

SSUNS 2014



*“Dare to Challenge,
Drive the Change”*

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Dear Faculty Advisors,

My name is Hilary Chu and I will be serving as the Chargée d’Affaires for the 22nd session of the Secondary Schools’ United Nations Symposium, otherwise known as SSUNS 2014. Whether you are looking to attend our conference for the first time or you are a seasoned SSUNS veteran, I am so excited to welcome you to what I am confident will be the most engaging and innovative conference to date. As Chargée d’Affaires, I will be your primary contact with the conference. It is my role to ensure that your SSUNS experience is a positive one from registration all the way through the conference until closing ceremonies. Through these monthly newsletters, I will keep both you and your delegates informed on all aspects of the conference so I do encourage you to read them to make the most of your SSUNS experience. Having attended SSUNS as a delegate myself, I am so excited to be working with both you and your students, without whom SSUNS would not be possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time should you have any concerns or questions at all. I look forward to meeting you at SSUNS in November!

Sincerely,
Hilary Chu | Chargée d’Affaires

WHAT IS MODEL UN?

Model United Nations is an extracurricular activity in which students take on the role of delegates in simulations of United Nations bodies. Participants typically conduct research beforehand to understand the foreign policy and position of the country they represent on a variety of issues. The goal is to educate students on international relations, and global issues of the past, present, and future. Students develop their public speaking and negotiation skills in trying to work with other delegates to come to a consensus on topics such as international security, the global economy, health, development, gender, the environment, and much more.

WHAT IS SSUNS?

The Secondary Schools' United Nations Symposium (SSUNS) is the largest Model UN conference in Canada for high school students, attracting over 1,000 students annually from all over the globe. It was first held in 1993 and is staffed entirely by students of McGill University on a volunteer basis.



“DARE TO CHALLENGE, DRIVE THE CHANGE”

At one point or another, driven young adults have had ambitious dreams of their hopes for the future of this world and have aspired to make a difference for the generations of leaders to come. However, for many, the difficulty comes in attempting to put those ambitions into action in order to achieve the vision of a more cooperative and harmonious global community. SSUNS 2014 believes that goals can become accomplishments today, so long as delegates have the passion and determination to put their ideas into practice, and are offered the opportunities to transform their dreams into reality. Youth are the instigators of change and the time for that change is now. SSUNS 2014 believes that the process from challenge to change is an active and dynamic process. As such, the theme for this year's conference is “Dare to Challenge, Drive the Change”.



HOW TO REGISTER FOR SSUNS

STEP 1:

Visit our website

Everything you need to know about SSUNS can be found on our website at www.ssuns.org. Check out the committees list, meet the Secretariat and staff, learn about the venue, and much more!

STEP 2:

Calculate your conference fees

SSUNS registration fees consists of 2 components: (1) Non-refundable delegation fee (2) Total fee per delegate attending. More information on conference fees can be found at www.ssuns.org/payment

STEP 3:

Determine your country/character choices

A) Refer to the country-committee matrix at <http://www.ssuns.org/CountryCommitteeMatrix> to determine your country/NGO choices.
B) Refer to the committees list at <http://www.ssuns.org/committees>- list for more info on Specialized Agencies & Crises.

STEP 4:

Register Online

Go to www.ssuns.org/registration to complete your registration.

STEP 5:

Confirmation

Once your registration has been verified and approved, you will receive an email with login information for your new account on the SSUNS website. Please keep make sure to remember your login information as all future correspondence with SSUNS will be done through this account.

2014 COMMITTEES LIST



GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

- Millennium Development Goals 2000
- Social, Humanitarian, & Cultural Committee
- International Labour Organization

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL COUNCILS

- Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- Convention to Combat Desertification

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

- UN Human Rights Council 1975
- Bilingual: De Gaulle's Council of Ministers, 1958
- Financial Action Task Force
- Radio Free Europe 1953
- 2040 Peak Oil Crisis
- Fédération Internationale de Football Association
- White Paper Response 1969

CRISES COMMITTEES

- Ad Hoc Committee
- Mughal Empire
- United Nations Security Council
- Iran-Contra
- Iraq 2003
- Joint Literary: 1984 vs. Brave New World
- Joint Crises: Ukraine Orange Revolution

SSUNS 2014 SECRETARIAT



SECRETARY-GENERAL | SERENA WANG

CHARGÉE-D'AFFAIRES | HILARY CHU

CHIEF OF OPERATIONS | FELICIA MAZZARELLO

CHIEF OF STAFF | KATIE GILFILLAN

UNDERSECRETARY-GENERAL, COMMITTEE AFFAIRES | JONATHAN SCHMIDT

DEPUTY GENERAL ASSEMBLIES & ECOSOCs | NICHOLAS BUHNE

DEPUTY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES | NICHOLAS D'ASCANIO

DEPUTY CRISES COMMITTEES | MARGOT CHARLES

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS | NADIA FENTIMAN

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS | KORAY DEMIR

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS | MARISA BARKHOUSE

UNDERSECRETARY-GENERAL, FINANCE | LAURYN PENG

UNDERSECRETARY-GENERAL, INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY | LUCILLE HUA

Close up on the Secretariat



Serena Wang | Secretary-General

Major: Interdepartmental Honours Immunology; Minor: International Relations

Hometown: Mississauga, ON; Born in Milan, Italy

History with SSUNS: Delegate (2007-2010), Crisis Staffer (2011), Deputy USG GAs & ECOSOCs (2012), Chargée-d'Affaires (2013), Secretary-General (2014). This will be my 8th and final year of SSUNS!

Why SSUNS?

SSUNS holds a very special place in my heart as it was my first conference as a delegate back in grade nine. More importantly, SSUNS marked the beginning of my love affair with Model UN and helped me to develop an awareness for global affairs, as well as a recognition of the role we play in shaping the scope of the world we live in. SSUNS has not only made me more conscientious of current world issues and of our responsibilities as global citizens in the international community, but it has also inspired my interest in a future career in global health. This is why I am coming back to SSUNS for the 8th year in a row.

What makes SSUNS different from any other conference?

The heart of SSUNS rests in the people. It is a conference that emphasizes the importance of building personal connections between delegates, faculty advisors, and staff. I believe it is this focus that reflects SSUNS' embodiment of the true spirit of the United Nations. The United Nations, after all, is a platform for discussion and collaboration based on interpersonal connections that allow for international partnerships. SSUNS emulates this spirit in every possible way. It is the international scope of its theme as well as the close personal interactions between its attendees and staff that make SSUNS the ideal conference.

Vision for 2014

SSUNS has given me so much in terms of my education, professional skills, and personal experiences. I hope to create a supportive and inspiring place along with the Secretariat where delegates can achieve the same. Delegates, faculty advisors, and staff, SSUNS 2014 is your conference!

Hilary Chu | Chargée-d'Affaires

Major: Economics & Political Science Double Major, U3

Hometown: Vancouver, British Columbia

History with SSUNS: Delegate (2010), Director (2012), Deputy USG Specialized Agencies (2013)



Why SSUNS?

SSUNS was the first Model UN conference I ever attended as a delegate and is the reason I fell in love with MUN. I felt such a unique energy from both the delegates and staff that I knew I had to get involved in running the conference when I decided to attend McGill.

How has Model UN changed you?

I used to be extremely shy. Model UN pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me realize just how important it is to voice your opinion and to do so effectively. It has also taught me that the best leaders in a committee are not always the loudest ones. I have definitely found that the diplomacy and negotiation skills I have developed in MUN have helped me outside the committee room.

Has there been a significant UN moment that has changed your perspective or just been meaningful to you?

I recently had the privilege of attending the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York as a representative of the International Relations Students Association of McGill. It was a very meaningful experience for me because I was in the UNCSW committee when I first attended SSUNS as a delegate. It was a dream come true to be able to witness the real commission in action.

Interesting fact about yourself?

I will spend a semester studying in Paris next year!

At the Heart of the Committees



Brendan Sheehan | Crisis Director, Ad Hoc

Major: Joint Honours Political Science & History, Minor in Classical Studies, U3
Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario

Why SSUNS?

SSUNS was my first ever crisis committee. Not only did I learn so much from doing a crisis at SSUNS, it also began my continuing love affair for crisis committees. I love staffing SSUNS because many students were just like me once and I wish I can provide the educational experience that received six years ago.

Why Ad Hoc?

Ad Hoc is always the committee and this is my first time being directly involved so I am in heaven. Delegates cannot rely on being a strong character or a vast understanding of the topic on hand. My vision is that the Ad Hoc can create parity among the delegates where they must rely on their own strengths to survive and thrive. I cannot tell you what I am most excited about this committee you will have to wait and see until November!

What advice do you have for delegates?

First time delegates, remember to take it whatever pace you want to. You don't need to speak every moment to fall in love with SSUNS or Model UN. You are allowed to make mistakes! All that matters is you try to understand the committee and try to learn something out of this rare opportunity. Don't forget no one will be more proud of you than yourself for what you can accomplish your first time coming to SSUNS. For returning delegates remember that no one is an expert at Model UN, you can grow so much more every time you come to SSUNS if you seize the opportunity to challenge yourself to do something you were unable to do the last time you were at SSUNS.

Punhal Pirzada | Chair, SOCHUM

Major: Finance, U3
Lived in: Karachi, Pakistan; Woodstock, Ontario

History with SSUNS/Model UN:

I attended my first Model UN conference in 2007. I actively participated in Model UN through high school, and led my school team on numerous delegations. I was a part of my school's delegation to Harvard MUN in 2012, probably the most memorable conference I've attended so far. I've been involved with SSUNS since I joined McGill in 2012. I served as a director at SSUNS 2012 and Vice Chair at SSUNS 2013. Similarly, I have also actively participated at McMUN, where I was Vice Chair in 2013 and 2014, and will be serving as the Chair for the Legal committee next year.

What got you started with Model UN?

Model UN was a relatively new concept where I was living back in 2007. The idea was appealing; acting as a diplomat and having the power to debate real issues. I decided to give it a try, and I'm glad I did.

If you could choose a UN committee to describe yourself, which would it be and why?

The UN Security Council. I like how the Security Council can call for emergency meetings at will, and the fact that it aims to take care of things ASAP, something that I try to do on daily basis.



At the Heart of the Committees



Sara Issaoun | Chair, Joint Literary Committee (1984)

Major: Physics, Minor in Economics, U3
Lived in: Algeria; Montreal; Arnhem, Netherlands

What got you started with Model UN?

I started model UN when I was 15. It was suggested to me by one of my teachers, who was also the head of the MUN club at my school. He felt it would be a great opportunity to get rid of my fear of public speaking. My first MUN was a General Assembly and I was so terrified that it took everything I had to go up to the podium and read out my position paper. Eventually, I came to love debating and interacting with other delegates. I grew in confidence and I finally applied to a chair position in high school, and that's when I found my calling. Chairing is the best experience for me as it enables me to interact with the delegates in a very personal manner and help them individually improve their performance.

Has there been a significant UN moment that has changed your perspective or just been meaningful to you? The UN has been doing tremendous diplomatic work over the years, but my most meaningful moment was Ban Ki-Moon's speech at the 17th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 2009. There was one quote in particular that marked me: "We must also remember that when women are empowered, so are their children." This quote was in the context of development in Africa and how investing in women will provide long term development in the future generations. Not to sound super feminist but the role of women in Africa is still nowhere near what it is in the western world, and enabling them will greatly improve the lives of the younger generations.

If you could travel to back/forward to any era in time, where would you go and why?

I would probably like to go back to the 1960s. I've recently been obsessed with Mad Men and I just love everything about it. Some of the biggest historical events happen in the 60s, such as the civil rights movement, the JFK assassination, Pop Art, the Beatles and the moon landing. I would only go to visit though, because the situation of women was deplorable, very similar to their situation in Africa nowadays.

Kim Kidani | Crisis Director, Joint Literary Committee

Major: Economics, U3
Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii

You're returning to SSUNS – what made you come back?

I'm returning to SSUNS because high school delegates are honestly my favourite kind of delegates to work with. Their intelligence and creativity, and how they apply it to solve the problems in front of them, never fails to amaze and challenge me.

Why did you want to be a part of your committee? What is your overall vision for the committee? What are you most excited for with this committee?

Brave New World and 1984 have been linked in my mind after reading one after the other while in high school; they also sparked my interest in dystopian fiction generally. Literature does not exist in a vacuum and the literary committee shouldn't either. I think the similarities and vast differences between the two dystopias, and the elements within them that resonate in our current society, are incredible topics for reflection before, during and after the conference. My goal for the committee is to create an environment that facilitates this reflection.

Interesting fact about yourself?

I'm currently working as an Intern Investigator for the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, Parole Division. I get to explore America's capital while doing work that has a very real impact on the lives of indigent clients. It's been an incredible experience so far and I can honestly say it's the most interesting and rewarding thing I've ever done.



At the Heart of the Committees



Ali Aasim | Chair, UNHRC

Major: Double Major in Mathematics and Economics, U3

Hometown: Karachi, Pakistan

Lived in: Lahore, Pakistan; Islamabad, Pakistan; Toronto; Dubai

What is your vision for this committee?

My vision for the committee was to be a modern one, dealing with issues that are very contemporary. The first of these is Women's Rights, which, despite us being in 2014 are shameful. Issues such as domestic violence (especially in developing countries like Pakistan) are absolutely appalling. Even in developed countries the pay gaps between the sexes is an issue that, despite being common knowledge is just never addressed effectively. The other two issues are topics that would not have been discussed even 5 or 10 years ago, which are the rights of Peaceful Protesters and the Human Rights issues resulting from all the surveillance being conducted by Governments. I'm really just excited for the delegates to go deep into these issues, and emerge having had some profound realizations.

Advice for delegates?

Never stop trying to improve yourself and never give up. (and if you're anything like me, losing miserably once in a while is the best thing that can happen to you).

Interesting fact about yourself?

I am colour blind.