

MIDDLE AGES CRISIS COMMITTEE



GLOBAL STUDIES 9
MR. HARRIS

What is a Crisis Committee?

A crisis committee is similar to a Model United Nations committee, but instead of coming up with one resolution, delegates will have to come up with multiple *Public Directives* to tackle the various “crises” that occur.

For example, if the committee is about the American independence movement from the British, the various crises would involve British hostilities towards Americans, and delegates would have to come up with specific solutions to issues and problems that occur.

For example, a crisis could be

“The British have fired upon six unarmed Americans, killing 3 of them in Boston”.

Following this incident, no British soldiers has faced punishment.

As a group then, you have to decide how you want to act. Do you declare war on Britain? Do you ask that the British parliament for the men to be punished? Do you choose to do nothing, and wait and see?

Time is of essence in a crisis committee, since one crisis often leads to another crisis.

You must make your decisions quickly or it will be too late!

This crisis committee we will be having during quarter 3 is called the,

Medieval Security Council: Crisis Committee

adopted from the Dallas Area Model United Nations conference in 2015.

We have modified some parts in order to make it a committee that could be completed within three 80 minute class periods (and not three days like the actual conference).

In this committee, the crises revolve around two issues.

The growing Mongolian Empire and the Black Plague.

As the heads of states you must come up with strategies to stop one of the most mighty and commanding military group and one of the worst pandemics the world has ever faced.

It is up to you, in regards to which other empires and groups you would like to ally yourself with in order to protect yourself from the Mongolian Empire.

Key Terminology

There are various “points” and “motions” in MUN. We will only use the basic ones in our committee.

MOTIONS

Moderated Caucus:

In a moderated caucus, a delegate will request

1. A total time,
2. Duration of speaking time,
3. Topic of discussion.

The topics can be very broad or very specific.

For example, it could be something as vague as

“Motion for a moderated caucus of 10 minutes, 1 minute speaking time, to discuss possible solutions to recent crisis”.

At the same time, it could be very specific such as, “Motion for a moderated caucus of 15 minutes, 1 minute speaking time to discuss Mongolian forces in the Holy Roman Empire”.

Unmoderated Caucus:

Unlike the moderated caucus, the unmoderated caucus (informally known as “unmod”), does not have a set speaking time. In this style of discussion, delegates can move around the room and discuss freely. Often unmoderated caucuses are used when delegates want to get together to come up with public directives (Which will be explained in further detail on the next page).

For example, an unmoderated caucus could be,

“Motion for a 15 minute unmoderated caucus to come up with a public directive to stop trade with China”.

Like the Moderated caucus, this too could also be vague if preferred. For example, if delegates just want to speak freely, one could simply motion for, “Motion for an unmoderated caucus for 15-minutes to discuss freely”.

MOTIONS ADVANCED

There can be multiple motions at once. For example, one delegate may want a 15-minute free discussion, while another delegate may want a 10 minute controlled moderated debate. The decision to go unmoderated or moderated is up to you the delegates. You will vote upon the motions and decide whether you want to discuss certain issues, debate in a controlled environment or debate freely.

Now why would one want to motion for a caucus? The advantage of motioning is that you can control the flow of the debate. If you want the discussion to focus on England, you can motion to discuss about England, and if it passes, now you have everyone in the committee forced to discuss only about England for the length of the moderated caucus. If you just sit there and let other delegates motion for various unmoderated and moderated caucus, you end up becoming a passenger and not a leader of the debate.

Special rule

Normally, delegates can choose, 30-seconds, 60-seconds and so on for length of moderated caucus. To keep things simple, in our committees, we will say all moderated caucuses must be 60 seconds in length when it comes to speaking time.

This means that an individual may speak a maximum of 60 seconds, but does not have to use up the entire time.

So, for example, a delegate may say "15 minute moderated caucus, 1-minute speaking time, about the issue of China and Mongolia".

A delegate cannot say "15 minute moderated caucus, 45 second speaking time, about the issue of China and Mongolia".

POINTS

There are various "points" delegates can bring up.

To keep matters simple, I have narrowed it down to three points, and have slightly modified the definitions for the Global Studies 9 version of Crisis MUN.

Point of Personal Privilege

If a delegate has a personal problem that needs to be resolved such as, but not exclusive to; wants to go to the bathroom, cannot hear a delegate speaking (request to speak louder), finds the air conditioning too strong/weak. A delegate can raise his/her placard and make a point of personal privilege.

Point of Parliament Procedure

If a delegate believes that procedure of the debate has been not followed properly, the delegate may make a point to the chair that an infringement had been made. For example, if the topic of the moderated caucus is "discuss how to stop the plague", and a delegate begins to talk about invading Mongolian forces. Another delegate can raise that point up to the chair, and the chair will either agree or disagree with the delegate and debate will move on.

Point of Clarification

If a delegate needs some type of clarification, whether it be a speech someone made and they did not understand a word, or they just listened to the chair/director make a crisis announcement and had difficulty understanding. They may raise their placard and ask the director/chair (or delegates at times) for clarification.

DIRECTIVES

There are two types of directives in a crisis committee. A private directive and public directive. A private directive means a delegate is choosing to pursue action individually with their own powers. For example, if you want to make a decision such as "Stop trade with neighboring empire to avoid the possibility of the plague spreading through trade" is a private directive. You, as the leader of your state have the power and authority to make this decision.

To the contrary, if the decision includes other members present (Or the entire committee), you must propose a **Public Directive**. In this case, you must have at least 1/3 of the committee to sign the public directive, before you introduce it to the group.

Once it is introduced, there will be one speaker for the directive (45 seconds), and one speaker against the directive (45 seconds). If there is no speaker against the directive, the directive will automatically move into voting (This is not uncommon if most delegates agree). The votes necessary to pass a public directive is a **simple majority**. 50% +1.

So, for example, if there are 15 delegates, at least 8 delegates.

If there are 12 delegates, at least 7 delegates.

NOTE PASSING

Note passing is a crucial part of crisis committees. Unlike standard committees, everything is time sensitive, and it could be crucial that you get a message to another delegate before certain events transpire. For example, maybe you want to create an alliance with a neighbor empire before the Mongolians attack. In this case, instead of waiting until an unmoderated caucus, you may want to contact that other delegate via notes.

Notes are also crucial in crisis committees because of public directives.

Public Directives require at least 1/4 of the delegates to sign on to the directive before it can be introduced.

For example, if there are 16 delegates, at least 3 other delegates must sign on to the Public Directive (Total of 4 delegates) for the directive to be introduced.

What does a Crisis Committee schedule look like?

The format of crisis committees are slightly more flexible than standard MUN committees, and are often more fast paced and require versatile thinking and the ability to adjust according to updated crisis.

What also makes crisis committees unique is that although many of the crises are somewhat predictable. For example, you should expect at some point a military attack from the Mongols if your country is literally next to the empire. Other crises are less predictable, because they could be caused by other delegates. For example, there may be an alliance between two countries, but this could be broken at any time if the leader of one of the countries chooses to do so. The ramifications and consequences of these decisions will change based on the actions delegates take in committee.

Example schedule for day #1

20 minutes: Introductions

5 minutes: Crisis announcement and clarifications

15 minutes: Moderated Caucus

15 minutes: Unmoderated Caucus

5 minutes: Moderated Caucus

5 minutes: Unmoderated Caucus

10 minutes: Moderated Caucus

5 minutes: Crisis announcement and clarifications

10 minutes: Unmoderated Caucus

Positions (and the modern country they would represent today)

POSITION	MODERN DAY
Song Dynasty	<i>China</i>
Kievan Russ	<i>Russia</i>
England	<i>United Kingdom</i>
Holy Roman Empire	<i>Germany</i>
Abbasid Caliphate	<i>Iraq</i>
Byzantine Empire	<i>Turkey</i>
Kingdom of Goryeo	<i>Korea</i>
Japan	<i>Japan</i>
Frank Kingdom	<i>France</i>
Kingdom of Castile	<i>Spain</i>
Delhi Sultanate	<i>India</i>
Khawarazmian Empire	<i>Iran</i>
Mamluk Sultanate of Cairo	<i>Egypt</i>
Tran Dynasty	<i>Vietnam</i>
Java	<i>Indonesia</i>
Ayyubid Empire	<i>Syria</i>
Hungary	<i>Hungary</i>
Poland	<i>Poland</i>

Topic #1 Mongolian Invasion

**Adopted directly from the DAMUN guide.*

It is the year 1235 and many have already crumbled at the wake of the Mongol conquerors. They have already subjugated the Western Xia, also known as the Tangut Empire that lay northwest of Song China. China is effectively the closest to the Mongol wave when this session starts - the actions that the " Song Dynasty" China Delegation takes in committee can be pivotal for resistance from further conquest.

The Mongols swept in from the east and wiped away entire cities, sometimes civilizations, off of the face of the earth. Your number one priority is to protect the lives of those within your domain .

Key Questions to consider about your Medieval Civilization

You are not representing the modern - day country you have been assigned, but rather its medieval, Mongol - era version (roughly 1000 AD - 1500 AD). Be sure to understand the political and militaristic capabilities of your empire during this time period, and maybe even these characteristics of the other states. Here are some pointers:

Who exactly is the Head of State of the empire you are representing?

If you can find someone in particular, this will greatly aid you in better representing your empire. You do not have to find a real figure exactly during the invasions, but you could try to make it someone notable and revered.

How strong is the military of your empire?

How did your military/empire fare when the Mongols encountered them in history?
What factors caused this?

Which dynasty, ruler, or political class rules your empire?

Which other empires are you close to, geographically, culturally , politically, or religiously? These connections and similarities can help you find allies.

Which empires are you enemies with?

Also known as: You wouldn't mind if the Mongols made these guys extinct

How far are you from the steppes of Central Asia, where the Mongols originated? Are you likely to be their next target after China? (You can look into the actual historical Mongol invasion sequence, but keep in mind things will get creative in our Crisis committee.)

Topic #2 Responding to the Black Pandemic

**Adopted directly from the DAMUN guide.*

The Black Death was disease that ravaged medieval Europe throughout the 1300s. It killed about 50 million people in Europe and also struck the Muslim world. Today, historians and epidemiologists believe that the Black Death was caused by the bubonic plague bacterium, which spread as a result of fleas on rodents. Most, if not all of the European countries were affected by the Black Death, and it also affected the Muslim and Chinese worlds as well.

Your job is to find a solution to the Black Death problem as the Black Death enters Europe, the Middle East, and Asia and begins to spread from country to country. Remember that your loyalty is to your country first, and that international relations were much different at the time.

There are a few things to a gain consider for this part of the topic:

-What are the major metropolitan areas located in your country? Are these areas susceptible to disease and have potential to be hit by the Black Death. The cities at the time may be different than the ones that are present today: for example, Hangzhou in China was much more populous than Beijing, which is the eight - most populous city in the world today.

-What is your empire's relationship with Silk Road Trade? This is reputedly one of the mediums through which the black plague traveled. Your understanding about disease spread through trade routes could very well be your advantage.

-Remember that at the time, your society has access to learning that was available at the time. Therefore, if you come from a more advanced society, you may have access to better methods of treatment and a better understanding of the disease than other societies.

-Who are your country's enemies? Remember that if the plague strikes them, they may very well be decimated, to your advantage.

-When does the Black Death reach your country? Knowing where your country stands in the sequence can help with the decision making process and contribute to stopping the spread of disease in your country.

-Remember that the Black Death also affected the Arab and Chinese worlds – it was not limited to just Europe! Most, if not all countries present in the committee will be affected by the Black Death – don't think that your empire is safe just because it is not in Europe!

Opening Speeches

Opening speeches usually range from 60 seconds to 120 seconds depending on the conference and committee.

For the Middles Ages Committee, each student will be given **60-75 seconds** to present an opening speech.

Its highly encouraged that opening speeches are at the very least 45 seconds in length.

The opening speech will be graded as a 20 point formative grade.

	Hook	Position	Preparation
Excellent	The hook is attention grabbing, and unique. Congruently, it also makes a poignant point that applies to the core of the speakers message.	The student takes a clear and strong position on the debate topic that is consistent with the assigned character These positions are supported by specific evidence.	The student is well prepared and does not use notes for his/her opening speech. Clearly, the student has rehearsed many times prior to the actual committee and has confidence in regards to the words he/she is stating.
Good	The Hook is attention grabbing, however, not very original.	The student takes a position on the debate topic that is consistent with the assigned character These positions are supported by evidence.	The student appears well prepared, and may rely on some notes, but has the opening speech partially memorized. The student is speaking with conviction and not directly reading off a note paper.
Satisfactory	There is a hook.	The student has a position, and these positions have reasonable evidence.	The student is somewhat prepared with a well-written speech, however appears to be directly reading it more than presenting it.
Unsatisfactory	There is no clear hook.	The student is unclear about his/her position and provides very little to none in evidence.	The student is not prepared. He or she is simply reading off the opening speech, and is showing little conviction to his/hers statements.

Position Paper

Position Papers should be a five paragraph essay addressing the following questions;

1. Which state do you represent? What are some basic statistics and information about your state (Such as neighboring states, economic status, population, relationship with the Mongols, distant from the silk road, etc). Which states are your allies? Which states are your enemies? Which states are you in a neutral relationship with?
2. How do you plan on avoid invasion from the Mongols? Do you have a capable military? Do you plan on creating an alliance with other nations? Do you plan on negotiating with the Mongolians?
3. The black plague is spreading! How will you deal with the impending "black death"? Will you focus on creating an antidote? Will you seal off your borders and stop trade with countries that may potential bring in the deadly disease? Will you use this disease as an opportunity to punish your enemies?

Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
<p>The position paper answers all questions fully and in detail, providing comprehensive solutions to the issues at hand.</p> <p>Various sources and evidence are used to support argument.</p> <p>The positions are consistent with character.</p> <p>There are no mechanical errors.</p>	<p>The position paper answers all questions fully providing solutions that may slightly lack detail.</p> <p>Specific evidence is used to support argument.</p> <p>The positions are consistent with character.</p> <p>There are no major mechanical errors.</p>	<p>The position paper answers all questions providing simplistic solutions.</p> <p>Some evidence is used to support argument.</p> <p>The positions are consistent with character.</p> <p>There are one to two major mechanical errors.</p>	<p>The position paper does not answers all questions.</p> <p>Very little to no evidence is used to support argument.</p> <p>The positions are not consistent with character.</p> <p>There are more than two major mechanical errors.</p>

Conference performance

Your teacher will be looking at several factors in regards to your overall committee performance.

Activeness/Leadership:

An active student is a delegate who consistently is getting involved with writing resolutions, presenting resolutions, asking questions, and moving around the room to persuade others to join their side. An active delegate will display leadership through taking on important roles such as resolution presenter, and will actively answer questions about their resolution.

Negotiation Skills:

A student who shows exemplary negotiation skills is always willing to talk to those who have differing opinions. They do not get emotional when making points, but use evidence and logic to persuade the others. They do not get caught up with the concepts of “winning” and “losing” and are interested in moving the entire committee forward towards a positive resolution.

Collaboration:

A collaborative delegate is one who is constantly looking to get others involved. They may be leading the conversation, but make sure to include those who do not speak out often a chance to display their thinking in order to contribute to the group. A collaborative delegate is seeking a variety of perspectives in order to achieve maximum results.

Respect:

A respectful delegate shows high regard towards his/her chair and other students. They do not interrupt others, and have an open mind towards differing and dissenting opinions. They are not condescending, even if a comment made by another delegate may appear silly or off topic.

Focused:

A focused delegate is on task at all times. They are always speaking English, and are looking at different ways to move the committee forward through unmoderated and moderated caucus's.

Preparedness:

A prepared delegate comes to the committee with a research binder full of information and ideas. They are willing to share with others their thoughts and research in order to help move the committee forward.

Tips/Notes

1. Notes
Note writing is an imperative part of a crisis committee. When you are in a moderated caucus, you can still “talk” to other delegates by communicating via notes. Notes are also a great way to get to personally understand the positions of other delegates, without other delegates noticing.
2. Geography
Geography and location plays a major role in this committee. Have a good understanding of where the Mongolians and where the plague exists in order to make sure that your people can survive.
3. A destruction of an empire
Inevitably, numerous empires will very likely be destroyed and conquered by the plague, Mongols or by both. In this scenario, one of the following three options will occur.
 - a. Given another empire,
 - b. You become a “dual delegation”, you partner up with the delegate who has conquered you as their subjugate. You will vote together, but they have the final say.
 - c. If it is towards the end of the committee, you may just end up “dead”. In this case, you will attend the final 30-60 minutes of the committee as an “observer”. You will not be eligible to vote and your job will be to take hand written notes for the remainder of the committee.
4. Print
Please print out your material. I am not advocating the destruction of planet earth, but it is crucial that you have printed records, given that for almost all of the conference, computers all not be allowed. Please do not wait until the last second to make prints.

GOOD LUCK

-MR. HARRIS