portland conference, I felt so much more confident going into San Francisco, because I knew my work contained numerous, well thought –out, fractures within it.

One thing that I would have done differently at the San Francisco conference would have been to be more confident. Out of the three conference I have been to, the conference in San Francisco was the only one where I didn't add my name to the speakers list, and for that I am extremely disappointed in myself. In unmoderated caucus I was assertive and was being listened to rather well; I was able to coordinate meetings with other delegates as well as negotiations between opposing nations. I went into the conference feeling great about my position and policies but once in committee—actually after the first P-23, Short Speech or Comment—I froze. I began to second guess all of my hard work. I started to think that I was not a good enough delegate to represent our school; I was very nervous. It just so happens though, I am very fortunate to have amazing team members and they were finally able to shake some sense into my thick skull. They gave me a wonderful pep talk and I felt ready for the conference again. So while I didn't feel comfortable enough to be on the speakers list, I did present our working paper to our committee, answered questions pertaining to it and also raised my concerns and questions to the entire committee when I felt it to be necessary.

Both of these conferences taught me a lot about myself. They taught me that it is alright to depend on others sometimes, because without teamwork, it would be difficult to get anything accomplished. These conferences taught me to be more confident in my capabilities and to not second guess myself because failure can only happen if I do not try in the first place. These conferences taught me that a leader is not someone who speaks the loudest but is the person observing and interacting with everyone in the room. These conferences taught me that even the most intelligent person in the conference, while intimidating at first, is still a human being and

most importantly, still a student willing to absorb more knowledge. These conferences taught me that education is not just something learned in the classroom, but is something gained by its' application outside of the stereotypical setting. Most importantly, these conferences continuously reaffirmed the passion I have for international studies and Model United Nations. I cannot wait for fall semester 2015 so that I can [if Dr. Grove and Dr. Scholl are agreeable] join the team again, solve more world problems while winning awards for our school!

## **MUN Reflection Paper**

There is nothing that I have enjoyed more during my college career than being part of the MUN team. Being part of the MUN team is one of the best learning experiences that a student can have at CSUCI. MUN offers students a chance for students to learn about the different policies from the different states of the world and discover how other countries view international organizations and the international scene in general. More importantly, students that participate in MUN have the unique opportunity to develop skills that are not normally acquired at a university. For me, the most important things I have learned from MUN did not come from researching the foreign policies of the many countries that I have represented but from working together with dozens of different people who represent dozens of different countries, all with unique interests, in order to solve a crucial issue in the international community.

This semester has been my favorite semester being part of the MUN team. There is more that I can take away from my experience this semester than the last two semesters combined. Out of the many things that I learned from these two conferences, perhaps the most important one is gaining the ability to find a middle ground between people arguing for different things. One great example of this happened in San Francisco where I was able to get Sudan and Kazakhstan to support the European working paper. As Portugal, I was caucusing with other European Union members like Germany, France, and Spain, as well as other states that were not members of the European Union such as Sweden and Australia. One of the biggest criticisms that our working paper was receiving was that many of the developing states saw our paper as developed states trying place more international regulations on the developing states' energy development plans. Two states that had rallied the support from most other developing states were Sudan and Kazakhstan; Sweden and I decided to try to get the developing states' support by having Sudan



and Kazakhstan sponsor our resolution. As it turned out, in order to have Sudan and Kazakhstan sponsor our paper, we only needed to negotiate two numbers and add one preambular clause. This led to having the overwhelming majority of the committee support one resolution and having the resolution pass with no objections.

The single thing that I am the most proud of this semester is my performance in San Francisco. While MUNFW does not give individual awards, I felt that my participation in this conference was better than in all previous conferences. I felt that I was heavily involved in the discussions for the two topics that were covered in my committee and I was a sponsor of one resolution that passed and another draft resolution that unfortunately failed. What I am most proud of about my performance in MUNFW is that I was always actively engaged in the topics and I felt I was a key part in moving the topics along and making progress within the committee. It was an exciting moment when all the delegations were awarded because I knew Joe and Nick performed spectacularly in committee and I am sure that all of our delegates deserved to be awarded.

There are a few things that I would have liked to do differently for both conferences. Like always, one can never be too prepared for any conference, so knowing more about my states' policies towards the topics discussed in both sessions would not have gone amiss. One thing that I wish I would have done better in the Portland conference is perhaps being more assertive with my opinions. Because I represented the United States, I did not want to outright bully the committee; however, I felt I did not have the presence that the United States typically has in international committees. I did still feel that I had some influence in the committee, but not as much as I would have liked. I tried to adjust for the San Francisco conference and made it a goal to be more engaged in the various discussions about the different topics. I feel that I met my goal

and as far as effort goes, I can't complain about my performance in MUNFW. One thing I wish I would have done differently in the San Francisco conference is rallying more support for the working paper I was sponsoring during the first topic and maybe letting people know that our working group's interests did not go against anyone else's.

Being part of MUN this semester taught me a great lesson that I will do well to remember for the rest of my MUN life, and that lesson is that sometimes perceptions dictate policy more than actual policy. The one very fatal mistake that was made during the discussion of the first topic in the San Francisco conference was the assumption that our working paper would speak for itself and that people would objectively vote on solely on what the draft resolution said. The disappointing first topic reminded me that all committees are composed of people and people don't act solely on reason and logic, but they also act on preconceived notions. The original perception of our paper was a negative one and a failure to fix this misconception ended up in a waste of a very good resolution that should have passed almost unanimously.

May 8, 2014  
POLS 490

### Reflection Paper

This past spring semester marks the last semester of my Model United Nations career at CSU Channel Islands. My time being a part of the Model United Nations team has truly changed my life. I have learned more about the international community and the interactions that take place between nation states through this experience than I ever thought possible. Considering it was my last semester I could not have envisioned a better way to go out. This semester the MUN team attended two conferences. The first conference was the National Model United Nations North West conference held in Portland, Oregon, while the second conference was Far West Model United Nations held in San Francisco, California. This was the first semester the CSU Channel Islands team attended the conference in Portland and the second time I have attended the conference in San Francisco. Both conferences consisted of students from all over the country and even from Canada.

The Portland conference took place in February of 2014. At this conference I represented Kenya on the Human Rights Council (HRC). This was my first time working on one of the smaller committees at a larger conference and I must say that I really enjoyed my time on the Human Rights Council. The topics for this committee were 1.) The right to Adequate Housing and Protection from Forcible Evictions, 2.) Ensuring the Right to Clean Water and Sanitation for All, and 3.) Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic. These topics ranged from very interesting from a political science student perspective (Syria) to very applicable to a country such as Kenya (adequate housing and the right to clean water. This was by far my favorite conference I have ever attended. It was the perfect mix of professionalism and a relaxed environment in which to conduct the conference. The fact that it was held in Portland made it

that much more enjoyable. At this conference I learned to work within my regional block more so than the previous conferences. The African block was very well represented at this conference making it easy for us as a region to influence the policies that we supported or disapproved of. Sadly, I once again spent the entire conference debating the crisis in Syria. This proved both fruitful and frustrating. The Human Rights Council was lacking a Syria, Russia, and China making it rather easy to pass a paper through that the body felt would properly address the human rights violations occurring within the country. While the process was much easier to accomplish due to the absent countries who would have been opponents to passed paper I still would have preferred that they were present. Model United Nations is supposed to be an educational experience where the obstacles you face force you to come up with more creative and intelligent solutions. Having these other countries present would have made the conference and this topic specifically much more divisive and as a further result much more interesting.

The San Francisco conference was much the same as it was last year. I have never been a huge fan of this committee due to its size and lack of professionalism by those who run the conference. Regardless of these critiques, I always enjoy my time spent and Model United Nations Far West. At this conference I represented the state of Liberia on the International Atomic Energy Agency. This confused me at first being the Liberia has no sources of atomic energy and no real plans of developing such a resource in the near future. After attending this conference I realized that despite not having the resources which may or may not be debated during United Nations conferences it is still vitally important for the smaller states to be represented on as many committees as possible. The smaller states really pushed for the larger, developed states to share their technologies as well as improve their waste disposal methods. Climate Change is a huge issue going forward and similar to the real world it was widely ignored

at this conference. It is extremely frustrating that many of the States present were only concerned with obtaining atomic energy or the money involved with atomic energy. This experience really put the Climate Change threat into perspective as well as the obstacles facing this challenging topic. This conference did not give out individual awards but rewards for country delegations were passed out after the last committee session. All of CSU Channel Islands won awards for their delegations which was an incredibly amazing accomplishment for our school and team. I could not be more proud of the team and the work we accomplished.

The Portland conference provided me with my proudest moment since joining the Model United Nations team almost 2 years ago. I was presented with an Outstanding Position Paper award for my position papers as the delegate of Kenya. I had never won any kind of award before, let alone one of an individual nature so this will always remain my proudest moment of my Model United Nations career. Winning an award at a National conference really put all of my hard work in perspective. I was extremely proud to be able to win an award for my professors and my team. It really felt like I accomplished my main goal and purpose for joining Model United Nations in the first place, to make my team, and mostly my professors proud as well as to show that I belonged on the team. Overall this long road of Model United Nations has taught me quite a bit about myself, but more importantly it has shown me all of the challenges I still face. I am far too comfortable going with the flow of the conferences and going forward with my life I will need to make a greater effort to become a “player” in the activities I take part in as opposed to being a “piece”. By being more assertive and aggressive in my pursuits I hope to eventually make as large of an impact in the real world of global politics as I was able to make in the mock world of Model United Nations. I cannot thank Professor Grove and Scholl enough for allowing me to take part in this life changing opportunity.

Thank you for everything you have done for the team as well as me personally. None of this would be possible without everything you do for this program and its students.

May 2, 2014  
POLS 490  
Model UN

### **Reflection Paper**

As I look back to last semester, I realize that I knew nothing about the world. I've been living my life worried about how difficult my life has been, without giving a thought to how hard peoples lives are in other parts of the world. I know now that politics surrounds every aspect of ones life, no matter where in the world you are. I got into political science because at a young age I saw the disparity in quality of life, distribution of wealth, and inequalities of our current political structures. My dream was to become a lawyer so I could protect those who couldn't defend themselves and eventually become a politician to fight the inequality. Through Model of the United Nations, I am able to see the similarities between domestic and international relations: in the needs of people, the progress to better quality of life and lessening the inequalities. I've learned of the difficulties in policymaking, especially in an international body like the United Nations, because different states have there own individual needs and agendas. Through MUN you learn the importance of negotiations, because if you want your policies passed you need people on board, and if you want their vote they most likely want something in return. Most importantly diplomacy is important because wars and conflict are never in favor of the people, and the people always lose, no matter the result. Honestly, I think the United Nations is helpful, inclusive and just really cool. To see all member states, no matter their monetary or political power, voice their opinion, discuss together and have a vote, in what happens around the world, is refreshing. I can now see the larger perspective and I'm excited to become more involved and a lot more informed as I continue this adventure.

Model of the United Nations was definitely a learning experience and I'm very excited to be a part of CSUCI's delegation. I'm very happy I took the chance on MUN, I was very scared at first but all the work, anxiety and lack of sleep was worth it.

The class wasn't easy for me this semester, partly because I took on too many classes and didn't manage my time wisely and the other is because I didn't know what I was doing, in the beginning. I'm so happy I stuck through, did my research, observed and asked questions because it really did pay off. Honestly, I am very proud of the all work the whole team put together and how encouraging they all are. I must say I was worried I wouldn't fit in with the crowd, being new to international studies and while most of the class was already so knowledgeable. Right away I felt how close the MUN team was and that it was never a competition between us. Through cooperation we were able to get through two mock sessions and two amazing conferences. We were all able to secure awards in both MUN conferences, which adds to how amazing our team was this semester. It feels incredible when people who aren't in MUN come up to you, around campus, and congratulate you, even though you haven't even told them about the conference. You get the sense of being in a distinguished group on campus, which makes you feel like you are actually working hard and doing something worthwhile. I'm also proud of Dr. Scholl and Dr. Grove because through their guidance they helped create leaders, professionals and students for life. I know I've been inspired to continue to work hard and put that much more effort into my work I produce.

My first ever MUN was at the National Model of the United Nations Northwest in Portland, Oregon. Although I had a lot of fun on the trip, I felt as if I hadn't done enough at the conference. I know it was because I wasn't as prepared as I should have been. I did beat myself up about it but I was also very happy that our delegation won an award. I struggled with my position papers in the beginning because I didn't ask for help, but I soon learned that it was a necessary step. I understand that this



whole process was a learning experience and that the only way to get better is through practice and experience. I knew I needed to redeem myself for the second conference in San Francisco. Although I did spend more time on the position papers and research, I still had issues with turning them in promptly on time. Time management is definitely my number one issue; I tend to procrastinate on work and then I panic when I run out of time. The anxiety can be debilitating at times, so I need to make sure I continue to practice proper time management skills. It is hard for me to get out of my comfort zone so I tend to stick to people I know, because I don't want to get rejected. At the MUN conferences it is important to mingle and meet new people, especially if you want their support. I was able to push myself more at the MUNFW than NMUN-NW but I know I could have done more. I want to be able to lead a group, head a resolution, without help from my teammates, and hold my own against those who think know everything.

I had an amazing time at the Model of the United Nations Far West in San Francisco. Having veterans like Stephanie G. and Joseph in the G.A. at the MUNFW really helped push me to be better, do more, and be more vocal. I may not be an expert at writing resolutions or comfortable talking in front of large audiences, but I love listening to others, getting people together, discussing ideas in smaller groups and rallying support. It was amazing to see what hard work and persistence can accomplish, even if it is just for MUN. It was also nice to know that I had people to discuss the topics with and get their opinions. Even though we were in different committees it was nice to discuss what was going on, what topics were being brought up and our opinions on different resolutions, since we were representing the same three countries.

This semester has really pushed me further than I've ever had to go. I never expected MUN to be so much work, but it really did pay off. I think that because of my insecurities I tend to keep to myself and not be as assertive as I should be with what I know and what I can add. Through this whole experience I was able to learn more about my work habits and myself, met incredible people who are

just as passionate about helping others as I am, and gained a love for international relations. I'm happy I opened up about the issues I was having with the class. The feedback I received really gave me a boost of confidence, which carried on to my other classes. I'm happy to continue on this journey with the amazing people I met through MUN and hopefully we can continue to build upon each other cooperatively. I'm so excited to keep learning and pushing myself to try new things. My goal for next semester is to inspire others like the people I met this year have inspired me. I've always hoped and wished I could do more, but now I finally have the confidence to know that I am capable of so much. I have the people I've met, followed, listened to, and argued with in MUN to thank for that!