

# **UMMUN 2008**

## Background Guide

### **International Press Corps**



**Justice is truth in action.**

**-Benjamin Disraeli**

Delegates,

Thank you for your interest in UMMUN and the International Press Corps (IPC). We believe that IPC is truly one of the most unique experiences provided at UMMUN, in that you will have an opportunity to explore the conference at a level nobody else can. IPC reporters gain knowledge of committee that provides them with the ability to express an educated opinion and insight to the entire conference. Without the IPC the committees are blind to their peers and cannot arrive at informed and effective resolutions to the problems affecting their delegations. The role of IPC is pivotal to the success of the conference and requires the dedication of the staff and its reporters to be effective.

IPC will be changing its face from previous years; hopefully, in a way that benefits everyone's experience. We encourage you to send us (the directors) an email prior to the conference. We look forward to working with you and hope that you enjoy your stay in Ann Arbor and at UMMUN.

Sincerely,

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## DAIS STAFF

- Director - Ryan Struber
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## COMMITTEE MISSION

The International Press Corps will focus on operating a newspaper covering the activities of the General Assembly Committees and the Special Committees at UMMUN 2008. The newspaper's content will call for writers to incorporate both fact and opinion into their articles. We intend to print five papers over the course of the conference. Writers will report to a consolidated paper under the name "The Daily Planet." This Special Committee is unique to UMMUN by offering an alternative to the more traditional option of being a delegate in a single committee. This committee aims for a more "transcendent" role that will create essential communication between multiple committees and their delegates.

## **DELEGATE HANDBOOK**

When signing up to be a member of the International Press Corps, you will be getting yourself involved in the following activities:

You will be responsible for gathering information for your articles using multiple mediums. First, you are expected to sit in on most committee sessions of a committee prior to writing articles on topics covered in said sessions.

Second, expect to interview one of the following people to add content to your articles: a delegate, a director, or a member of the crisis staff (if applicable).

Throughout the conference, it is essential that you read what other IPC members have written and communicate with them about ongoing events at the conference so our paper is consistent. Also, if you choose to write any articles about the crisis or for a crisis committee, you may have to include information that comes from “unconfirmed sources.”

During the day you will have little down time. Your schedule will be gathering information (committee attendance /interviewing /etc), writing, editing, and revising (including peer editing), and repeat. As the editors, we can work with you on the final editing process before you submit your work. There will be 2 edits for each article, the first will be from a fellow IPC delegate, the final edit will be one on one with a member of the IPC staff. Your paper may need to be edited for content or to fit a particular format after both edits have been completed. If we suspect either an attack on the character of a delegate or staff member (libel), or any sort of plagiarism, then we will in all likelihood not print your article and will consider further action if appropriate. Remember to give

credit where credit is due.

Use of the IPC room will mostly be intended for peer and director editing, interviews (if the information is intended to be secret), and paper setup/ pre-printing. The IPC room may have its own computer resources; however, the Delegate Resource Center will be located next door.

### **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

One article should be written and submitted prior to the conference. This article will serve as a warm up, and will have edits and comments ready before the conference so you can begin to understand the style of writing we will be looking for. The following is a tentative schedule for paper releases throughout the conference:

Conference starts Thursday January 10, 2008:

	Printing:
1 <sup>st</sup> Issue	Friday morning 11:00 a.m.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Issue	Friday evening 7:30 p.m.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Issue	Saturday morning 11:00 a.m.
4 <sup>th</sup> Issue	Saturday evening 4:30 p.m.
5 <sup>th</sup> Issue	Sunday morning 11:00 a.m.

In order to print at these times, articles will be due on a staggered schedule before the paper goes to press. An article's deadline is important so that the staff has enough time to edit, revise, format, and print the paper before committee sessions let out. We intend to provide delegates with a schedule of unique editing times so that a delegate can effectively use time management to meet deadlines. The amount of time each reporter spends listening to her committee is entirely up to her. Committee meeting times are posted on the UMMUN website

([www.ummun.org](http://www.ummun.org)) under “Advisors/Registration > Schedules” and will be featured in the Delegate Handbook. Each student will have to decide how much time to devote to listening, interviewing, writing, etc. in order to meet the deadline.

## **ARTICLE CONTENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

As far as technical information goes, it is important that we can fit as much in as little space as possible. Therefore articles should:

- Be approximately 250-300 words long (roughly half a page single spaced in 12 point font).
- Contain quality writing as far as grammar, spelling, and content are concerned.
- NOT attack, criticize, or ridicule any individual delegate unless the argument is about policy or other substantive issues.

To gain a better sense of the type of writing we expect, we recommend visiting some online newspapers such as [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), [www.chicagotribune.com](http://www.chicagotribune.com), [www.freep.com](http://www.freep.com), and [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com). As previously mentioned, one article should be written prior to arriving at UMMUN. If you are struggling, it would be easiest to read the topics for a committee and then construct an opinion on what may happen and the relevance of those topics to today’s evolving world.

Background guides and topics are found on the UMMUN website ([www.ummun.org](http://www.ummun.org)) as well as other details about what will be happening in each committee. In case newspapers are not giving you a hint as to what we are expecting from an article, there is an issue of the The Daily Planet from the 2006 conference at the end of this handbook.

## **INTERVIEWING**

A reporter may find that an interview is in his or her best interest in order to get that extra bit of information to spice up an article. However, conducting an effective interview is not an easy task. Selecting questions that will draw out correct and meaningful information takes practice.

Some tips on what makes a good question are:

- A question starts with who / what / where / when / why / how.
- Consider which of these bases the question is trying to accomplish, and then formulate a short, concise, pointed question around that goal.
- Do not be too wordy or else your interviewee may become confused. Writing a question is one thing, however it may sound very different when spoken out loud.
- Avoid the use of “large” words; your interviewee doesn’t have a dictionary at his or her disposal.
- Treat your interviewee with respect; make sure to thank them for their time and effort.

There are a plethora of points that could be added to this list. We feel that interviewing is a major part of how newspapers relay information to their readers; as such interviews will be highly stressed. Expect the staff to push you to include an interview in most articles and be prepared to conduct them.

## **UMMUN COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS**

You can find descriptions of committee topics on the UMMUN website

(<http://www.ummun.org>).

## **RULES**

Delegates are going to be spending a significant amount of time in committees

and areas outside of the IPC room. The committee's Directors are going to be monitoring delegates closely to ensure that they are where they are supposed to be. Delegates will be provided with special credentials and it is important that you conduct yourself professionally and courteously in and out of committee. In addition, respect the rules of parliamentary procedure and exercise caution when entering and leaving committee rooms.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

We hope that IPC will be a great experience for both students and staff. We wish to express that a lot of this policy is quite malleable. Deadlines, rules, expectations, and most of what was discussed in this handbook are open to change, improvement, and suggestions. Welcome to IPC and we look forward to seeing you in January!

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The following is an article that we feel expresses many of the ideals we have outlined in this handbook:

American naval forces off the coast of East Africa launched an isolated air strike in southern Somalia late Sunday night. Intelligence reports identified the target as a base for Al-Qaeda operatives in Somalia, most notably Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, a thirty-two year old Syrian whom the U.S alleges orchestrated the 1998 African embassy bombings.

These air strikes, not related Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia, are the first American military interventions in Somalia since the "Black Hawk Down" crisis of 1993 and are unrelated to Ethiopia's invasion of Somalia. Special Forces units operating from an American base in Djibouti are conducting a hunt for Al-Qaeda operatives who have been forced to flee Mogadishu, the Somali capital, since Islamic militants were driven out by an Ethiopian military offensive last month. Also, according to the New York Times, the CIA has been making cash payments since early last year to Somali warlords who pledged to track down Al Qaeda cells within Somalia.