

# Washington Model Organization of the American States Student Handbook

## Introduction

What is the Washington Model Organization of the American States? The WMOAS is a simulation of the General Assembly of the Organization of the American States. The Model is conducted under the auspices of the Institute for Diplomatic Dialogue in the Americas (IDDA) and is supported by the Organization of American States itself. The Model is held in Washington, DC, every spring. University students from all parts of the Americas attend and participate, representing as many as thirty-four member states.

The Model provides students with an excellent opportunity to test their knowledge and diplomatic skills with their peers from other schools, during a five-day period of intense interaction and work. This interaction is where the WMOAS is truly enjoyable and educational. The ability to speak with so many varied and unique individuals from different backgrounds allows students to broaden their conversational and interpersonal skills in a way that classrooms simply cannot teach. The value of this experience depends heavily on the investment students make to prepare for the Model. The more prepared students are, the more fun they tend to have at the Model, and the more profitable the experience in terms of learning. Less preparation means less work, but it also means a less satisfying experience.

This Student Handbook aims to help you get the most out of your WMOAS experience. Sections below begin with an Overview of the Model, and then cover topics including preparation for the Model, and what to do during the Model. There is a Glossary of terms, and a sample Proposed Draft Resolution (PDR) at the end.

Note that a major resource for all participants is the WMOAS web page: <http://www.wmoas.org>. Many of the items mentioned in this Handbook will have much more detailed descriptions on the web page. For example, the agenda of topics is briefly mentioned below, but the current complete agenda of topics, with the full names of the five committees, is available on the web page. Similarly, the Rules of Procedure and the Model's Program are available online.

## Overview of the Model

Each participating university represents a member state of the OAS and sends a delegation of up to ten students, one of whom is the Head Delegate. Some delegations also include a Public Information Officer who can help coordinate the efforts of the delegation. This diplomatic team is divided among five committees, each of which has an agenda of up to four substantive topics, topics that will be the basis for diplomatic work during the Model. Every delegation is represented on each committee, so there are a maximum of 34 delegates at the committee table (and another 34 delegates in the room, seated behind their delegate partners).

Within each delegation, the pair of delegates assigned to each committee is expected to become very familiar with the agenda topics of the committee to which they are assigned, and each delegate is normally expected to produce an Item for consideration by the committee. This Item for consideration can be a Proposed Draft Resolution (PDR) or a White Paper (note that in the 2010 Model, White Papers

are restricted to the General Committee.) Students prepare their PDR or White Paper, before coming to Washington, present it at the Model, participate in its consideration by the appropriate committee, and deliberate on the Items prepared by other delegates, sometimes in formal sessions, sometimes in caucus sessions.

The conduct of the Model is governed by Rules of Procedure, an important document for all participants. The Program, or Schedule of Events, provides a calendar for participants. Usually, opening and closing ceremonies take place at the headquarters of the OAS, at 17<sup>th</sup> and Constitution, NW, in Washington, and other committee sessions usually take place in the official hotel for the Model. Delegates usually have a briefing at the OAS Mission of the country they are representing, on Day 2 of the Model. Committee and caucusing sessions take place from Day 2 to Day 5. At the Model, students will interact with other students from universities from all around the Americas. The goal is to work diplomatically to produce consensus on all Items under consideration.

### **The Committee Structure at the Model OAS**

As mentioned earlier, the Model is divided into five committees:

- General Committee (formed by Head Delegates);
- First Committee (Juridical and Political Affairs);
- Second Committee (Hemispheric Security);
- Third Committee (Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities and Inter-American Council for Integral Development – CIDI); and
- Fourth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary Affairs).

Each delegate is assigned to one of these five committees. Each committee will have an agenda of three to four topics on which delegates will present an Item for consideration at the Model. An example of a topic might be “Encouraging Corporate Responsibility in the Hemisphere,” from the Third Committee. Each student presents only one Item of business, which means not all agenda topics will be covered by each team of two delegates, but the two delegates on the committee need to be familiar with all of the topics on the agenda in order to deliberate when other member states introduce business. In short, students become expert on one agenda topic, the one they will work on for their primary research, but students also need to be familiar with the other agenda topics for the committee. The Agenda is available online at the Model’s home page.

Topics in the General Committee cover broad issues that affect all countries in the Hemisphere. The topics can range from bilateral and multilateral trade agreements to the promotion of good governance and strengthening of democracy. Delegates of the General Committee will find it useful to be familiar with the important documents from every committee. They should also be familiar with the Democratic Charter and the Social Charter of the OAS.

The first committee deals primarily with issues of law. Important OAS organizations to look at are the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the Committee on Hemispheric Security. There are many other resources that you can consult for this area, such as the Millennium Development Goals, Multinational Monitor, and other organizations involved in specific issues of the First Committee.

The second committee’s agenda includes issues such as terrorism, weapons, gangs, and international treaties. There are several important OAS bodies that you will need to consult, including the Inter-

American Commission Against Terrorism and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Commission. Other important resources on topics commonly seen in the Second Committee are the World Health Organization, the Gates Foundation, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The third committee deals with issues of civil rights and social responsibility. It is important to be familiar with the Social Charter of the Americas. There are many grassroots organizations that would be good resources to consult on that issue. You should also be familiar with the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, the Department of Social Employment of the OAS, and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. Depending on your topic, you may also wish to consult Global Policy, a UN monitoring group. Another possibility is Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index.

The fourth committee is the budget committee. It examines how to finance resolutions and OAS programs and initiatives. It is therefore necessary that the members of the Fourth Committee have a working knowledge of the OAS's budget and financial situation. Delegates should be able to recognize which funding plans are feasible and which are hokum. The Budget Committee receives all passed resolutions to analyze them for financial feasibility. If you do not know how the OAS funds its projects, you will not know what to do when this comes up. Members of the Budget Committee should know who has paid their dues and who has not. A good resource for OAS budget activity is the Central American Bank for Economic Integration. The annual OAS budget is posted on its website and [www.wmoas.org](http://www.wmoas.org).

### **Preparing for the Model**

Your faculty advisor will have sent in an application to the Model Coordinators, and will have received an assigned member state to represent in the next Model. Meanwhile, an agenda of topics for the upcoming Model is usually available online several months before the Model meets in Washington. Usually, the faculty advisor will assign students to one of the five committees, and ask students to select which agenda topic they wish to work on. You should try to pick a committee and topic based on your individual interests, since you will become an expert in that subject by the end of the process. The more interest you have in your topic, the easier it will be for you to write about it and the more interesting it will be to research.

From that point forward, students have several tasks:

- Research the agenda topic itself: what is this issue about? What are the hemispheric issues? Are there schools of thought in the literature on what to do about this issue?
- Research the member state, so as to determine the issue position your country is likely to take on the agenda topic.
- Research the OAS: what are the relevant organs of the OAS? What has the OAS historically done on this agenda topic, and who in the OAS has done it? In other words, researching past General Assembly resolutions and other OAS documents is vital.
- Decide if the research will produce a Proposed Draft Resolution or a White Paper (in 2010, only the General Committee delegates may choose to produce a White Paper); become familiar with the procedures for submitting either type of Item;
- Become familiar with the Rules of Procedure. Ideally, your faculty advisor will conduct mock committee sessions so that you can see the procedures in action before you arrive in DC.
- Finally, remember that the students in your delegation are a diplomatic team representing the same country, so be prepared to share information and to work to ensure that your fellow

delegates are staying “in character” when they take a position on an agenda topic.

Remember that the WMOAS web page has many resources for you in several of these tasks, including, for example, the format for Proposed Draft Resolutions and links to web pages for each member state’s diplomatic mission.

### **Creating a PDR or White Paper**

The basic goal for each delegate is to submit electronically before the Model, and then take to the Model with them, their Proposed Draft Resolution or White Paper. Each delegate from each school is expected to have one of these Items for consideration during the Model. After being assigned to a Committee and picking the agenda topic you will work on, the research begins, following the list of tasks above.

As you prepare for the Model during your research and writing, try to put yourself in the mindset of the country you represent, which may well mean you have to suspend some of your normal understanding of issues. For example, imagine that your agenda topic is something like: “Promotion of Hemispheric Cooperation and Border Security related to Terrorism, Gangs, and Drug Trafficking.” The stance of the United States tends to be for the eradication of drugs at the source, which, in practical terms, means funding coca eradication actions in Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia. Bolivia, on the other hand, has attempted on several occasions to decriminalize the coca leaf for cultural heritage purposes. If you were representing Bolivia, it would be out of character to try to pass a resolution that is against the production of the coca leaf, regardless of your personal feelings about the issue. Colombia might or might not favor eradication of coca, since the eradication process introduces chemicals into the environment and affects agriculture generally, yet Colombia might vote with the United States because of military aid or other bilateral considerations. Similarly, Peru might have a conflict of interest because of its cultural support for Bolivia and its interest in a free trade agreement with the United States, and Peru might therefore abstain. Normally, the differences in viewpoints will not be this polarized, but issue positions will rarely be the same between more than a few countries. It is your mission to explore the position of the state you represent and to remain in character while at the Model.

### **White Papers: Format and Structure**

The opportunity to submit a White Paper for consideration at the Model is new in 2010, and for the 2010 Model is restricted to the General Committee. A White Paper is a research document that a) focuses on the agenda topic as a general question, and b) presents the position of the delegation regarding that agenda topic. A White Paper is a delegation’s attempt to help the other delegations deliberate, by providing sound research information. A White Paper requires no action by the Committee: it is presented, there is a statement by the delegate (like the Proponent Statement for a PDR), and there is a Question Period (as with PDRs). There is neither debate nor amendments, nor is there voting. White Papers, because they seek to provide a solid basis for subsequent deliberation, will be presented first in the schedule, i.e. prior to the consideration of any PDRs.

### **Proposed Draft Resolutions: Format and Structure**

Proposed Draft Resolutions, the second type of Item delegates may introduce, consist of four basic sections. The first is the Title, which should explain what exactly the PDR is proposing to do. It’s easy to imagine the title being the first thing you write down, as well as the last section you polish before

submitting the PDR for review. The second section is the Preamble. This section details the background of the resolution; why it is important, what has been done in the past, and the extent of the problem. This is where branches of the OAS are referred to, as well as previous resolutions and documents issued by the OAS. This section sets up the rationale for the action or “operative” or “resolve” clauses, which is the third part of the resolution. These are the actual steps to be taken. The Resolve Clauses are your statements of what it is you hope to accomplish should this resolution pass, and they form the substance of the debate in the committee.

The last part of the PDR is the signatures. For a resolution to be considered in committee, it must have five co-signatories from members of your committee (you cannot get signatures from a First Committee delegate from another country if you are on Third Committee, for example). These signatures are obtained at the Model itself. Each delegate who signs onto a PDR becomes a sponsor and is obliged to vote for it, unless it is amended.

Each word of each clause is important. What a given word may mean to one delegation is not necessarily what it means to another. Therefore, great care must be taken on the part of the student in drafting a PDR. If it is too specific, there is a good chance that it will get heavily amended, or simply may not pass. On the other hand, if it is too vague, there is little point in passing it since it will not do or mean anything.

There are specific rules a resolution must follow, and these need to be taken into account:

- The resolution must be in the format of an official resolution by the OAS. There is a template available on the Model website ([www.wmoas.org](http://www.wmoas.org)), which must be followed exactly down to the placement of commas and semi-colons.
- The resolution must be written in the third person. This means no use of the pronouns 'we', 'you', 'I', 'our' or any derivations of them.
- The resolution is typically no longer than two pages. This includes the signatures portion, so be sure to keep this in mind while writing. The signature portion cannot appear by itself on a page – the page with the co-signatories must include at least part of the Resolve clauses section of the PDR
- The resolution must refer to the OAS Charter in the Preamble.

Finally, again note that there several relevant links on the WMOAS web page to help you through this process, including a sample PDR, a template, suggestions about what the faculty reviewers look for, etc.

### **Submitting PDRs and White Papers**

The WMOAS requires that all Items that are proposed for consideration at the Model be submitted electronically. The Model provides students two opportunities to do this: once two or three weeks before the Model and once during the Model itself. The following paragraphs provide more detail.

Items that are submitted two or three weeks before the Model are evaluated by Faculty reviewers chosen by the Coordinators, and the process is done electronically, using e-mail. Usually, your Faculty Advisor will give an initial approval to your work and then send it to the faculty reviewer. (Note that *only* the faculty advisors may communicate with the Reviewer.) The Reviewer may approve the proposal as it was submitted, or may perhaps make editing changes, or will perhaps return it to the

Advisor for more work. Or, the Reviewer may assign some submitted PDRs to “working groups,” (details below). Once a submission, whether White Paper or PDR, is approved by the Reviewer, that Item becomes part of the “Electronic Packet,” a set of Items that will be considered when the Model begins.

The Electronic Packet is one of three sets of business Items for the Model. Submissions assigned to working groups become part of the “Working Group Packet,” and these will be deliberated in Washington according to the Model’s Schedule. (The order of business in the Electronic Packet will be interrupted so that the Working Group PDRs can be considered, and the schedule is in the Program.) Because delegates in a working group will need to work with other delegates to produce a single co-sponsored PDR, working groups provide a good opportunity for diplomatic negotiation and consensus building, two important goals of the Model. The results are usually excellent PDRs that can gain widespread support when they are introduced.

Items that are not approved *before* the Model, or that are not ready to be submitted by the pre-Model submission deadline, can be submitted during the Model itself, in Washington. These Items will be reviewed by faculty reviewers, and if approved, will become part of the “Washington Packet,” which consists of Items normally considered after the other two Packets are completed. The timetable for this process appears in the Model’s Program. Note that these Items must be submitted both on paper and “electronically,” that is, via a thumb drive that allows the Secretariat to copy the PDR into a computer. Delegates who feel they might be submitting a PDR during the Model itself should therefore bring thumb drives or some other way of transferring their work from one computer to another.

Please note that the contents of the Electronic Packet, the set of business items that will be worked on at the beginning of the Model, will be available online at least a week before the opening of the Model. Paper copies of the Electronic Packet are NOT available from the Model Secretariat, so they should be printed out and brought to Washington. The Electronic Packet is your first chance to see what other delegations are going to present. Many delegations spend time reviewing this packet ahead of time, in order to be able to prepare questions for other delegations, to find potential allies, to identify delegations that could be potential opponents on some questions, to confer about how to vote or approach the various PDRs, and/or to be able to formulate questions they might pose during the Question Period.

## **Overview of the Schedule of Events at the MOAS**

For more detail on the schedule, see the online link to the Program.

The WMOAS begins with Opening Ceremonies on the afternoon of Day, and these are held at the Headquarters building of the Organization of American States, in the Hall of the Americas. (Before the ceremonies begin, Head delegates pick up registration material for their delegation in the lobby of the OAS building.) During the Opening Ceremonies, Head delegates will be seated at the table, and all other students will be seated around the Hall. Once introductory remarks by the Coordinators are concluded, there will be a mock committee session, in which the Head delegates will debate a resolution in order to demonstrate to everybody how the Model is run and how the rules of procedure work. There may be a guest speaker from the OAS or from the diplomatic corps as well. There will also be opening remarks from the President of the Model, and the drawing, by lot, of the Order of Precedence, which governs both how seating of delegates will be arranged and the general order of

business during committee sessions. Finally, there are informal committee meetings, in separate rooms, during which the Chair will make remarks and delegates will be able to meet and greet, and perhaps obtain co-signatory signatures on their Items of business.

The next official function is to get a Mission Briefing from the Mission of the country you are representing, which usually takes place in the morning of Day 2 of the Model. This can be at the Mission itself, at an embassy, or at the Hall of the Americas. You will want to dress as well as possible for this. The delegation will be meeting with either the ambassador to the OAS or one of his or her assistants. This meeting can take various forms. Most commonly, the representative of the country will provide a briefing to the class in the form of a short lecture. This is then followed by a question and answer period. It is recommended that you use this time to fully understand how the country you are representing would vote on any resolutions you are unsure of, or how they feel about the one you have written. This is one of the best resources you will have available to you to stay in character during the Model. Make the most out of it by asking questions and remaining attentive throughout the briefing. The Mission Briefing opportunity is one of the unique aspects of the WMOAS and provides an excellent opportunity to come face to face with real-world diplomats.

After lunch on the second day, the game begins in earnest. Delegates will be seated with their appropriate committees and Proposed Draft Resolutions will be presented and debated -- preceded by any White Papers on the agenda. There will be breaks for lunch and dinner, as well as informal breaks simply to decompress every few hours. Some of the scheduled committee sessions are designated as "caucus sessions," which gives delegates a chance to ask questions of each other, based on the content of the PDRs, in a less formal atmosphere. Yet diplomatic decorum is expected at all times in these sessions, as of course it is in the more formal sessions. Again, check the online program for details about the scheduling of committee sessions, since there is variability.

On the last day of the Model, closing events will again be held at the Hall of the Americas. During the Closing Session, several student officers of the model will give closing statements. Elections will be held for the offices of President, Vice-President, and Secretary General for the following year's model. There will be awards and certificates of participation, and usually there is a guest speaker from the OAS or the diplomatic corps.

### **Getting Your Proposed Draft Resolution Passed:**

In the real OAS, almost all resolutions are passed unanimously. All debates and arguments between delegations are done behind closed doors, and often over a considerable length of time. In this regard, the Model varies from the OAS itself, but even at the Model, most negotiating on PDRs happens before the formal consideration of the resolution. At the Model, you will be required to garner support for your Proposed Draft Resolution in order to get it passed in committee. You will need to have at least a simple majority (50%) of the delegations in favor of your PDR in order for it to pass. This will happen if you make an effort to get the support needed from other delegations, to get enough votes. This can be done in a variety of ways, each of which has its advantages and disadvantages.

The first task is to get your five signatures. Each of the co-signatories to your PDR will be obligated to vote in favor of your PDR, unless it gets amended. Amendments release all signatories from the obligation to vote for the PDR. So then, how do you get signatures? Informal caucusing sessions are held the night of the opening day and the morning of the following day at the Model. During these times, the delegates will split into their respective committees and will then be free to speak with the

delegate of any other school. Each delegate needs to have a paper copy of their PDR, and that copy has to be exactly what is in the official Packet, whether that be the Electronic Packet, the Working Group Packet, or the Washington Packet. This is an opportunity to share your PDR with other delegates so that they can read, consider, critique, and, if they wish, sign the PDR. Even if your PDR was approved by the Reviewer(s) and is in the Electronic Packet, you must get signatures on that PDR and submit it to the Secretariat before the PDR can be considered in committee.

Some countries are more likely to sign your resolution than others simply on principal. Bolivia and Venezuela, for example, are often allies, as are, generally, all of the English-speaking Caribbean nations with each other. Others, on the other hand, may refuse to sign your PDR simply because of the country you represent. The United States often runs into this problem at the Model since they are seen as they “bully on the block”. It is necessary that delegates know going into the Model what countries they have close ties with and of whom they need to be wary. You should quickly find your allies and try to get those signatures first, since they should be the easiest. Once you have obtained the signatures of allies, you may still need more signatures. If this is the case, then you will be going purely on the merit of your PDR. This is where interpersonal skills and diplomacy play an important role. In the course of attempting to get signatures for your resolution, you will need to be prepared to defend your PDR. Words or phrases you thought were insignificant may suddenly become otherwise. This is why you need to prepare so carefully before going to Washington. A successful defense of your PDR will get you a signature, while a shoddy defense may put your PDR at risk when it is debated.

You are going to get questions about your PDR no matter what. And, you may learn that some delegates really have little to say, but like to hear themselves talk. You will get questions you anticipate and some you never thought you'd hear. Since you clearly cannot prepare for every possible question, you need to know how to defend yourself without appearing incompetent. It comes more naturally to some than to others, but there are basic techniques that everyone can use. It may be easiest to just think of a politician you are most familiar with, especially at the presidential level. Look at the way politicians react to questions in debates or interviews. The only time they ever answer a question the way the interviewer actually wanted is when it benefits them to do so. Diplomats do the same thing. It is important that in this process you respond politely and tactfully. The way you present your answer matters just as much as the content of it. If you speak condescendingly or in a preaching way, it won't matter how well you answered; your behavior is all they will remember. This is why it is important for you to practice diplomacy – characterized by professionalism, tact, and shrewdness -- at all times.

When someone asks you a question to which you know the answer, and it is in your best interests to do so, feel free to answer it. When you don't know the answer, that's fine too. The first thing you want to do is to take a second to organize your thoughts. Don't let your facial expression show that you're unsure of the response. One of the best ways to start your response is to compliment the person asking you the question. Say something like, “That's a good question”, or, “It's good you brought that up.” Then, take their question and run with it. Make it your question instead of theirs. Let's say your resolution is for the advancement of free trade policies and you are asked to define what percentage of Nicaraguan citizens are positively assisted by free trade. You could tell them that Nicaraguans will benefit from your resolution because it will make it easier for their agricultural produce to move freely between nations involved in free trade, because of the lack of tariffs. If you can say something like, “All Nicaraguans are in favor of this resolution because it will greatly increase their standard of living.”

Try to phrase your response in just such a way that a reasonable person would have to agree.

## **Building Consensus**

In the real OAS, most resolutions are passed unanimously; 34 in favor and none opposed. Because of time constraints, it is unlikely that you will be able to create such cooperation in the Model, but you can certainly try, and you can come fairly close. Committee procedures mandate that the Chair, at the conclusion of the Question Period on every PDR, ask if there is any objection to consensus adoption of the PDR. If you have really done a great job, you may achieve this consensus. But there may be differences of opinion, as there often are on matters of substance, so there may well be debate and even amendments on many PDRs.

As you seek support, as was already discussed, some allies come naturally. Others will take more effort and planning to bring around to your side. Some neutral parties may vote for your PDR if you can promote it to them during caucusing, but this implies one important assumption: you actually have to talk to people during the caucus sessions and during informal caucuses off the schedule. You will have anywhere from four to six hours of caucus session time during the Model, and you should use it. You don't stop talking to people just because you have gotten all five of your necessary co-signatories. Five votes won't let you clear the majority you need: rhetorical skills are necessary, and campaigning and advocacy are indispensable.

Don't be afraid to talk to the countries that are supposed to be against yours by inclination or design (such as Venezuela for the United States). You may not be able to win them over to your side during a face to face chat, but you can at least get an idea of what they're like. You can figure out what specific parts of your resolution they disagree with, how aggressive they are, or what specific questions they might pose to you during committee session. All of these are advantages for you: more information is better than less. If you know how your opponents will act, then you can plan ahead of time how you will address their concerns during sessions. Make an earnest effort to understand the point of view not in agreement with your own. It is vital to understanding all facets of an issue. If you cannot understand why someone is opposed to a topic, you'll never be able to address his or her concerns.

Official sessions are not the only way to create support for your PDR. Diplomacy is not an eight-hour a day job. You will run into delegates from other countries at any time of day. Sometimes you can talk to them about your PDR and, other times, it is enough to socialize to build consensus. The more friends you make, the better your chances of getting votes. Of course, it works the other way, too. If you make enemies instead of friends, your PDR will likely face opposition because of you, not because of its merits.

## **Working Groups**

Once your Proposed Draft Resolution is submitted electronically, being told you will be placed in a working group is not a bad thing! In fact, this is closer to how the OAS actually works: diplomats circulate proposed resolutions and seek to build consensus by working with other countries. Being in a working group not only gives you a head start towards creating a consensus, it increases the odds of your PDR passing with unanimous support, since each other delegate in the working groups signifies an additional vote. Faculty reviewers may decide to create a working group for PDRs that are similar in ideas and substance, and the reviewers will notify you, through your Faculty Advisor, of your assignment to a Working Group.

As noted earlier, all working group PDR are placed in the Working Group Packet, so that the delegates

have enough time to work together on their PDRs and prepare one co-sponsored PDR to submit. The Program will show a deadline for submitting these multi-sponsored PDRs, and the Rules of Procedure provide more detail about how to proceed. While work on business begins with the Electronic Packet, there will be a scheduled committee session, relatively early in the Model, for the Working Group PDRs.

In the process of creating a working group PDR, all of the original resolutions will not be considered separately. It is up to the delegates of the working group to find each other and work together in order to create one PDR. This is an exercise in cooperation and teamwork. Depending on each delegate, you may wish to cede or preserve specific details of your own PDR. Your working group resolution needs to show that some substantial effort was made to come to an agreement during deliberations.

Working group resolutions may also be voluntarily created between delegations. If during caucusing you should come across another PDR that is similar to your own and the faculty advisor didn't catch the similarity, you are free to attempt to make a joint PDR together. This is an excellent opportunity for using diplomatic skills to work towards consensus, and Faculty Advisors would be likely to appreciate this sort of effort. (Should this happen, be sure that all parties to the action alert their faculty advisors.)

Unlike a PDR that only has one sponsor, working group PDRs will have more than one. One delegation will get the official speaking time and then the others will be expected to get on the speaker's list in order to speak in favor of the resolution. It is also possible that other members of the Working Group will be able to respond to questions during the Question Period. Working group PDRs have the benefit of having two sets of allies: those delegations allied with you plus those delegations allied because they are your working group partners – not to mention *their* natural allies. See the Rules of Procedure for more detail, about getting co-signatories, for example.

### **When A Crisis Occurs**

At some point in the Model, a simulated crisis will occur. The “crisis” consists of an urgent situation that the General Committee is asked to consider immediately, and that consideration might include other committees as well. The Rules of Procedure provide some detail about how this process unfolds. The most recent example of a simulated crisis at the Model consisted of Bolivia invading Chile in order to recoup Bolivia’s coastal territories on the Pacific Ocean. One can imagine another simulated crisis focusing on a military coup in Honduras, or tension at the border between Venezuela and Colombia. The crisis simulation is designed to test the ability of delegates to respond to an emergency in a way that would replicate the likely real-world responses of the OAS in similar circumstances.

### **How Resolutions Pass in Session**

In order that you might have a better idea of how Proposed Draft Resolutions are presented, discussed, and, hopefully, passed in session, this section will demonstrate how this process takes place at the Model. Note that there is a flow chart describing this process, at the end of this document. Once the committee session is brought to order, it will roughly follow this pattern:

First, the introduction of the PDR:

- The Chair will state: “The \_\_\_\_ Committee will now hear the White Paper or Proposed Draft Resolution from \_\_\_\_\_ (country). Will the Rapporteur please read the resolves clauses?”
- The Rapporteur will then read the resolves clauses of the PDR, and will state which countries

have co-signed the resolution. (This step is bypassed if the Item is a White Paper.)

- The Chair will then state: “The delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (country) will now have two minutes for the proponent’s speech in support of this resolution.”
- The sponsor of the resolution will then rise and give his or her prepared statement. Delegates may look around the room during authorship speeches; they do not have to look at the Chair the entire time.
- Once the prepared statement is finished, the speaker will yield the remainder of his or her time to the Chair and remain standing.

Second, the Question Period:

- The Chair will then open the floor to questions, by asking if there are any questions at this time. Any delegation with a question must raise their placard to be recognized. The Chair may call on delegations at his or her discretion.
- The Chair will recognize a delegation by saying: “Delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (country). To what point does the delegate rise?” The delegate will then stand and state: “The delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (country) would like to pose a question to the delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsor country) through the chair.” The Chair will then respond: “That is in order at this time.”
- The questioner may then pose his or her question.
- Once the question has been asked, the Chair will address the sponsor and say: “Does the delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsor country) understand the question and wish to respond?” Sponsors may reply either
  - a) They do not understand the question -- if they do not understand the question, the Chair will ask the questioner to either restate or rephrase the question;
  - b) They understand the question and wish to respond, or
  - c) They understand the question and do not wish to respond..
- The sponsor will then have the opportunity to respond to the question in whatever manner they so choose.
- Upon completion of the response, the Chair will ask the questioner if they have understood the response. The questioner may respond either Yes or No.
  - If they do not understand the response, the Chair will request that the sponsor rephrase his or her response.
  - If they answer yes, they may either be seated, or they may pose a follow-up question, at the discretion of the Chair, which follows the same structure.
- All questions are posed to the sponsor through the Chair; questioners and sponsors must address and look at the Chair through the question and answer period. The question period is limited to three questions, though there may be follow-up questions permitted at the discretion of the Chair.
- When the Question Period is finished, the sponsor may be seated, and the Chair will move to a speaker's list.

Note that if you are introducing a White Paper, the process stops after the Question Period. The following is just for PDRs:

Third, the request for Consensus:

- The Chair will ask the committee if there is any objection to adopting the PDR by unanimous consent.
  - If there is no objection, your PDR is approved unanimously – congratulations.

- If there is an objection to unanimous consent, then the Chair will proceed with the following steps.

#### Fourth, the Speakers List:

- The norm is to have three speakers in favor of a PDR and three against (but there is a parliamentary procedure available to extend the Speakers List). The Chair will begin by saying “We will now move to the creation of a Speakers List.”
- The Chair will ask: “All those wishing to speak in favor of this resolution?” at which point any interested delegate needs to raise his or her placard. The Chair may recognize whichever delegations he or she chooses. The Rapporteur will then note the delegations selected.
- The Chair will then request: “All those wishing to speak against the proposed resolution?” which will follow the same pattern as above.
- Once the speaker's list has been established, the Chair will state: “The delegation of \_\_\_\_\_ (first speaker in favor) will have two minutes to speak in favor of this resolution.”
  - Once the speech is concluded, that delegate will be seated and the Chair will recognize the first speaker against the proposed resolution.
  - This will continue until all speakers for and against the resolution have spoken and the list is exhausted.
- Amendments to a PDR may be proposed only by being on the speakers list *against* the resolution. You may not speak against a resolution if you are a cosignatory.
- If an amendment is proposed, while its proponent has the floor, the Chair will acknowledge that it has received the amendment.
  - The Rapporteur will then read the amendment and the resolution as it should read with the changes made by the amendment.
  - The Chair will then give the proponent of the amendment one minute to speak on why the amendment is good and necessary.
  - There will then be a speaker's list for and against the amendment, which is run just like the speaker's list for the resolution.
  - Once the speaker's list on the amendment has been exhausted (you may not amend an amendment), the committee will move to a vote. If a majority approves, then the amendment succeeds. If not, then the amendment fails. If an amendment passes, the co-signatories are released from their commitment to vote for the PDR.
- Once an amendment has been voted on, whether it passed or not, the Chair will then return to the original speaker's list, at the point where the amendment was proposed.
  - Assuming in this example that the first speaker on the “against” side proposed the amendment, the Chair would return to that person.
  - If the amendment had passed, the speaker's list would likely move on to the second speaker in favor of the resolution, but
  - If the amendment had failed, then the speaker (who proposed the failed amendment) will then have his or her two minutes to speak against the PDR.

#### Fifth, Voting Procedures:

- Once the Speakers List on the PDR has been exhausted, if the committee will move to vote on the resolution.
- If it is a quorum vote, the Chair will request that all those in favor raise their placards, then all those against, and then all those who abstain.
- Both the Rapporteur and the Chair will count the totals and then compare.
  - If they are the same, then the Chair will announce the results and move on to the next

#### PDR.

- If they are different, then the votes will be recounted.
- If a delegate has moved that there be a roll call vote (a quorum vote is the default), then the Rapporteur will read each country by name, following the Order of Precedence. Each delegate will then respond by stating 'In favor', 'Against', or 'Abstain'. The Rapporteur will then tally the results, inform the Chair, and the Chair will announce the outcome.
  - Any abstentions will be required to explain the reason for abstention. The only reason for abstention can be a conflict of interest. The abstention vote, in other words, cannot be used because one is not familiar with the agenda topics or the issues at hand.

Note: while it is within any delegate's right to call for a roll call vote, repeatedly doing so for no apparent reason can hinder the work of the Committee. It also can appear undiplomatic and can lead to reduced effectiveness for the delegation using this tactic. There are some times good reasons to call for a roll call vote, particularly when one or two delegations have been forceful in opposing what otherwise might be a consensus on a question. But to do so in what might appear to be an attempt to slow down the proceedings for no good reason may prevent other delegations from presenting their work to the committee, and will likely be frowned upon by most delegations. Similarly, abstaining for no apparent reason and then "explaining" your vote by simply saying the phrase "conflict of interest" reduces your effectiveness as a diplomat. If there is a conflict of interest, you should be prepared to explain briefly what that conflict consists of, in ways that show your level of preparation and understanding of the issues as they affect your nation.

### **Decorum and Behavior**

Delegates must behave with decorum during the entire model. Delegates are not only representing a member state of the OAS, they are representing their university, and they will be doing so in the presence of officials from the OAS, as well as university faculty from throughout the Americas. The Model expects that all delegates will behave in a professional manner throughout the week, whether you are in session, at the Hall of the Americas, or just wandering around the streets of Washington, D.C. All delegates should speak in the third person at all times during committee sessions and must treat each other civilly and formally. Delegates are required to be at all official functions on time.

Besides behaving with normal politeness and maintaining diplomatic decorum at all times, delegates must follow the basic Rules of Procedure for the Model, rules that are designed to make the Model a cooperative, friendly, and productive environment. Whether you have participated in other models or simulation sessions or not, the rules used by the MOAS are probably different than what you have experienced before. The exact Rules of Procedure can be found on the Model's website ([www.wmoas.org](http://www.wmoas.org)).

In committee sessions, the WMOAS Rules of Procedure must be followed. General rules are:

- Only one person may speak at a time.
- In order to speak, you must be recognized by the chair.
- If you are speaking, you must stand.
- If you stand, you may not be seated until the chair tells you that you may do so.
- All questions are posed through the Chair. This means that when asking or receiving a question, you must face the Chair. Responses are also given to the questioner through the Chair, as described earlier.

- There can be no talking in the committee room outside of the formal debate. You may pass notes to other delegates or to your alternate if you need to ask a question, but not during voting.
- In order to be recognized by the Chair, you must raise your placard.
- Normally, a vote will be determined by the rapporteur counting the placards of those in favor and those against or abstaining. To vote, simply raise your placard when requested to do so by the Chair.
- Alternately, delegates may request a roll call vote. For a roll call vote, the rapporteur will call each country by name, at which point the delegate responds either yes, or no, or abstain.
- Any time a delegate speaks, there is a time limit. If you should get close to going over your time limit, the Chair will politely remind you. If you end before your time is up, say “The delegate yields the rest of his/her time to the chair”, and then wait for the chair to allow you to be seated.

## Dress Code

Dress code for the Model is business formal. You should consider this to mean whatever you would wear to an interview. Men must dress in a collared shirt, necktie, slacks, and jacket. Dress shoes are also required. Jackets must remain on at all times during sessions unless the Chair permits delegates to remove their jackets. This means that you should dress professionally for all official functions of the Model. For role models, please watch the anchors of national news programs. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the Coordinators. The following quote describes each of these, and there are photos on the WMOAS web page:

Traditional business attire includes business suits, dress shirts, and ties for men. It includes business-oriented suits for women, both skirted suits and tailored pantsuits. Leather shoes (closed-toe/closed heel), socks and/or hosiery are also a requirement for any outfit to qualify for traditional business attire.

Business formal is a subset of traditional business attire, yet, it has specific requirements just one step down from tuxedos, such as dark tailored suits for men and women. Business formal standards dictate that women wear skirted suits, hosiery, and closed-toe/closed heel pumps. [...] If you receive an invitation requesting business formal attire, dress in this standard. This level of dress is often requested for Award dinners, political events, and a variety of dressy evening business occasions that are not black-tie.

The General Business attire category is a mere mini step away from the Traditional Business classification. For men, this category still demands a tie and it's still worn with a dress shirt. However instead of a suit, this category includes a tailored sport coat worn with dress trousers. For women, this category can look numerous ways. It includes tailored pantsuits, businesslike dresses, and coordinated dressy separates. When wearing separates, tailored jackets are required.”

([http://www.casualpower.com/business\\_casual\\_tips/biz\\_attire.html](http://www.casualpower.com/business_casual_tips/biz_attire.html), accessed 10/07/2009)

The coordinating pieces for dressy separates should include tailored blouses and skirts. Blouses and tops should not be worn too tight or low and skirts should be no higher than a few inches above the knee. The goal of professional dressing is to look well put-together and your dress should not be a distraction to the work you are trying to accomplish.

## After the Model

What will you take away from the Model? That's entirely up to you. The experience is different for everyone, and it is never the same from year to year. There are so many different aspects and facets of the Model that everyone finds at least one part that they thoroughly enjoy. For some, the socialization outside of the formal committee sessions is the most interesting. Others will find the heavy debates on controversial issues to be exhilarating. You may find yourself to be drawn into the order of sessions, or the hustle and bustle of a caucus session. Even if you dislike the formality of official sessions, you will probably enjoy making friends from around the country and Hemisphere. There is always something to take away from this experience.

There are some things that everyone will take away from the Model. The importance of diplomacy, the power of politeness, and the weight a single word or phrase can carry. These will be useful in any career or other organizational opportunity in your future. You may decide that you want to go into the diplomatic field, or that you clearly should never consider such a job. You will also establish great connections, which, if maintained, may help you in the future as well. The most important thing to remember about the Model is that, at the end of the day, it is a game. Try above all to enjoy the experience and learn as much as you can about the OAS, politics, and yourself.

After your experience at the Model, perhaps you will want to become affiliated with the alumni/ae MOAS group. Check the WMOAS web page for information.

## Glossary

**Agenda** – the Agenda of Topics is the set of issues that will be addressed during the Model in each of the five committees. Each student participating in the Model will normally pick one agenda topic to concentrate on during his or preparation for the Model, but delegates are expected to be familiar with all of the agenda topics for their particular committee. The Agenda is available online at the WMOAS web page.

**Chair**- The Chair is the person in charge of a committee, the presiding officer. It could be the elected Chairperson, or the Vice-Chairperson. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are followed. The Chair brings resolutions to the floor, recognizes delegates to speak, and maintains decorum. How strict or loose the Chair is for following the rules varies from committee to committee, but all Chairs are responsible for ensuring that resolutions are debated in an orderly and coherent fashion. During the final committee session of the Model, except for the General Committee, delegates elect next year's Chair and Vice-Chair. (The President, Vice-President, and Secretary General for next year's Model are elected during the plenary session on the final day of the Model.)

**Coordinators** – The Coordinators are faculty advisors who have volunteered to conduct the Model – they make arrangements with the hotel and with the OAS. They maintain records of who participates in the Model. The Coordinators oversee the processes of creating the Agenda, the submission of Items of business for the Model (PDRs and White Papers), etc., and generally enforce the Rules of Procedure during the Model. The Coordinators are appointed to their position by the IDDA.

**Co-Signatories**- All single-sponsor Proposed Draft Resolutions must have five co-signatories. Co-

signatories are obligated to vote in favor of any resolution they have signed, unless that PDR gets amended during debate.

**Faculty Advisor-** The Faculty Advisor is the professor who arrived with the delegation and is responsible for the behavior and attitudes throughout the Model. Faculty Advisors review PDRs and serve as Technical Secretaries on hand to answer procedural questions.

**Faculty Council** – An group of five faculty advisors who are elected by the faculty advisors to manage the Model and to update the Rules of Procedure when that is called for.

**Faculty Review Committee-** This is composed of several different faculty advisors and has the duty of reviewing every resolution or White Paper submitted at the Model. They review them for form and substance, as well as ensuring that each PDR has the necessary signatures. All resolutions must be approved by the faculty review committee before they can be debated in delegate committee session.

**IDDA** – The Institute for Diplomatic Dialogue in the Americas is the non-profit organization that sponsors the Washington Model OAS. Its Board is made up of Faculty Advisors and others who share the goals of the Model.

**Officers** – The “Officers” of the Model are the President and Vice-President, who serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the General Committee, the Secretary General, and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the other four committees.

**Order of Precedence** – the Order of Precedence is drawn by lot during the opening ceremonies of the Model. The Order of Precedence determines the general order of committee business and determines the order of seating in committee sessions. In rare cases, it also determines if a delegate becomes a Chair or Vice-Chair of a committee, in the case of absences.

**Packet-** Packets are all resolutions turned in by a certain date. The Electronic Packet includes the Items submitted and approved before the Model begins. The Working Group Packet is composed entirely and only of working group PDRs. The Third Packet includes White Papers and PDRs which were not submitted electronically and are not working group resolutions.

**Preamble-** The Preamble of a resolution is the first section after the title. It is everything before the resolution reads: “RESOLVES.” It is important because it establishes all precedence for the resolution. It makes references to the Charter of the Organization of the American States, previous resolutions passed by the OAS, and any other significant international or inter-hemispheric documents that are relevant to the issue at hand.

**Proposed Draft Resolution (PDR), or “resolution”** – one of two types of Items of business for committee sessions during the Model. Resolutions are passed by the real OAS and serve as the “laws” of the Hemisphere though, of course, sovereignty always takes precedence. Resolutions state how the OAS proposes to fix a problem. They establish the sources of funding, as well as step for implementation of, and reporting on, the solution. A sample PDR follows this Glossary.

**Rapporteur-** This position is essentially the secretary of the committee. Rapporteurs keep track of attendance, speaker's lists, amendments, and vote counts. They are the Chair's “right hand” and play an important role in the Model: they report on the proceedings and assist the Officers in providing

information and maintaining a record. They are officially members of the Secretariat of the Model.

**Resolution-** See Proposed Draft Resolution

**Rules of Procedure** – a specific document, updated annually, that includes the rules of conduct for the model, duties of elected officers, procedures for committee business, and expectations for faculty advisors, etc. Delegates should be thoroughly familiar with this document, available online at the WMOAS.org web page.

**Secretariat** – the Secretariat is the “public administration” of the Model, and includes the Coordinators, the student Secretary General, and other members of the faculty. The Rapporteurs are part of the Secretariat.

**Vice-Chair-** The Vice-Chair is the back-up in case something happens to the Chair. They are there to assist the Chair in issues of misunderstanding, assist the Rapporteur if necessary, and be the liaison with the faculty on behalf of the Chair and committee.

**White Paper** – one of two types of Items of business for committee sessions during the Model. A White Paper is essentially a statement about an agenda topic, based on research, and will include details about the position of the proponent’s member state on the issue at hand. White papers are attempts by governments to persuade others (governments and publics) to adopt a position based on empirical evidence, without resorting to gimmicks or marketing. White Papers do not pass through voting and debate – they are designed to help other delegates debate specific agenda topics, and are introduced early in the committee process, before the PDRs.

**Sample Proposed Draft Resolution****SAFE WATER FOR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE**

First Committee  
Draft Resolution Presented by the Delegation of Bolivia

Topic No. 4 of the Agenda

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

CONSIDERING:

That Article 15 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter recognizes that a safe environment is essential to the integral development of the human being, which contributes to democracy and political stability;

BEARING IN MIND:

The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, as well as the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and its Plan of Implementation, which state that adequate drinking water is a necessity of life;

RECOGNIZING:

That economic development, social development, and environmental protection are interdependent pillars of sustainable development and that water is necessary for all other basic human rights;

RECALLING:

That goal 7 of the United Nations Millennium Development goals includes reducing by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water; and

REALIZING:

That access to clean water is an essential basic human right that should be guaranteed throughout the hemisphere,

RESOLVES:

1. To encourage member states to use their resources to enable the indigenous and rural population ample access to sanitary drinking water.
2. To encourage member states to establish a hemispheric standard for water quality by 2020.
3. To encourage member states to monitor the quality of water particularly in rural areas.
4. To encourage member states to view clean water as a human right and to include this right in the

Social Charter of the OAS.

4. To encourage member states to seek funding from international bodies like the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and other IGOs and NGOs whose missions are compatible with this goal.

Approved for form and substance

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Faculty Advisor)

Cosignatories:

- |    |                       |                     |
|----|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Signature of Delegate | Country Represented |
| 2. |                       |                     |
| 3. |                       |                     |
| 4. |                       |                     |
| 5. |                       |                     |

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Note: Delegates may find detailed instructions and templates for the formatting of Proposed Draft Resolutions online at the Model's web page. Note also that the Rules of Procedure, also available online, contain detailed information about the format and content of PDRs.

