

KNIGHTMUN XXI



November 4th - 6th, 2022

Dear Reporters,

Welcome to the first annual KnightMUN Press Corps! As an English major, I have always been interested in creating a Press Corps for KnightMUN. They are a truly unique body and I hope that you will have a rewarding experience in this committee. As excited and passionate as we are to be offering this committee, it is important to note that since this is our very first Press Corps there will most likely be kinks to work out, so we ask for patience as we navigate this new body!

This background guide will establish the committee's structure and your intended goals for the weekend. At Press Corps, you will be able to experience closely the one-of-a-kind experience and perspective of United Nations conferences. With the access to every debate in the conference, you will have the chance to pick up negotiations between delegates, contact staff members and even leak key information as to change the debate agenda and to provide insightful information to your audience. As a reporter, you will represent the asset in charge of connecting the works of all committees to the people, and will therefore hold the duty to fight for transparency within the debate.

Please reach out to your chair Bruno (parrabruno2003@gmail.com) if you have any questions in the meantime!

- Katherine Weiss, Secretary-General KnightMUN XXI

Committee Structure

The committee structure of a Press Corps is much different than any regular committee. The following section of the background guide will focus on the operational workings of the committee.

After arriving at the conference, Press Corps will meet just as other committees. To begin, you will be introduced to the dais and we will run through the logistics of the conference. However, unlike other committees, most of your time will be spent in various committees, covering their events and interviewing other delegates. Your role will be to create articles on various committees' debate. This means when you are assigned to write an article on a specific committee's events, you conduct in person interviews, utilize quotes from these interviews to add color to your story, and present the reader with the hard facts they need to be informed of. The chair and vice chair will serve as the editors-in-chief. We are more than willing to help you develop thoughtful news stories.

Publishing Expectations

Writing articles will be the majority of your work. Each reporter will be required to post at least one long-form article with a minimum length of five paragraphs every day of the conference. These may be either informative articles in an objective manner, or opinion pieces containing your own personal opinion and analysis. Remember that gathering information from multiple sources - mostly through the interaction with chairs and delegates or your direct observation of the committees- is key to composing a reliable piece of work. Moreover, in order to provide a high- quality article you should also strive to feature well-chosen quotes and relevant facts about the situation, including its historical and political context.

PRESS CORPS

Aside from this daily long-form, you are expected to compose at least 1 other traditional newsprint articles, opinion pieces, interviews, brief essays, or even blog-style posts each committee session. Remember that even though such types of content serve different purposes, a considerable knowledge of the events you write about as well as their context is important in order to form a comprehensive and relevant opinion.

When you believe your article or other short-form pieces are ready for editing, you will submit them to the Dias. Once a member of the Dais has reviewed your piece, it will be sent back to the reporter with comments. The editor may attach a note instructing a reporter to approach once you receive the revised version in order to discuss it further. If there are only a few changes to be made, the reporter may review those changes and adjust accordingly before sending in a final copy. Once the final is finished, a member of the Dais will type the article and publish it on the conference website. Then, if time allows, at the end of session, the article should be read to the committee for transparency purposes. The goal is that even if a reporter is writing an article, they will be able to do so in a time frame that they can still do plenty of field reporting and writing throughout the conference.

Logistics

Throughout the conference, Press Corps members will mostly be moving around and gathering information for their articles. That being said, we expect each delegate to maintain respectful conduct when entering, staying in, and exiting other committees. For example, Press Corps members are not allowed inside committees during voting procedure. Additionally, committees can choose to deny Press Corps access for any reason. Lastly, when interviewing other delegates, Press Corps members are to maintain formal

PRESS CORPS

and respectful conduct, including respecting delegates' decisions to allow or deny interviews.

Further you are allowed to request to hold a press conference. A press conference is a brief 5-10 minute pause in your assigned committees debate. You will be granted a short period of time to officially ask questions to delegates within the committee. This time must be used carefully and the questions must be well researched. This is your opportunity to represent your newspaper, hold delegates accountable to their countries' positions, and ask questions that will help you write an article about the committee later on. It is also a chance to display your public speaking skills – the only one you may get in a press corps committee! You **MUST** ask for permission from your assigned committee chair and you **MUST** inform the editor-in-chief, who will enter the committee room and observe the press conference.

Your Role as a Reporter

Each reporter has been assigned a news organization with a particular viewpoint and work dynamic. Thus, some of you will aim to take the stance of an unbiased and independent organization, whereas others might take up a position that leans further towards the left or right on the political spectrum, and even display certain degree of government ownership. While each reporter should be free to be an independent journalist at the conference, agencies have been designated with varying 'colors' or outlooks in order to provide further variety and simulation value. That being said, reporters are encouraged to take in consideration their respective news organization's viewpoint when deciding what conferences are to be covered and how they should be subject of their news coverages.

PRESS CORPS

Prior to the conference you will be assigned a committee to report on. You will find your assignments in the Press Corps Members section of the background guide. If the committee you are assigned is discussing a number of different questions related to a topic, as is common, you may choose to focus on something in particular rather than simply writing a bland summary piece. Once you have selected a focus for your article, gather notes relevant to your piece specifically.

If you plan to quote a speech—a highly recommended practice—make sure that you note down the quote exactly, as misquoting is highly unprofessional and can distort the intended meaning, and the country that the delegate is representing. You may also request interviews with delegates, but you must always request permission from the dais in advance. The one exception to this rule is when the delegates are in an unmoderated caucus, in which case you may simply ask permission from the delegate in question. You must still inform the dais that you are reporting on their committee however.

Rules and Policies for Reporters

Due to the unique nature of the Press Corps, there are several rules and guidelines that reporters should be aware of:

- **Sourcing:** It is permitted to make use of material and information obtained from other reporters and news sources. However, it is imperative to remind you that any text, photo or video not properly credited may qualify as plagiarism.

- **Usage of electronic devices in committees:** During conference, you will be encouraged to use your electronic devices in the Press Corps Center or outside committees in order to keep up with your reports or communicate with other members of our Press Corps team. However, you will need to be mindful when using your electronic

PRESS CORPS

devices inside other committees, as you may distract other delegates and committee staff members. It will be important for you to maintain your cameras, cellphones and other devices in silent mode if you wish to enter other committees.

Evaluation

In order for reporters to have clear knowledge about what will be evaluated in this committee, a brief description of the criteria the staff will follow has been placed below. This criteria has been set with a holistic approach rather than a rigid numerical grading system. The following criteria will be taken into consideration:

- News pieces are well-written, informative, appropriate quotations and contain content and Facts used in articles are accurate and presented in an unbiased manner (taking into consideration the 'color' of their news agency).

- Initiative and creativity when formulating ideas for the reporter's work.

- A critical stance and effective delivery of questions is demonstrated throughout Press Conferences.

- Punctuality with deadlines and curfews set. If having trouble with set time-frames, the reporter is able to inform the Press Corps staff in advance and shows effort to complete their work in a timely manner.

- Responsiveness to the advice and directors of the Press Corps staff.

Introduction to News Writing

While it is critical that your assignments are written in the style of your news organization, it is perhaps even more important that you are able to follow the rules of hard news writing and reporting. Here are the basics:

1. Start with a succinct and informative lead
2. Follow the inverted pyramid structure throughout: more important information early on in the article, less relevant information towards the end
3. Limit paragraphs to 2-3 sentences
4. Use quotes from interviews to add color, using new paragraphs for each quote
5. Conduct background research on the topic
6. Never insert your own opinion

These guidelines for writing news articles apply to every news organization; however, it is important to keep in mind that each news organization's particular style will be different. To better prepare yourself to write in the "voice" of your news organization, we suggest reading and analyzing their articles.

Members of the Press Corps

Al Jazeera – SOCHUM

A news channel that has stated that they are editorially independent of the government, based in the state of Qatar. It was founded in 1996 and reaches more than 220 million households in various countries across the globe. Although often criticized for its supposedly biased coverage of Egypt-related incidents and extremely pro-Qatar articles, Al-Jazeera's network is one of the most exclusive in the world of journalism and often rebroadcast in major western broadcast outlets including BBC and CNN.

The Economist – SOCHUM

The Economist, a prominent British publication, discusses political, social, and business events, and prides itself on being in the “extreme center,” having endorsed candidates and ideas from both the left and right of the political spectrum on the basis of intellectual soundness, not partisan loyalties. The Economist follows a no-bylines policy, meaning that authors are not named, both in keeping with historical precedent and to indicate that its articles reflect the collective views of its journalists and editorial board.

Agence France-Presse – Welcome to the Jungle: The Leticia Commission, 1933

After the Associated Press (AP) and Reuters, the third largest news agency in the world is the Paris based Agence France-Presse (AFP). It was established by journalists of the French Resistance following the liberation of Paris. With almost 2300 collaborators on its side, this agency is able to represent over 80 nationalities in five geographical zones. Despite being a well-known name in the reporting sphere, it was criticized for a copyright violation in 2013.

CNN - Welcome to the Jungle: The Leticia Commission, 1933

With its launch CNN became the first 24-hour coverage as well as the first all-news channel of the United States. Despite being one of the most renowned news agencies in the world, CNN was accused of being politically biased by casting negative views on the Republican Party. Such issues of ethics in journalism leave the reputation of CNN untarnished however and it continues to be an icon in the circle of reporting.

Russia Today – Ad-Hoc

The main news source in Russia, and is a government owned media source that primarily specializes in televised media. They have been criticized recently for skewing public opinion in Russia to follow President Vladimir Putin’s messages, which often include propaganda. Despite this, *Russia Today*, often simply called RT, is extremely influential in Russia.

The Guardian – Ad-Hoc

Created by Scott Trust to “safeguard the journalistic freedom and liberal values of (the Guardian) free from commercial or political interference”, The Guardian is a mainstream leftist newspaper of British origin. While it was criticized for its alleged bias against Palestinian and even possible traces of anti-Semitism – all such claims have been denied by the news agency itself and it continues to be one of the leading reporting agencies in the world.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation – UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

Though the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is funded by the Australian Federal Government – it claims to exercise its journalistic power independent of the Government and the Commonwealth's influence. Its model is derived from United Kingdom's BBC. Since a number of journalists and presenters progressed from their positions at ABC to political offices – politics seems to play a large role in this agencies functioning.

The Wall Street Journal - UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

a daily newspaper in the United States. It was founded in 1889, and is the largest newspaper by circulation in the US, though it is widely read around the world, especially by those in the finance sector, and is particularly strong in its coverage of international business and American news. In 2007, the *Wall Street Journal* expanded its global presence by launching an internationally focused site with foreign-language editions of its articles. Arguably this is the number one newspaper in United States.

The Independent – Dune: The Desert War of 10,191 a.g.

The Independent is a leading British newspaper which turned largely digital by 2016. Until 2011, the paper declared itself "free from party political bias, free from proprietary influence". Rather than focusing on traditional written content, the Independent catches the eye by unorthodoxly relying on graphics and lists. As far as political views are concerned, it deems itself to be a "proudly liberal newspaper"

The Hindu - Dune: The Desert War of 10,191 a.g.

It is one of the two Indian newspapers of record and the second most circulated English-language newspaper in India, after *The Times of India*. It is recognized for its role as one of the many newspapers to report the discriminatory policies of the British rule in India and while it began as an initially liberal agency, it seems to be considered left leaning in the modern day Indian political scenario and therefore accused of left-wing and pro-Sinhalese bias in its articles.

The Washington Post – For All MUNkind

A newspaper that lays special emphasis on national politics, The Washington Post is an American daily newspaper with the ambitious slogan of ‘Democracy dies in Darkness’. There are whispers of neo-conservatism and a few left-wing supporting articles.

TASS – For All MUNkind

The Russian competition to the largest worldwide agencies like Reuters and AFP is TASS. The TASS name comes from the former Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union. While it is debatable if Tass is just a strategic Russian attempt for international propaganda during the Ukraine crisis – one thing is certain, being one of the central news collection and distribution agencies in Russia, can lead to an influential role in forming public opinion.

The Korea Herald – Fighting for the Soul of YG

A daily South Korean newspaper published in English. It is considered the country’s top English newspaper, and is the successor to a tabloid newspaper known as *The Korean Republic*.

Reuters – Fighting for the Soul of YG

Widely considered as one of the largest and by most casual readers, the most credible source of news - Reuters is an international news agency based in London. Its immense popularity has also served as a downside due to the various controversies and criticisms raised against it time and again including its “value-neutral approach” of reporting.

Xinhua News Agency – The 2030 Imperial Crisis

Being the official press agency for the People’s Republic of China, it seems only obvious that Xinhua News Agency is the largest in numbers as well as influence in China. As the President of this agency is a member of the Central Committee of China’s Communist Party, the agency is routinely under fire for a biased portrayal of China’s state policies and alleged lack of political correctness.

Haaretz – The 2030 Imperial Crisis

Haaretz is the oldest daily newspaper in Israel, although its coverage, columnists, and editorials have known to be quite critical of Israeli government policies. Founded in 1918, the newspaper is published in both English and Hebrew, with both editions being available online. The paper has a “broadly liberal outlook both on domestic issues and on international affairs” according to its website.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) – Family Feudal: The Battle of Sekigahara

A Quasi Autonomous Non-Governmental Organization, meaning that it is technically a part of the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. They receive government subsidies and have a royal charter. The BBC is primarily shown to be an online news outlet, however has the BBC World Service as radio, television, and print.

Press TV – Family Feudal: The Battle of Sekigahara

Press TV is an English language news and documentary network, affiliated with Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB). It was founded in 2007. IRIB is state owned but managed separately of the Iranian government and is the only legal broadcasting station in Iran. However, the leadership of the IRIB maintains a close relationship with the government and as such, its published news is often considered politically conservative. Press TV presents itself as a source that counters the news coverage of Western sources such as BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera.

The Globe and Mail – United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

The Globe and Mail is a Canadian newspaper based in Toronto and distributed nationally. Founded in 1844, it is arguably Canada's most authoritative and prestigious newspaper, particularly for international and domestic news. The Globe and Mail extensively covers international issues through a domestic lens. Additionally, it has a strong background for financial and business reporting. Its political orientation has been often scrutinized with no definitive conclusion reached, although its close alignment with the business sector has led to many speculations.

The Buenos Aires Herald - United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

An English-language daily newspaper published in Argentina. It was originally founded by a Scottish immigrant in 1876. On Sunday, the newspaper is released with a supplement featuring news from the New York Times and on Monday it is packaged with a supplement focusing on worldwide trade. The *Herald* reaches an average of 50,000 readers each day.

Associated Press – The Iranian Hostage Crisis, 1979

The New York-based Associated Press (AP), is the oldest and largest 24-hour news service in the US. Founded in 1846, AP has since expanded to independently report on international news, with reporters from over 50 cities outside of the United States and a presence in 97 countries. AP articles prevalently emphasize direct quotes and on-the-ground reporting, which can allow those being quoted a platform to spread misinformation while being minimally tampered with or diluted by reporters.

The Dawn – The Iranian Hostage Crisis, 1979

Pakistan's most popular English-language newspaper, Dawn is also its oldest. Founded by the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah – this news agency was an imperative gateway for the Muslim League. It faced a news leak controversy once, resulting in a change in political scenario by causing the Information minister to resign yet it is noteworthy that Dawn was the first newspaper to oppose the restarting of death penalty in Pakistan

The Spectator – UN Counter-Terrorism Committee

The Spectator is a weekly British magazine that has always had a role in the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom as many of its past editors have enjoyed high offices in the party. It is no surprise therefore; that a magazine incredibly indulged in politics and culture has an editorial outlook that is largely supportive of the Conservative Party.

The Yemen Times – UN Counter-Terrorism Committee

A weekly English-language newspaper in Yemen. It was founded in 1990, and is the first widely read English-language newspaper in Yemen. In recognition of its work to support freedom of the press and advance human rights in the country, the *Yemen Times* won the National Press Club's International Award for the Freedom of the Press in 1995.