



VMUN 2026

# Delegate Guide



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## About VMUN

Vancouver Model United Nations (VMUN) is Canada's premier educational simulation. A three-day Model United Nations conference located in the heart of Vancouver, VMUN is the world's largest high school student-organized Model United Nations conference. Welcoming over 1,400 participants yearly, our conference provides attendees with high-quality debate, facilitated by experienced and dedicated committee staff.

VMUN aims to expose students to complex challenges and inspire them to approach the world from new perspectives. As a delegate at VMUN, you will have the opportunity to engage in realistic debate about the issues confronting modern-day society in one of our twenty diverse and distinct committees.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DELEGATE

At VMUN, logistics are primarily handled by the staff and your Sponsor Teacher(s). However, every delegate has a distinct set of responsibilities to ensure their experience is as enriching and informative as possible.

Firstly, delegates are responsible for maintaining communication with their Dais, Sponsor Teachers, and the Secretariat about potential absences during the conference weekend. While absences are discouraged to ensure that all delegates have the best possible experience, we recognize that there may be exceptional circumstances where an absence is unavoidable. Please inform your Dais and the Delegate Affairs team with advance notice if you must miss a committee session.

During the conference, all delegates are responsible for engaging in committee sessions in a professional manner. Delegates are expected to follow the guidelines and rules set forth by the Dais along with the VMUN Delegate Code of Conduct to uphold the integrity of a Model UN simulation. As representatives of real countries/people, you should adhere to realistic foreign policy; refrain from drastically deviating from your country's stance to maintain the authenticity of debates.

Working collaboratively with fellow delegates is a cornerstone of the Model UN experience—at the conference, you will have the opportunity to engage in debate and negotiations with individuals who share your curiosity and enthusiasm. Although compromise is an aspect of MUN that is often overlooked, challenging yourself to bridge the gap between different viewpoints will lead to more meaningful and creative discussions.

## How to Research

Committees at VMUN will discuss urgent and consequential issues that pose relevant challenges to world leaders, politicians, and diplomats across the globe. As such, conducting research may seem like a daunting task for delegates at any experience level. However, when research is broken into smaller parts, the process becomes much more manageable.

### RESEARCHING FOR STANDARD COMMITTEES

Research for Standard Committees differs from that for Crisis Committees. Given the former categories generally deal with contemporary topics, research can be done primarily through modern news sites, government websites, and academic literature.

#### Reading the Background Guide

Once you receive your position assignment, the first step you should take is to read your committee's backgrounder in its entirety. The Director of your committee has spent immense time researching important sub-topics pertaining to the broader issue, which can be used as an outline for subjects the Dais would like to see debated during committee sessions. The backgrounder will give you an important understanding of the historical context, modern-day implications, and potential controversies of the topics.

As you read the backgrounder, make note of any mention of stances that align with your position; this information can be incredibly useful during the conference and allow you to demonstrate a specialized understanding of the topic when discussing with fellow delegates. Mentions of your position will give you insight into your country's history with this topic, any solutions you may be willing to implement, and other delegations you would be willing to work with.

After fully reading the backgrounder, it is important to understand your country or position in greater depth. It is vital that you understand your delegation because this will help you in debate to inform other delegates of your stance on the topic. For example, if you were in SOCHUM and the topic was Freedom of the Press, it would be pivotal to have an understanding of historical government attitudes toward freedom of speech and journalism.

Basic questions encompassed by this process include:

- » How large is your country?
- » Where is your country situated?
- » Who are the main allies of your nation?
- » What is the structure of your government?
- » Do you have any historical treaties or agreements surrounding this topic?
- » Who are some major trading partners?
- » What domestic or international tensions affect your nation?

All of this information will enhance your knowledge of your country and give you a more solid comprehension of why the topics at hand are relevant to your nation.

## Further Research

After you have fully read through the background guide, you should begin researching your country, its history, and current attitudes toward the issues your committee will be discussing. A good way to begin this is by researching the specifics of the overall topic. Be sure to be able to answer basic questions, such as:

- » Who/what countries does this topic most dramatically impact?
- » When did this issue become widespread?
- » Why does this topic affect your nation?

When completing this process, the committee's backgrounder will be helpful as it will strive to answer many of these questions. Throughout the entire research process, make sure that you are using a variety of reliable sources—avoid being overreliant on news sources, as these organizations may have an agenda or bias that will inform their reporting. UN websites, NGO websites, and academic literature regarding the topic can all be considered more trustworthy and informative resources. Some great sources to start with are the UN's website (or affiliate websites), the CIA World Factbook, and BBC Country Profiles.

## Note-taking

While researching the aforementioned information, it can be helpful to begin a document that consolidates everything you have learned. This document can be a great resource during committee sessions, as you can refer back to it before making a speech or interacting with other delegates to reinforce your stance. Make sure that the document is well-formatted and easy to read because you will not have an abundance of time to review it. You can also record your notes on note-taking platforms, such as NoodleTools, and collect all the sources you have used either on the document or in citation programs such as Zotero.

## Possible Solutions

The next important step when researching is to find possible solutions for the topic. The committee backgrounder will be extremely useful in this regard as it will explicitly outline several viable solutions. However, remain open to other paths of action—you should not be limited by the solutions the backgrounder introduces. If you can find a creative solution to the topic, do not be afraid to debate it in committee sessions; it shows that you have done thorough research. Viable solutions to your topic should be informed by past actions that the international community has taken. For instance, if you are in UNODC and the topic is *International Drug Control in the 21st Century*, you would probably not want to propose another prohibitory campaign akin to the War on Drugs. Reiterating an ineffectual solution would not progress debate in committee unless your nation is steadfast in its belief in the benefits of said actions.

Once you feel that your research has been done to a satisfactory extent, you will want to begin drafting your position paper. For more information on how to write a position paper, please refer to the [Position Paper Guide](#) on the VMUN website.

## RESEARCHING FOR CRISIS COMMITTEES

Research for crisis committees is very similar to that of General Assemblies, Specialized Agencies, and Regional Bodies. However, unlike those committees, crisis committee topics differ in that they discuss historical or speculative topics. Please ensure that your research is based on relevant information occurring before the beginning of the crisis, as your committee will quickly diverge from the history. Research for crises can primarily be done on academic sites such as Britannica or JSTOR. When conducting research for crisis committees, be especially careful of the credibility of your sources. Although sources such as Wikipedia can provide a good introduction to the topic alongside your committee backgrounder, it is not the most credible source to cite in your research. Instead, we recommend you use its many sources and references as a segue for your research.

### Reading the Background Guide

Once you receive your position, it is crucial to read the entire backgrounder. Backgrounders for crisis committees contain comprehensive information on both your topic and your own position. While you read through the backgrounder, make sure to note down any important information relating to your topic. Before you research your position, it is imperative to have a broad understanding of the topic to help you write your position paper, contextualize position-specific research, and prepare speeches and ideas in committee sessions. Although the backgrounder contains detailed information about the topic, you may also find reading about your topic on another source helpful. Websites such as Britannica contain valuable general information about historical events. The backgrounder will also contain additional resources and articles that can be used to further your research and understanding of the topic.

While reading about the topic, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- » How did the crisis start?
- » Which countries/forces/powers intervened on which side?
- » Which country/forces/power succeeded in their objectives?
- » Why was the crisis initiated?
- » What were the events that led up to the conflict?

You can also use these questions to guide your research, though the committee's backgrounder will help you answer most of these questions. While researching the event, it is important to be aware of potential biases, particularly because authors of sources will tend to portray a certain country/power in a certain light, either glorifying or vilifying them.



### Researching Your Position

After you have conducted thorough research on your topic, you should start researching your position, what stance your position has, and what powers they have in the committee. Unlike regular committees, delegates in crisis committees represent specific individuals rather than countries or organizations. Thus, it is imperative to give more attention to the Bloc Positions/Portfolio Overviews in the backgrounder, especially those that pertain to your position. The Bloc Positions/Portfolio Overviews will provide insight into your position's stances, goals, and the specific powers they may have in the committee. This can entail resource control, military command, or political influence. You should also research your position using other sources. It is always best to start by reading a biography of your individual/position, which can usually be found on Britannica or Wikipedia. Though Wikipedia may not be the most reliable source, it does offer a gateway into many other sources, including journal articles, diary and letter entries, and digital archives, which may aid in your research.

### Note-taking

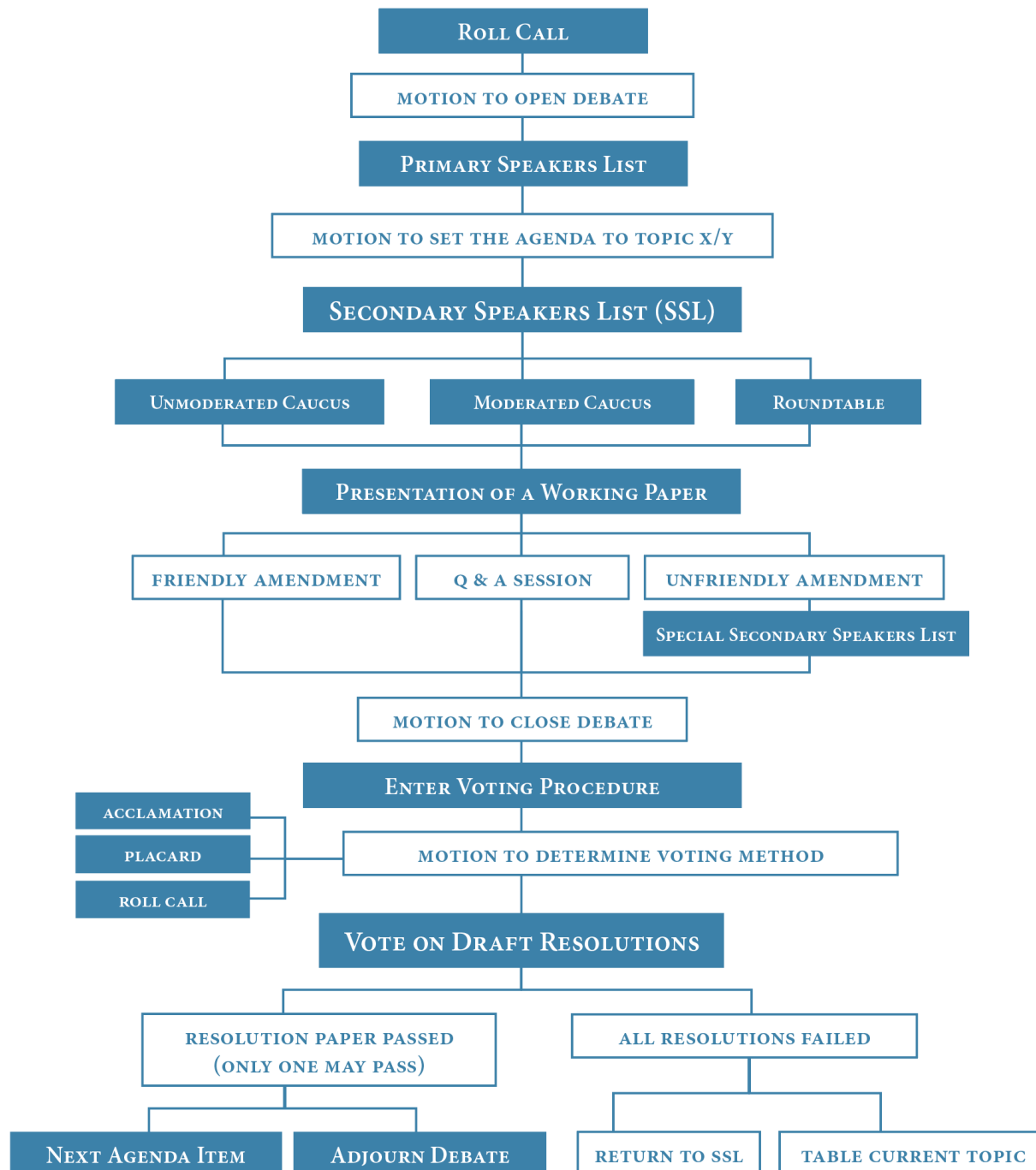
While reading your sources and conducting research, it is often helpful to begin a document that consolidates everything you have learnt, and any additional information that you think may be important. This document is important to help collect information that can be used in writing your position paper. You can also record your notes on note-taking platforms, such as NoodleTools, and record all the sources you have used either on the document or on citation programs such as Zotero.

By the time you finish your research, you should have a thorough understanding of the topic and your position in the committee. You should be able to confidently answer the discussion questions at the end of the backgrounder. If you feel you are ready and satisfied with your research, you can now begin to draft your position paper. For more information on how to write a position paper, please refer to the "[Position Paper Guide](#)" on the VMUN website.

## Debate Guide

### REGULAR RULES OF PROCEDURE

The following ROP is pertinent to General Assemblies, Intermediate Agencies, and Regional Councils (excluding the House of Commons and Historical U.S. Senate). For Continuous Crisis ROP or a more extensive ROP guide, please navigate to the “[Resources](#)” page on VMUN’s website where you can find the official VMUN 2026 Rules of Procedure Guide.





## Roll Call and Introduction

Every committee session begins with Roll Call, where the Dais will alphabetically call out the country names of every delegate. There are two responses that can be made—“present” or “present and voting”—and each entails a different process. When you raise your placard and respond with “present,” this means that you can abstain from voting, or not vote, on substantive procedures, like voting on resolution papers, for the duration of the committee session. When you raise your placard and respond with “present and voting,” this means that you are unable to abstain from voting and consequently, must vote on all matters presented to the committee. Since Roll Call is taken at the beginning of every session, you can change your response if desired.

In the first committee session after Roll Call is completed, the Dais will entertain a motion to open debate. In MUN, all debate (outside of Primary and Secondary Speakers Lists) begins with a motion. Delegates propose a motion by saying, “*The delegate of [position] motions for a [speech duration] [type of debate] on [subject].*” To open debate, a delegate would say, “*The delegate of [position] motions to open debate.*”

Once the committee votes on this, the Dais will open the Primary Speakers List. During the Primary Speakers List, members of the committee will debate which topic to begin with, since most committees at VMUN will debate two over the course of the weekend. The Dais will entertain a motion to set the Agenda. In this case, a delegate would say, “*The delegate of [position] motions to set the Agenda to Topic A/B.*”

Then, the Dais will call upon four speakers—two in favour of and two against the motion—and these Speakers would give their one-minute speeches. Following this process, the Dais will hold a vote on the original motion. If it passes, the motion is adopted and that topic is debated first. If it fails, the committee will immediately begin debate on the second topic.

After this is complete, the committee will enter the Secondary Speakers List. This is the time when delegates can introduce their overall stance to the committee. If you raise your placard to speak during this time, you can give a brief overview of why this topic is important and your delegation’s stance and connection to it. Delegates are encouraged to employ a mix of rhetoric, delivery, and evidence to engage the committee and progress the debate. Every speaker has a maximum of one minute to speak, and the Dais will call upon 5–12 delegates, depending on the size of your committee. After your speech in the Primary Speakers List or Secondary Speakers List, make sure you yield your time. At VMUN, there are four types of yields: to the Chair, to comments, to questions, or to another delegate. The most common yield is to the Chair, which dissolves your remaining speaking time. When a delegate yields to comments, other delegates, when called upon by the Dais, will have the opportunity to make a comment on the delegate’s speech. Similar to yielding to comments, yielding to questions means that other delegates have the opportunity to question the delegate on their stance. Finally, yielding to another delegate means that a new delegate has the opportunity to make a speech with the original delegate’s remaining time. Once a speech has been yielded to a delegate, it cannot be yielded again to anyone else.

## Motions

Following the Secondary Speakers List, the Dais will open the floor to any points or motions. Moderated caucuses comprise the majority of debate and can be on any subject pertinent to the topic. A delegate can motion for a moderated caucus by saying, “*The delegate of [position] motions for a 10/1 (10-to-1) moderated caucus on [topic].*”

In that example, “10/1” represents the duration of the moderated caucus—one-minute speeches given during a ten-minute moderated caucus. Please note that any duration can be substituted in for both the length of the speech and the length of the moderated caucus itself. The Dais will entertain up to 5 motions on the floor at once, and then the committee will vote on the motions. If one passes, it is immediately adopted by the committee; if all fail, the committee reverts to the Secondary Speakers List. Delegates can also motion for an extension of the current topic; however, extensions must be half as long or shorter than the original motion and cannot be extended again.

## Caucuses

The committee will entertain various moderated caucuses, sometimes reverting to the Secondary Speakers List, for about two sessions before entertaining motions for unmoderated caucuses. An unmoderated caucus is where blocs (groups with a shared stance working towards writing a working paper) are formed, negotiations occur, and delegates can have unstructured interactions with each other. Delegates motion for unmoderated caucuses in the same way that they do for moderated ones. If the motion passes, the committee enters an unmoderated caucus period, typically around 10–15 minutes in length.

Although quite uncommon, the Dais will sometimes entertain a Round Table motion. A Round Table involves the Dais calling out all of the delegates alphabetically, and giving all delegates the opportunity to speak one-by-one. This is typically called for when the committee becomes circuitous or too few delegates are involved in debate. Due to the sheer amount of time it takes to go through an entire committee, Round Table speaking times are generally limited to 30–45 seconds, and you do not need to yield your time upon completing your speech.

## Resolutions

The ultimate goal of a MUN committee is to pass a draft resolution, which acts as a conclusion and product of the debate that has occurred. During unmoderated caucuses and breaks, delegates work within their blocs to write a paper delineating the solutions that the bloc would like to implement. For an example resolution paper, please refer to the “[ROP Guide](#)” on the VMUN website’s “[Resources](#)” page. When all of the blocs have finished writing their papers, delegates can motion to present their working papers. If the motion passes, the sponsors of the paper will read its contents clause-by-clause. Afterwards, the Dais will typically entertain a Q&A session where delegates can question the Sponsors on the content of the paper. Once the paper has been fully presented, the next bloc will motion to present theirs, and so on. Once all papers have been presented, delegates are able to debate on and propose amendments to papers.

## Amendments

There are two types of amendments: friendly and unfriendly. Friendly amendments are unanimously agreed upon by all of the Sponsors and are adopted into the paper immediately.

Unfriendly amendments divide the Sponsors and cannot be agreed upon; in that case, the committee goes into a Special Secondary Speakers List, with two Speakers for and against, and they debate whether or not to enact the amendment. After the Special Secondary Speakers List, the committee will vote upon the unfriendly amendment; if the vote passes, the amendment is added to the paper; conversely, if the vote fails, the amendment is discarded.

## Voting

After completing this process and presenting all papers, the Dais will entertain a motion to close debate. If this passes, the committee enters voting procedure. The Chairs will bar the doors and external communications to preserve the integrity of the vote. Next, the Dais will entertain a motion on the method of voting.

There are four methods of voting in Model UN: placard, roll call, acclamation, and division of the question.

- » **Placard** is the most common method of voting and simply consists of every delegate raising their placard indicating whether or not they are in support of the motion.
- » **Roll call** voting is a method where the Dais will go through the committee alphabetically and record every delegate's vote.
- » **Acclamation** is a method of voting primarily used in committees like NATO and acts as a consensus vote—if any delegation is in opposition, the motion fails.
- » **Division of the question** can be used in conjunction with any of the aforementioned three methods of voting; however, the entire paper is voted upon after being divided clause-by-clause.

After a method of voting has been decided upon, the Dais will entertain a motion on which paper to vote upon first. **Only one paper can pass**, so delegates often want their paper to be considered first. The committee will then vote on the paper and, should it pass, the committee will move on to the Secondary Speakers List for the second topic. Once the second topic has been completed and papers have been passed, the committee is able to accept a motion to adjourn debate for the conference. If all papers fail, the committee will revert to the Secondary Speakers List for the current topic.

For a more in-depth discussion of ROP, a guide on House of Commons or Senatorial ROP, or a guide for Continuous Crisis ROP, please refer to the VMUN website's "[Resources](#)" page.

