Overview of the Northern Rockies Model Arab League Program

As representatives of the Arab League's 22 member-states, Staff (Student Leadership) work to achieve consensus on questions real-life diplomats wrestle with daily. They vote on resolutions they have written that seek to resolve some of the Arab countries' most difficult challenges. The dynamics and interactive nature of the role-playing among the Student Leadership stimulate critical thinking, heighten creativity, expand knowledge, and cultivate understanding as no book, video, or coursework ever could.

Participation in a Model is of value to all Students regardless of their academic major. It matters little if at all whether their school has an academic course offering on the Arab countries, the Middle East, or the Islamic world. Staff gain invaluable firsthand leadership experience and hands-on training. They acquire this through the Model's constant challenges and interaction in the course of public discussion, the application of time management skills, the use of parliamentary procedure, and the dynamics of debating, writing, and editing. All this occurs under pressure and tight deadlines that mirror the actual realities and tensions inherent in the give-and-take that comes with activism in public affairs.

In experiencing how a prepared resolution succeeds or fails on the basis of whether their fellow students find its rationale sufficiently persuasive, student leadership also refine their interpersonal skills. At the final session, adult judges with experience in international relations announce the names of individual Student Leadership, delegations, and delegates whose performance has earned them highly coveted awards. These and other student participants are provided priority consideration for partial scholarships in the National Council's language and area studies academic programs in the Arab world.

At the end of any Model, all participants come away having practiced and improved
considerably the kinds of skills that will serve them well all their life in any field they pursue. This one-of-a-kind practical experience brings Student Leadership and their faculty advisers back year after year.

Course Description and Goals:

This course will further its Student Leadership’s Knowledge of the Arab world; its countries, politics, cultures, peoples and issues. By leading national delegations and focusing on the specifics of individual countries and various contemporary issues, Student Leadership will be given a more intimate knowledge of the region through active participation in teaching and mentoring the delegates. As staff members students will be expected to solidify their knowledge of the issues, cultures, and politics of the Middle East, as well as parliamentary procedures on a level with which they will be able to effectively assess and guide discussion towards positive ends. During the Northern Rockies Model Arab League Conference in April student staff members will act as chairs, vice chairs, and rapporteurs in individual committees assigned to them by the student leadership. As such, staff members are expected to be the exemplars of conduct both in class and during the conference. In class they are expected to initiate and help lead discussion among the collective of students, throughout the conference staff will be expected to remain impartial to opinions that they may hold with the aim of fostering discussion among the delegates without any bias given to said opinions, as well as pre-existing friendships, animosities, school affiliations, etc.

1. The objective learning outcome of the course is for Student Leadership to learn and understand more about the history, politics, and culture of the Arab world through class discussion and independent research. Student Leadership’ success in the course will be determined through their ability to think critically about issues facing the Arab world, as well as their ability to thoughtfully lead in class discussion and ask engaging and thought provoking questions of visiting lecturers. Their success will also be assessed based on their performance at the Northern Rockies Model Arab League Conference at the end of the course.

2. Student Leadership are presented with peer reviewed articles on various topics concerning the Arab World including, economic, social, cultural, and political affairs. Student Leadership will be required to keep up with current events of the 22 Arab League countries. They will also read relevant historic documents and treaties. Student Leadership taking the course for honors credit will be required to do extra research into assigned topics in order to engage more thoroughly with visiting speakers and at the conference.

3. Student Leadership will be required to write two papers and several resolutions pertaining to their assigned country and topic. The first will focus/outline the history of their assigned country. The second paper will define their country’s position on a specific committee topic. Each student will be expected to draft several resolutions pertaining to a committee topic. Each of the assignments is designed to benefit the student and help them learn as much about their country as possible before they have to formally represent that country at the conference. Assignments will be evaluated/graded based on accuracy, depth of research, format, and whether it meets all specified requirements.
In order to complete all that is expected of them, Student Leadership must do extensive research into their assigned countries and committee topics. In their research they must attempt to relate their country’s history to current events and put it in context with regional relationships and policies.

4. The course is designed so that a different guest lecturer gives a presentation each week, so Student Leadership will have the unique opportunity to engage in thoughtful discussion with a new professor every week. The class size is small enough to allow in depth conversation between a small group of Student Leadership and a diverse faculty.

5. The small class size and discussion based format allows optimum intellectual exchange among Student Leadership. Each class period Student Leadership will lead discussions and debate the assigned readings, resolutions, and presentations often through parliamentary procedure. Student Leadership are encouraged to express their views on the various issues and policy matters concerning the Arab World, and will receive participation grading based on their involvement in facilitating class discussion.

6. Student Leadership are presented with difficult and ethically complex problems and proposals, ranging from the Palestine Israel conflict, terrorism, economic and environmental stress, and human rights. They will be expected to debate these issues and produce policy proposals to address them.

**Course Requirements and Expectations:**

**Class Participation:**

Participation consists of two components; your physical presence in the class, and your informed contributions to class discussions. Readings will be assigned and it is expected that students will come to class having read the materials for that day ready to add to the comprehension of the topic. Participation will demand your vocal presence in the class using past knowledge and information from the readings to increase both your understanding and that of the other students in the class. Participation will constitute 10 percent of the final grade.

**Written Assignments:**

Written assignments will constitute 40 percent of the final grade. There will be two papers assigned to student staff members;

Each Chair will be required to write two backgrounders for their committee topics. Each backgrounder is 7-8 pagers long. The first backgrounder is due on February 12th, the second on February 26th.

Vice-chairs will write one 7-8 page backgrounder which will also be due on February 12th. As well as the backgrounder, Vice Chairs will also write a second 6-7 page paper in which they will imagine a hypothetical crisis in a given Arab country and conceive a solution. This paper will be due on April 1st.
Grading of Papers

Each paper is worth 15 percent of your final grade (30 percent total), the grading of both papers will be based upon the following:

5% Grammar & Organization

5% Accuracy of Information

5% Substance & Content

Source Documentation

Please document your sources in MLA format with a complete bibliography. Use at minimum three sources in each paper (note: it is likely that many sources will need to be used to provide an accurate picture of many of these countries and their issues, as events unfold constantly that change the political and cultural landscapes), at least one of these sources must be the BBC Country Profiles found at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm. Other sources should be articles from major news publications, academic journals, and scholastic articles, Wikipedia is not an acceptable source. Remember not citing sources for information constitutes plagiarism.

Pre-drafted Resolutions

Due in class- Tuesday March 29th, 2011
In preparation for the conference Staff will write two prepared resolutions containing substantive recognition of and solutions to topics raised in the respective committee agendas. Resolutions will be turned in with binders to be assessed and graded before the conference.

Binders

Due in class- Tuesday March 29th, 2011
Staff will compile a binder consisting of their two papers, two resolutions, a Model Arab League parliamentary procedures guide, and any documents deemed by the Staff to be especially pertinent to the discussion and resolution of issues within their committees, (i.e. past Arab League resolutions, Charter of the League of Arab States, past U.N. resolutions, Geneva Convention, International Convention on Human Rights, etc.).

Northern Rockies Model Arab League Conference:

The Northern Rockies Model Arab League Conference will be held April 7th, 8th, and 9th, 2011. Student Leadership are expected to be on time to all meetings, in proper attire, with respectful attitude and action towards all students, Student Leadership, faculty members and advisors, and university community members. Student Leaderships will participate according to the various stances, principles, and alliances that their respective countries have held in the past and at present with an aim towards passing substantive resolutions that create positive change
for the parties affected by the issues discussed in each committee. During all committee and summit sessions, student Leaderships will show respect and deference to the judgments of the respective chairs presiding over the meetings. It is the responsibility of the chair members to guide Staff discussion towards meaningful ends, and it is therefore the responsibility of the student Leaderships to recognize the suzerainty of the chair in decisions regarding the rules of parliamentary procedure as well as fostering the chairs aim to provide meaningful development of debate within the various committees. The conference will constitute 30 percent of each student Staff’s final grade; Student Leadership will be evaluated by faculty advisors, the Secretary General, and Director General concerning the level of their participation during the conference. Grading for in-class work will remain the same. At the conference, the Faculty Advisor, SG and DG will evaluate your performance.

**Academic Honesty:**

Tantamount to the integrity of the classroom is the honesty of Student Leadership in the work they create, plagiarism in papers and other pertinent materials is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade. Be it from written sources, another student, or electronic media if it is not cited in the work it will be considered plagiarism; for a more complete definition of plagiarism, and help avoiding it, visit www.plagiarism.org.

**Attendance:** Your presence and participation in class is imperative given the limited amount of time we have to prepare for the conference. Attendance will be taken during each class. One unexcused absence will be permitted. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a drop of one letter grade. Excused absences are medical (with a doctor’s note), university sanctioned event where your attendance is required (for athletes, choir members, etc) or family emergency (documentation required).

**Grading:**

Class attendance 10%, Quizzes 20%, Draft Resolutions 10%, and Papers 30%. The additional 30% of your grade will be based upon your attendance as well as SG, DG and advisor evaluations during the conference. Evaluations during the conference are based on: Parli-Pro skills 10%, Country knowledge 10%, Attendance and participation 10%

Grading for in-class work will as outlined above; at the conference, the Faculty Advisor, SG and DG will evaluate your performance.

**Quizzes:**

There will be a quiz at the end of every class period. The quizzes will test your understanding of information contained in the CIA World Fact book, BBC Country Profiles, and assigned readings. Quizzes will also contain current events questions. Staff are encouraged to follow Middle Eastern news from *The Economist, Washington Post, Middle East Times, Le Monde Diplomatique, Foreign Affairs, Al Jazeera Online, Chicago World Tribune, Le Monde and the New York Times.*

**Course and Conference Summary:**
The course will be taught and run by the Lecturer and the Staff (Student Leadership). It will be augmented with guest lectures and presentations from staff throughout the University in various academic disciplines, as well as members of the community with experience and understanding of the Arab world. Subsequent to the conference, staff will be asked to write a one-page summary of their experience in the class and a one-page summary of their experience during the conference. These summaries will be due on the final day of class, April 15th.

**Draft Resolutions:**

In addition to the papers, Staff will also write three 1 page resolutions prior to the conference. One resolution will be done in class. The other two will be done as homework and will be required to be typed and turned in the following class period. Each resolution is worth 5% of your grade and must be approved by the SG before the final grade is given. The resolutions must contain at least five perambulatory clauses and eight operative clauses and follow the guidelines laid out by the National Council on US-Arab Relations (NCUSAR).

**Class Schedule:**

**Week 1** – Introduction to Model Arab League, Basic Arab World Knowledge Quiz. Country Assignments.
Readings for 1/29:
1. Comoros, Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritania BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: Comoros, Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritania

**Week 2** – Comoros, Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritania Quiz, Parli-pro practice, Discussion over Persian Gulf States (UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait).
Readings for 2/5:
1. UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait.

**Week 3** – UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait Quiz; Parli-pro practice; Discussion over the Maghrib.
COUNTRY HISTORY PAPER DUE.
Readings for 2/12:
1. Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia

**Week 4** – Quiz over Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; Parli-pro practice; Discussion over Libya and Egypt. FIRST BACKGROUNDER DUE (Chairs and vice-chairs only).
Readings for 2/19:
1. Libya and Egypt BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: Libya and Egypt

**Week 5** – Quiz over Libya and Egypt; Parli-pro practice; Discussion over Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman.
Readings for 2/26:
1. Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman

**Week 6** – Quiz over Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman; Parli-pro practice; Discussion over Sudan and Somalia.
Readings for 3/4:
1. Sudan and Somalia BBC Country Profiles
2. CIA World Factbook: Sudan and Somalia.

**Week 7** – Quiz over Sudan and Somalia; Parli-pro practice; discussion over Iraq. COUNTRY POSITION PAPERS DUE.
Readings for 3/11:
1. Iraq BBC Country Profile
2. CIA World Factbook: Iraq

**Week 8** – Quiz over Iraq; Parli-pro practice; discussion over Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan.
Readings for 3/18:
2. CIA World Factbook: Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan.

**Week 9** – Quiz over Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan; Parli-pro practice, Review resolution drafting.
Homework for 4/1:
1. Resolutions due.
2. Second paper due for Vice-chairs.

**Week 10** – Resolutions due; Parli-pro practice; Conference prep; Parli-pro/resolutions quiz.

**Week 11** – Conference prep. Final parli-pro practice.

**Week 12** – Northern Rockies Model Arab League conference.

**Week 13** – Course/conference review and wrap up.

**Office Hours:**
I will have posted office hours during the week, everyone is encouraged and is welcome to come in, visit for questions or discussion and I am also available by appointment.

**Sample of Readings (dependent upon week and requests from speakers):**

- Politicizing the International Criminal Court: the convergence of politics, ethics, and law- Steven Roach
- The Role of the Arab development funds in the world economy: New York: St. Martin’s Press in association with ICEI, 1984
Comoros, Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritania BBC Country Profiles
- CIA World Factbook: Comoros, Eritrea, Djibouti, Mauritania
UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait BBC Country Profiles
- CIA World Factbook: UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait
- *Soaring Buildings, Sliding Dollar; Dubai;* The Economist, November 3, 2007
- A Bouncy Bantam; Qatar; The Economist, September 9, 2006
- An Island Kingdom Feels the Ripples from Iraq and Iran; The New York Times; April 16, 2006
- Ailing Emir of Kuwait Steps Down, Ending a Succession Crisis; The New York Times, January 24, 2006

Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan BBC Country Profiles
- CIA World Factbook: Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan
- Syria is Accused of Blocking a Deal on a New Lebanese President; The New York Times; November 22, 2007
  - From Crisis to Crisis; The Economist; July 7, 2007
  - Who's For President?; The Economist; September 29, 2007
  - In Search of a Government; The Economist; December 1, 2007
- Syria is Said be Strengthening Ties to Opponents of Iraq’s Government; The New York Times; October 7, 2007
  - Has He Got Away With It?; The Economist; April 7, 2007
  - Get a Move on Then; The Economist; September 22, 2007

Iraq BBC Country Profile
- CIA World Factbook: Iraq
- Why They Should Stay – Why They Should Stay; The Economist; September 15, 2007
- Papers Paint New Portrait of Iraq’s Foreign Insurgents; The Washington Post; January 21, 2008
- Iraq Asks for Iran’s Help in Calming Kurdish Crisis; The New York Times; November 1, 2007
  - Neighborly Mumblings; The Economist; May 19, 2007
- Sudan and Somalia BBC Country Profiles
  - CIA World Factbook: Sudan and Somalia
  - Ex-Rebels Quit Unity government in Sudan; The New York Times; October 12, 2007
  - The Other War; The Economist; October 20, 2007
  - Darfur’s Rebels May Find a Measure of Unity; The Washington Post; December 1, 2007
  - As Somalı Crisis Swells, Experts See a Void in Aid; The New York Times; November 20, 2007
  - Breaking Into Even Smaller Bit?; The Economist; October 6, 2007

Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman BBC Country Profiles
- CIA World Factbook: Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman
  - The (Not So) Eagerly Modern Saudi; The New York Times; May 6, 2007
- Yemen Leader is now Paying for Providing an Open Election; The New York Times; September 20, 2006

Libya and Egypt BBC Country Profiles
- CIA World Factbook: Libya and Egypt
  - A Seif Pair of Hands?; The Economist; September 22, 2007
- Qaddafi Heralds a Changing Libya, But Within Limits; The New York Times; March 3, 2007
- Egypt Shuts Door on Dissent as US Officials Back Away; The Washington Post; March 19, 2007
- Failed State, Failed Leader; The Economist; November 3, 2007