PittMUN Judging Criteria for Awards

The Pitt Model United Nations (PittMUN) is a simulation of the actual United Nations and its committees. Delegates to PittMUN are area high school students who are assigned to represent specific countries. The PittMUN Secretariat chooses the committees and the topics that the students will be debating. Members of the University of Pittsburgh’s undergraduate Model UN Club moderate the committee sessions. PittMUN is a competitive event, and the delegates are judged by professionals, graduate students and educators from the community. There are two types of judges, stationary and roving.

Each stationary judge will be assigned to one PittMUN committee and will observe that committee for the entire day-long conference. Together with the committee moderator(s), the stationary judge will select the two country delegations that demonstrated the best performance in that committee to receive first- and second-place awards. (Please note that two delegates acting as a team may represent one country. In such cases, an award will be made to both students.) The portion of the PittMUN manual concerning a judge’s assigned committee will be reviewed by the judge in advance of the simulation.

There will also be a team of several roving judges. This group of judges will select the top delegations, or countries, of the entire conference. These are the delegations that performed at the highest level across all committees. First- and second-place country awards will be given to both large and small delegations. Typically, large delegations are those that are represented on at least five committees, while small delegations are those that are represented on four or fewer committees. Roving judges are asked to spend an equal amount of time observing each committee, and to review the portions of the PittMUN manual concerning the debate topics for all committees in advance of the simulation.

Decisions of the stationary judges will be made in consultation with moderators from the relevant PittMUN committees during the judges’ meeting at the end of the day. Decisions of the roving judges will be made by a process of cumulative voting led by a member of the PittMUN Secretariat. Stationary judges may participate in the roving judges’ discussion, but they do not vote on country awards. The committee moderators and stationary judges may answer questions about particular delegates if necessary to assist with the roving judges’ decision process.

Throughout the conference, delegates are only identified by their country and committee. The PittMUN registrar maintains a list containing school information. Judges are not informed of which school represents which country until after the award decisions are made.

Please note that delegations are not required to submit position papers to the PittMUN Secretariat in advance of the conference. Delegations are invited to submit position papers to compete for the Clarke Thomas Memorial Awards for the strongest papers, but delegations that do not submit position papers will still be eligible to receive awards for their performance at the simulation. The position papers will be reviewed by a separate panel of judges from the team that judges the delegates on the day of the conference.
Delegates are evaluated on the following interrelated criteria:

A. Representation of Country/Position (most important criterion):

- Staying in character of the country/position
- Having relevant information about the country/position
- Being knowledgeable of:
  - The history of the country/position, including its international obligations and the treaties to which it belongs
  - The country/position’s allies and adversaries
  - Current events, as related to the country/position, and to the committee in general
- Demonstrating thorough research and prior preparation

B. Knowledge of Topics under Discussion:

- Being knowledgeable of:
  - Past UN resolutions and/or activities
  - Any relevant treaties and/or international agreements
  - Current events, as related to the country/position, and to the committee in general

C. Adherence to Formal Procedures:

- Being familiar with:
  - Resolution-writing
  - Formal Debate
  - Parliamentary Procedure

D. Adherence to Unstructured Proceedings:

- Maintaining diplomacy and overall effectiveness during caucuses
- Practicing conduct befitting of a diplomat

Some delegates may attempt to attract the attention of judges during the course of committee proceedings in order to influence the award outcomes. This behavior is considered out of character and not an accurate portrayal of a UN committee meeting. Delegates will be judged accordingly.