



Harvard Model Congress Asia

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Dear Faculty Advisor:

Alison Schumer
Director of Operations -
Singapore

Welcome to Harvard Model Congress Asia (HMCA)! We are extremely excited to invite you and your students to join us for HMCA 2010. Our Harvard staff has been working hard to ensure that our first year at our new Singapore location and our second in Seoul will bring an exciting and educational conference experience.

Jacky Kwong
Director of Operations -
Seoul

I would first like to introduce myself, and then briefly explain a bit about what we do. My name is Mate Pencz and I am the Executive Director of HMCA. I am a junior at Harvard, and I have been involved with HMC conferences in Boston, Athens, and Bangkok. I'm very much looking forward to working with you all as we prepare for the upcoming conference. Now that I've told you about me, let me elaborate on HMCA.

Harvard Model Congress Asia is a student-managed American government simulation run under the auspices of Harvard University. Our sister organization, Harvard Model Congress, has been running internationally acclaimed government simulations for more than two decades in Boston, San Francisco, Paris, Brussels and Athens.

The mission of HMCA is to educate international high school students about civic participation by simulating how governments actually work. Our system enables high school students (grade 9-13) to step inside the political process by assuming the role of legislators, governors, journalists, cabinet ministers, and judges. At HMCA, students learn about government while they debate issues, draft laws, and write newspaper stories.

Throughout this process, Harvard students act as teachers, encouraging students to solve problems creatively as they work cooperatively with peers from throughout the world. Through their HMCA experience, students sharpen their debate skills while developing their own leadership potential.

We would be delighted to welcome you and your students to either of our upcoming conferences, held in Singapore on Jan. 15-17, 2010, or in Seoul on the following weekend. Please use this registration guide as a tool to learn more about HMCA! It contains all necessary information regarding conference details and registration. Also, do not hesitate to contact me with questions at info@hmcasia.org

I look forward to working with you, and hope to see you next January.

Best regards,
Mate Pencz

Please note: This Guide is for the Singapore Conference

Information on the Seoul conference can be found on www.hmcKorea.org

This guide should serve as a reference for faculty advisors throughout the year. These pages contain all information necessary to register students for the conference, assist them in their preparation for HMCA, and to coordinate accommodations while in Singapore.

The entire registration process, including hotel reservations, takes place online at www.hmcasia.org

Please complete the online process as soon as you have all required information. Do not hesitate to contact us at info@hmcasia.org with any questions or concerns about the registration process.

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Introduction to HMCA Asia

Harvard Model Congress (HMCA) is a government simulation conference for high school students. The 2010 conference will be held on January 15-17 in Singapore. High school students from around the world converge in Singapore to address the challenges facing modern governments. At HMCA, students will discuss issues, draft policy, report news stories, decide court cases, and advise the president.

What is the purpose of HMCA?

HMCA teaches students about government by providing insight into pressing issues confronted by governments across the world. HMCA's staff of Harvard students, selected through a rigorous application process, act as teachers, encouraging students to think creatively as they work to solve problems.

As a result of the HMCA, students learn about the structures and working of the American government. More importantly, though, under the direction of Harvard staff, students improve skills in critical thinking, debate and argumentation, and English fluency. As a result of HMCA, students can use these tools to analyze the challenges facing their own societies.

HMCA also strives to help students develop leadership skills while teaching students to engage with one another in a cooperative learning environment. HMCA staff members work to encourage every delegate to participate actively in his or her committee, to write laws and policy statements, and to give speeches before large groups.

What do students gain from the conference?

When asked what they thought they had gained during last year's conference, students and faculty responded with the following:

- Increased confidence and leadership skills
- Improved debate skills, including public skills in English
- Friendships with students from around the world
- An understanding of the workings of American government

Conference History & Overview

Conference History

Harvard Model Congress Asia held its inaugural conference in September 2005 in Bangkok, Thailand. Now in its fifth year, the conference brings together a diverse and talented group of students and staff members from across the world. In its first year, HMC Asia had 120 student participants in six committees. Since then the

conference has more than doubled in size while still maintaining the very low staff-to-delegate (12:1) ratio that is the hallmark of the HMC Asia experience.

HMCA is excited to build upon past successes and to have an even larger, more diverse conference than in the past. This year, students may participate in one of ten unique committees, each emphasizing a particular topic. In addition to several enhancements to existing programs, this year's conference will also see the addition of a Lobbyist program, allowing students to lobby other committees on behalf of interest groups such as labor unions, environmental groups, and businesses.

Conference Overview

After registering for the Conference, students' program preferences are reviewed and then students are assigned a role within one of the programs at the conference. Some programs will focus on international politics, such as OPEC, ASEAN, and the WTO (World Trade Organization), while others will focus on the American government, including the Senate, the House of Representatives, the Presidential Cabinet, and the Supreme Court. Non-government organizations (NGOs) will be represented in the Lobbyist program, while journalists will take part in the Press Corps.

Once the conference begins with an address from the President, students assume their roles for the duration of the conference. After opening ceremonies and the administration of the oath of office, students will divide into their different committees, where they will immediately face the challenges of policymaking, adjudicating, or governing. The remainder of the conference is dedicated to focused committee debate, special meetings (including luncheons), court deliberations and other activities.

Students will be free to explore Singapore in the evenings, and an ice cream social will allow the students to shed their roles as government officials and develop friendships with other conference participants, relax, and have fun.

At closing ceremonies on the last day, students will be asked to reflect on the events of the conference, take pride in their accomplishments, and, most importantly, to draw conclusions about what they have learned.

Programs

The following are descriptions of the different programs in which students may participate at the conference:

OPEC

OPEC is a permanent intergovernmental organization, created in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. It has expanded since to include more of the major oil producing countries, who have a mutual interest in managing the price of oil. Yet members countries have a variety of interests, economic and political, that have to be delicately managed and negotiated. Students interested in international economic policy may be a good fit for the OPEC committee.

ASEAN

The Association of South East Asian Nations was established in 1967 with two key objectives: (1) to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region and (2) to promote peace and stability. The member states of ASEAN will be represented at the conference, along with several observer states that frequently association with ASEAN. The body will discuss issues that are important to the member states, potentially including transnational crime, terrorism and separatism, trade, and international relations.

U.S. House of Representatives

There will be three House of Representative committees at HMCA, each with a distinct topic (foreign affairs, for example) and issues. Each committee will have 40 delegates. Congressional committees are the birthplace of laws. At HMCA, delegates participate in committee sessions where they hear testimony from experts and then work with their peers to draft, amend, present, and vote on different pieces of legislation.

House committees are very structured, and may be best for students who are younger or less confident with their English skills. One House committee will be a “beginner’s committee,” designed for all delegates in grade 9 as well as any other delegates who would prefer a slower pace.

U.S. Senate

HMCA will have two senate committees, each with 25 delegates. Senate committees have the same goal as House committees—passing laws—but because Senate committees are smaller, they are much less formal than House of Representative committees. As a result, Senate committees are more likely to see compromise rather than partisanship.

U.S. Presidential Cabinet

The Cabinet is made up of the different secretaries (called ministers in most other nations) of the departments of the executive branch. They advise the president about

policy, provide expert testimony to members of Congress seek to advance the president's policy goals. Members of the cabinet interact with the President on a regular basis, even providing him with final advice about whether he should veto (reject) legislation that Congress has passed. There will be about 20 members of the presidential cabinet.

Cabinet members will be constantly on the move, dealing with journalists, members of Congress, and lobbyists. We advise only placing advanced delegates in the Cabinet.

U.S. Supreme Court

The Supreme Court program allows participants to experience justice in the United States from a variety of perspectives: justices who interpret laws and as attorneys arguing for a certain interpretation. They will be called upon to interpret laws, argue for or against precedents, evaluate testimony, issue written opinions, and uphold the principles of justice established in the Constitution of the United States.

Because much of the work in the Supreme Court relies upon the use of complicated legal documents, positions in this program are typically reserved for students in the 11th or 12th year of school, or returning HMCA participants (though exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis).

Press Corps

While members of the press corps will certainly develop experience interviewing others and writing clearly to a diverse audience, they will also be confronted with difficult decisions to make. Given that there are very few legal restrictions on what the press may print, individual reporters are confronted with ethical questions when they have information that might jeopardize security. No particular experience is necessary for Press Corps delegates, though students should be comfortable writing in English.

Lobbyist Program

In HMCA's newest program, Lobbyist delegates work for groups that have an interest in government policy. For example, environmental groups want to ensure that laws protect the environment, business groups want lower taxes, while labor unions want protection for workers. Lobbyists will craft strategies for these interest groups, encouraging committees to pass certain laws, writing articles in the newspaper to argue in favor of their ideas, and trying to convince other delegates to endorse their policy proposals.

WTO

The World Trade Organization supervises international trade and works to eliminate trade barriers. It has 153 members, who represent more than 95% of total world trade. The World Trade Organization deals with the rules of trade between nations at a near-global level; it is responsible for negotiating and implementing new trade agreements, and is in charge of

policing member countries' adherence to all the WTO agreements. Students interested in international relations and economics will find the WTO committee a good fit.

Conference Details

Where do delegates and faculty stay?

Because we strive to create a sense of cohesiveness among the students in the conference, all delegations will stay at the same hotel. This year, we have made arrangements with the Holiday Inn Park View Singapore.

The hotel is fully equipped with a restaurant and swimming pool, and is located right off of Orchard Road, and within a few kilometers of many tourist sites including Chinatown and the National Museum of Singapore.

While HMCA takes responsibility for making all hotel arrangements and reservations for the duration of the conference, more information about the hotel, including contact information, can be found here:

<http://www.ihotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/sinpv>

Where does the conference take place?

The conference will take place at the Business Faculty of the National University of Singapore. HMC Asia will coordinate all transport between the hotel and the conference center.

Tentative Conference Schedule

Thursday, January 14, 2010
Registration at the Holiday Inn

Friday, January 15, 2010
9:00-10:00 Opening Ceremonies
10:00-13:00 Delegates in Committee
13:00-14:00 Lunch
14:00-18:00 Delegates in Committee

Saturday, January 16, 2010
9:00-13:00 Delegates in Committee
13:00-14:00 Lunch
14:00-18:00 Delegates in Committee

Sunday, January 17, 2010
9:00-13:00 Delegates in Committee
*13:00-14:00 Closing Ceremonies

* Please Note: To accommodate the request of many schools, the final day of the conference will end at 14:00.

What are the costs associated with the conference?

We are thrilled to offer our conference at a top-level facility and to lodge delegates at a nearby hotel, but these locations also present a substantial cost.

The individual participant fee is \$550 which includes the conference fee, three nights' stay in a double room at the hotel, breakfast and lunch during the duration of the conference, transport to and from the conference center.

Additionally, we encourage participants to budget roughly \$25 per day to cover incidental expenses, dinner, and private sightseeing through the city. Please see the next page for a list of all costs and fees.

Please note that schools are solely responsible for coordinating all travel arrangements to and from Bangkok—this includes making sure that each participant has secured all legal documents necessary for travel.

Student fee: \$550 (double room, per person); \$670 (single room)
Faculty advisor: \$400 (single room)

Note: All transactions with HMCA are conducted in U.S. dollars. All prices are in US dollars.

Payment Process

HMCA accepts conference fee payment by either check, Paypal (credit card) or wire transfer.

Early Registration

We will be able to give a \$50 per person discount for any delegation that is able to make a 25% deposit on their registration fees by June 15.

End of Registration

Regular registration will end on September 15th. Depending on enrollment numbers, it may be possible to register after that date, but we cannot guarantee any openings or pricing information. If your delegation will have any problems making the September 15th date, please contact us so that we can discuss your arrangements.

Travel Arrangements

HMCA is pleased to be able to offer complimentary travel advice from Flightspin Travel, a travel agency that has booked HMCA travel in previous years. Because we have been impressed by Flightspin's helpful service and low prices in the past, we are excited to extend their services to HMCA delegations. Please let us know if you would like us to get a price quote from Flightspin for your school's travel.

How to Register

Registration (including payment) can be completed completely online at www.hmcasia.org.

Preliminary Registration

1. Go to our website at www.hmcasia.org
2. **Click on registration (red bar at top of page directly under the Harvard Model Congress Asia banner)**
3. Click on “to register for the conference, click here” at the bottom of the page
4. Fill out your school information. (Fields marked with a star MUST be filled in)
 - *Enter School Name
 - *Enter School Address
 - Enter City
 - Enter State/Province
 - Enter Postal Code
 - *Enter Country
 - Enter School Phone Number
 - Enter School Fax Number
 - *Enter the Number of Expected Delegates
5. Fill out your primary faculty advisor information. (Fields marked with a star MUST be filled in)
 - *Enter Faculty Advisor’s Name
 - *Enter Faculty Advisor’s Email
 - *Re-enter Faculty Advisor’s Email
 - *Enter Faculty Advisor’s School Phone Number
 - *Enter a Password
 - *Re-enter your Password
 - Enter the names of up to three more Faculty Advisors
6. Remember your password—you will need it to edit information on the website.
7. Click submit at the bottom of the page

At this point, you have successfully completed your preliminary registration. We will contact you within 48 hours to begin setting up hotel accommodation and determine which committees are best for your students.

Any questions about the registration process should be directed to Mate Pencz at info@hmcasia.org.

Conference Preparation

Delegates should:

- Read the Guides and Briefings that have been posted on their committee's web page. All conference materials will be posted on HMCA's website (www.hmcasia.org) by September 1st, 2008.
- Submit optional pre-conference assignment (posted October 1).
- Read newspaper stories about their topics or do other types of research.
- Email their Harvard staffers with questions.

Faculty may want to:

- Incorporate conference themes into classroom instruction.
 - Work individually with students to help them understand materials.
 - Organize a mock committee session to help students practice giving speeches.
 - Help students with specific vocabulary. Although we try to keep jargon as simple as possible, discussion of government and legal systems inevitably requires words ("legislation", for example) that do not come up in every-day speech.
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