

Seton Hall University Model United Nations Conference XIX



Press Corps

Background Guide

March 24th-25th
Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ

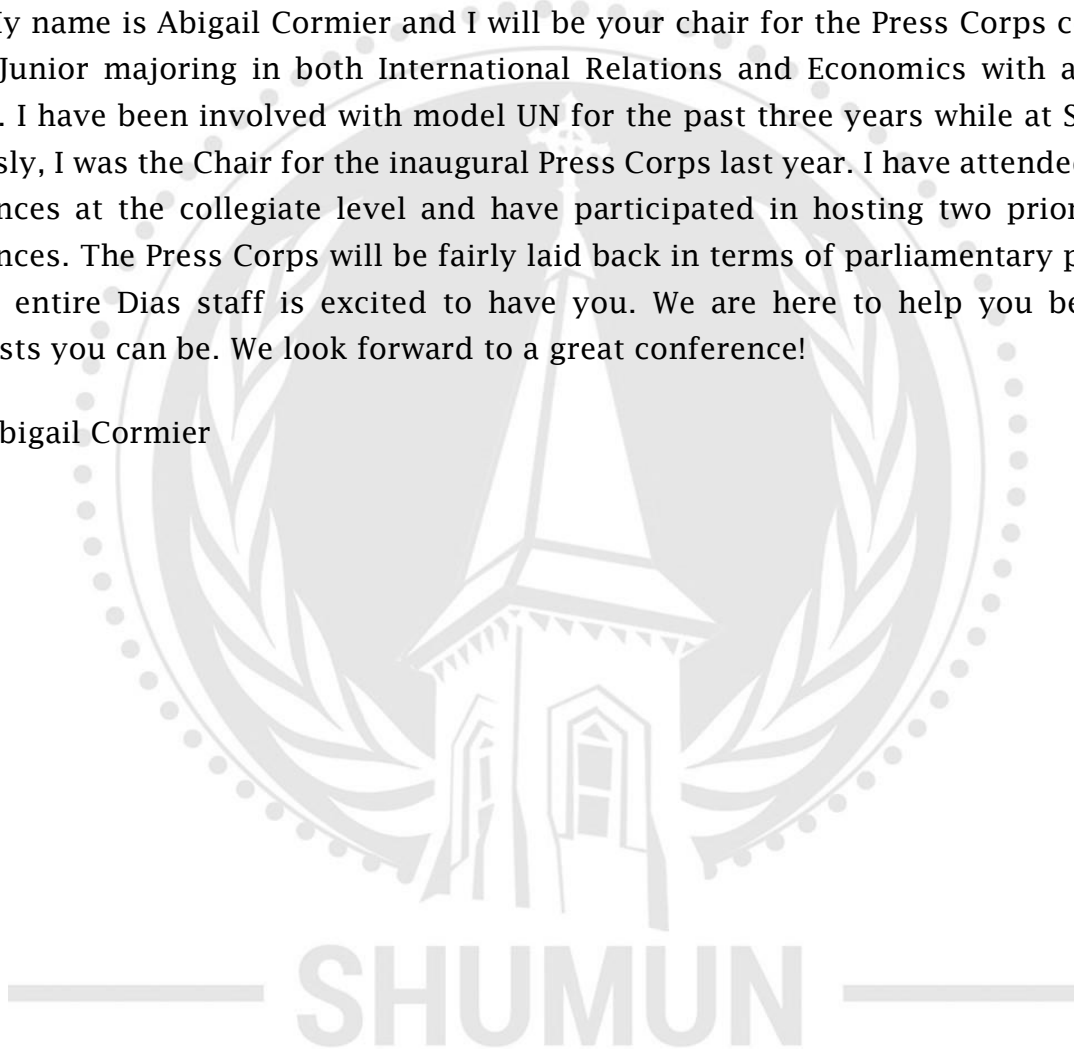
Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Seton Hall University Model United Nations Conference and to the Press Corps!

My name is Abigail Cormier and I will be your chair for the Press Corps committee. I am a Junior majoring in both International Relations and Economics with a minor in Russian. I have been involved with model UN for the past three years while at Seton Hall. Previously, I was the Chair for the inaugural Press Corps last year. I have attended multiple conferences at the collegiate level and have participated in hosting two prior SHUMUN conferences. The Press Corps will be fairly laid back in terms of parliamentary procedure, and the entire Dias staff is excited to have you. We are here to help you be the best journalists you can be. We look forward to a great conference!

Abigail Cormier



Introduction

The press around the world is a vital element to informing the public and checking the power of governments. Given today's heated sociopolitical climate, it is more important than ever to have a well-functioning press to provide information on events around the world. The press links what happens at the United Nations and in governments across the globe to the population of the world. As a part of SHUMUN's Press Corps, you will be responsible for maintaining this link, as it is essential people are constantly informed about the actions of the committees.

Unlike other committees as SHUMUN, the Press Corps is not confined to any one topic, time, or country. The objective is to report on the committee sessions that you are assigned to, which rotate and change. Therefore, the remainder of this guide will serve to provide information on how you can accomplish your task.

Representation

The SHUMUN Press Corps' members is focusing on both incorporating different biases and geography. Therefore, each news agency is from different regions, with different histories, and with different biases. Consider these criteria while writing and representing your agency. An important research method to understanding your news agencies writing style and typical coverage is to research what the journalists of your source are writing about the topics of the various committees. The different agencies represented by members of the corps at SHUMUN are as follows:

1. The New York Times
2. Al Jazeera
3. Associated Press
4. BuzzFeed
5. The Wall Street Journal
6. CNN
7. The BBC

Format

The charge of each reporter is to investigate the development and actions of the committees at the conference and then produce written content after engaging with delegates in lines of questioning. During sessions, reporters will be assigned to certain committees. Delegates will collect information, write content, and submit work to the chair for edits.

The written content can take two primary forms: smaller feature news pieces focusing on a specific topic or person, and larger, more complex hard news pieces with factual, expansive overviews of an issue.

Certain stories, or news agencies may require a blend of the two, therefore reporters are encouraged to individualize and blend these two styles. The lines of questioning will be prepared for use within committee conferences in question and answer sessions. From the information gathered during committee sessions, reporters will create lines of questioning for individual delegates. These are your tools to get to the root of the story. Reporters are encouraged to make their questions unsparing. The creation of these questions will test your own reporting skills, while the implementation of them will create action in the room between delegates.

Reporting Tips

It is imperative to spell delegate names and their respective positions correctly. In addition, when quoting delegates in articles, ensure it is word-for-word. If it is during an interview, have them repeat the sentence to ensure you get it written down correctly. For hard news that is longer and more factual, avoid the third person, sensationalism, and extensively cover the topic. When writing a feature piece, reporters can focus on one delegate, one sub-topic, and cover it in a shorter, briefer article. Always keep in mind how your news agency would write on the topic. Research how your agency covers various topics that will be covered in the committees at SHUMUN this year, available on the website.

You will also have the opportunity to host question and answer sessions. Prepare interview questions ahead of time, and avoid yes-or-no questions, as these generally produce less information. Ensure that you get accurate quotes and evolve your questions as the session goes on so that you can focus on a topic to write on.

Always try to include a one or two sentence introduction to your article. It should grab the reader's attention, and answer as much of the "who, what, where, when, why" as possible.

Awards

Throughout the conference you will be evaluated by your chair and entire dais on your performance as both a reporter and a representative of your agency. In the spirit of the MUN tradition, delegates will be competing with one another within this committee for the award of Best Delegate. This award will be given to the delegate that best represents

the idea of investigative journalism and their news agency. Our editors will be ready to evaluate your articles based on your news agency, so be sure to stay true to character. Other factors, such as quantity of written works or utilization of question and answer sessions can be taken into account, but they are secondary to the other objectives. In addition, there will also be the awards of Outstanding Delegate, and Honorary Mention, in that order. The Press Corps at SHUMUN will be a great arena for you to explore the field of journalism, improve your writing skills, and take part in a new side of MUN competition. You, as Press Corps representatives are pivotal to making Seton Hall's MUN conference realistic, effective and engaging. Reporters, feel empowered to ask tough questions, expose hidden agendas within committees, and pursue exceptional stories.

Informal Points

A minimum of three pieces is expected to be submitted during SHUMUN. One piece per committee session at least, the first session can be a shorter article due to introduction and an information session. One of these should be a hard news article. As well, articles should be roughly 350 words. Greater specifics will be given in the first committee session of SHUMUN.