Field Notes on Running a Crisis Committee

By Derek Lin

AMST Class 2019

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Section I: The Introduction:

I suppose if you are reading this, that means I've actually overcome senioritis enough to write out my last thoughts on crisis before I go on to college. The purpose of this treatise is to hopefully give you, a prospective Director of Crisis or Crisis Director (see the glossary for the difference), a better understanding of what running a crisis entails, and ideally give you a leg up when you actually run it. Every Crisis Director has to have a first time, and in many cases you will only have one chance: at BCA many CDs are rising seniors. Moreover, many CDs that are juniors often go on to become non-crisis secretariat, thereby making them ineligible to run a crisis. This, of course, has a significant disadvantage, in that the lessons learned are not retained for next year's AMUN - which is a major reason in why this paper is being written.

The hope/intention of this writing is to strengthen the BCA Model UN crisis arm (or Crisis Unit as I like to call it). As I write this (shortly after AMUN XX), our department faces extinction - though it has always been small and it has always been rebuilt - as all the major Crisis delegates on the team are Seniors. While surely there will always be BCA crisis delegates, I fear that knowledge is lost every time it is rebuilt. What's worse, since there are a large number of Crisis-specialized seniors, we are given priority for crisis spots on trips - thereby blocking out underclassmen from giving it a try (the notable exception being AMUN). How does this relate to running a crisis? I have observed over my time in crisis and in other conferences that when CDs do not have experience being crisis delegates (which is particularly egregious in UNSCs, which often are elite GA delegates who seek the prestige of running the UN's first organ), they often

run into various pitfalls when running their crisis. Therefore, I hope to reduce this problem at AMUN - if at least once or twice.

So who am I? Well, briefly my name is Derek Lin. I am a senior in AMST of the Bergen County Academies and I have been a crisis delegate for three years. While perhaps not the best delegate, I have been in eleven crisis committees since I was introduced to the format by Michael Dugan - one of BCA's finest crisis delegates and my good friend. During my most recent Crisis committee, I was given the chance to take on a role on the other side of the table, running the crisis as a USG/Director of Crisis rather than a delegate. While I had been a staffer two years prior, it was nothing compared to both the fun and exhaustion I had as the self-proclaimed "Generalissimo of Crisis". While I think it went well, there was much that I feel I could have done better. Unfortunately, it is looking increasingly like I will not be able to do this again (the colleges I have been accepted into do not have quite the robust MUN program BCA has) and I hope to impart said lessons to someone so it does not have to be relearned.

There are some obvious flaws and assumptions inherent in what I am writing. For one, I am writing this with the assumption that this is for AMUN (BCA's Model UN conference) and heavily assuming that the culture and values of the team remain largely the same. For another, I am assuming that you, the reader, care a lot about your crisis (but then again, you haven't tuned out already so I guess there's that). This is formatted in chronological order of how you would prepare for your crisis committee. **However to be honest, if I was reading this I'd probably skip to section IV, because if you've been in a few crisis the rest should be obvious.**

Section II: The Foundations of Your Crisis:

Opening Moves:

It will be around early June, the year before conference, when you get the fancy email from the Secretary-General wishing you congratulations on being appointed to Secretariat. You will read that you are now a Under-Secretary General/Director of Crisis (BCA uses both terms, though honestly I think USG is better to avoid confusion with the term Crisis Director) and that your team will be appointed shortly. Or perhaps you are in a Joint Crisis Committee (JCC), and you were nominated to be a Crisis Director (CD) under the USG of Joint Crisis. Either way, all USGs of Crisis are Crisis Directors and CDs should help their USGs regardless..

The most important thing to do at this point is to assemble your team, and set up communications. Facebook messenger was extensively used this year for all three crisis teams, and its chief advantage was its accessibility from a laptop and a cell phone. Set up a hotline with your Co-USG, Chargé, and Sec-Gen - you will frequently need to contact all of them. Consider
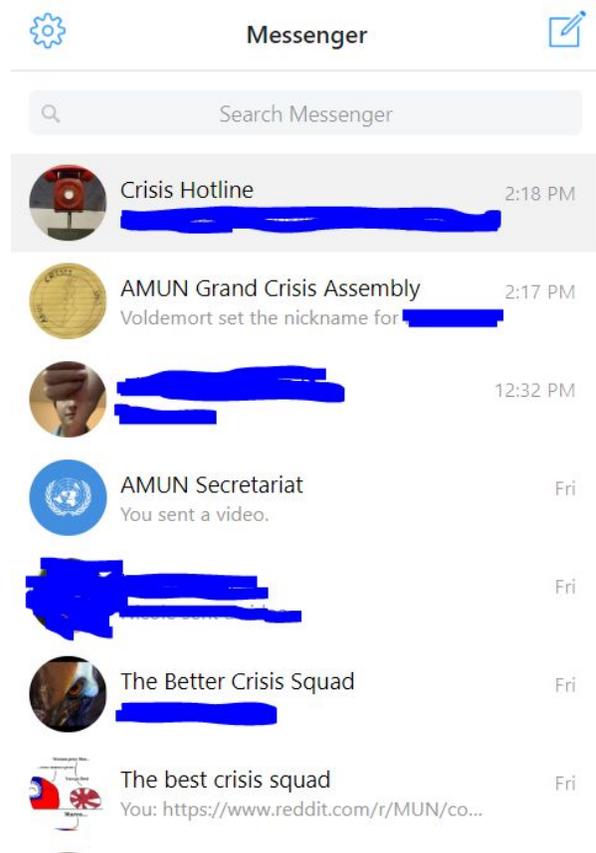
creating a chat with all Crisis teams as well - just so you call all bounce off ideas with each other. In either case, good communications, and being on good terms with everyone in the crisis department is essential. Over the summer, our teams worked with each other to create ideas and help build topic guides. During conference, props can be shared. In any case, there is little downside and often substantial benefits to have a cohesive team.

The next crucial step is choosing a good topic. A good topic is one that you are willing to invest a tremendous amount of time and effort into. In my case, I chose 1937 China - a China with an unstable government on the verge of Japanese invasion. There were many obstacles for this topic. For one, it was obscure - few people learn about it in class, and many sources are in Chinese or are otherwise difficult to obtain; there was always a question of whether or not anyone would be interested in even coming to a committee about this topic, and if it would fail. Furthermore, it was not always clear we could represent all the nuances of China's political scene at the time.

But I cared deeply about it. My family has ties to the conflict, and I had read extensively about the subject. And I was able to imprint that passion on my team - 2 chairs and an Assistant Crisis Director. Together, we worked for about 1-2 hours a night for quite a few nights over the summer, researching and writing until we had 70 pages worth of Topic Guide (we ended up splitting off the Character Guide from the main Topic Guide so each had about 35 pages). And delegates came. Nearly all spots were filled up in our committee, and I have no doubt it is because of the sheer effort and visible care we put into it. Well, that and we had such a great Sec-Gen/Charge de Affairs pair that got a lot of schools to come to AMUN (a point of pride for me, they also had a background in Crisis).

Being passionate about your topic is also essential to their relationship to you. As aforementioned Charge de Affairs Nicole Gerzon put it, your superiors are looking for:

Experience. You do not want to explain things to people [who are secretariat]. Independence is another big thing [for Crisis], like with GAs [General Assemblies] we do their staffing and figure out what they are doing topic-wise. [But] With Crisis we like them to exist in their own world, like we don't want to to micromanage their topics or staffers. Passion is another thing - I don't need to know what they are writing for their topic per say, but I need to be able to trust them to get them done. We just looked at the top 5 topics and trusted you guys to get it done well.

[Gerzon, N. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

But not only that being so committed to your topic and just loving it will drive you to do things that would surprise even yourself - I am terrified of making phone calls as well as asking people for favors, and yet I found myself on the phone with classmates asking them if they can help staff my department at AMUN. I purchased a costume (a KMT replica military uniform) using my Halloween and Birthday money, as well as

Normal Me with Hair vs Bald Me in a KMT Uniform

other props. And, of course, I shaved my head bald (I hate having short hair) to pay homage to Chiang Kai-shek.

Choosing a Topic:

It occurs to me that just writing "follow your dreams" is not actually a helpful sort of guide to choosing a topic. I was writing something for Reddit the other day, so I'll try to relay it in this document. Anyway, broadly I should outline the general types of crisis topics: historic/alt-historic, modern, futuristic, and fantasy/mythological. Each have their own characteristics/feel to them, and you should choose a topic that works around your strengths. See the table below for a general outline what each are like.

	Research	Character Creation	Uniqueness
Historical	❖ Probably a lot available in book and internet form ❖ To do it justice you need to a lot of reading ❖ Might be difficult to find specifics ❖ Worry about different languages	❖ Some historical characters are obscure and finding research for them is difficult	❖ Some historical crises are done to death - like Cuban Missile Crisis ❖ Obscure historical events don't necessarily translate to better
Realistic Modern	❖ Lots of newspaper articles ❖ Need knowledge on current events	❖ Background histories for current people are often difficult	❖ Realistic crisis scenarios set directly in the present are usually kind of trite (natural disaster, a war, etc) but stuff set directly in a war are usually decent
Futuristic	❖ You make a lot up as long as its consistent ❖ Knowing Sci-Fi tropes is useful though	❖ You'll be making up characters most likely. Have good character profiles ❖ You can use modern/historic people as a starting point.	❖ Choose fun future crises ❖ Usually good for Ad-Hoc since no one can do research anyway
Fantasy/Mythological	❖ Read the source material and make sure everyone uses the same source ❖ Consistency is key	❖ Set early on which stories about mythological characters are "canon" and not canon and make them clear	❖ Harry Potter has been done a lot at least this year ❖ Ideally you'll choose a book everyone has read but also not something done every high-school conference

Bells and Whistles:

On a practical note, do choose a creative name for your crisis. I could have chosen the somewhat bland name of "Chiang Kai-shek's 1937 Cabinet", which is informative but not particularly interesting. However, I simply couldn't resist the urge to call it the more dramatic "The Second United Front: A Stand Against the Rising Sun". Of course, it doesn't even mention the fact that the committee is about China, but it sounds cool and, if you read the topic blurb (which is something you need to write anyway), you'll gain context for it.

For your crisis blurb, try to add some flair to it. Crisis is not some GA, where everyone is supposed to be some diplomat in the UN trying to peacefully resolve the same issues over and over again in a long-winded Resolutions full of "advises" and "hopes for". Our department is about action and is called "Crisis" for a reason. Make it dramatic, with a degree of panache to it if you can. Try to attract delegates that are excited for the topic as you are, or better yet make them as excited about the topic as you are.

A Nation in Peril:

On January 1st, 1937, the Republic of China is facing a fight for its life. After decades of violence and political turmoil following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, the central government in Nanjing has received at least nominal submission from the nation's warlords. However, with the impending Japanese invasion in the horizon, the brewing storm forced an uneasy alliance between the various parties. Consisting of urban merchants, Nanjing bureaucrats, rural communists, foreign inspired radicals, and unscrupulous warlords, the fractious alliance must come together in face of the looming threat. Together they must work to rebuild the shattered nation, resist Japanese aggression, and of course, seize power for themselves.

Before you come in to AMUN, please at the very least skim over the basic rules of crisis and your individual character's description in the topic guide. **To be considered for an award, please write up a position paper** (reading the topic guide should assist in your research) addressing a summary your character's view of the current situation and your plan for the future before first committee session. For any questions/submitting your topic guide please feel free to email Derek Lin at derlin19@bergen.org.

I tried to model by blurb after the introductory spiel of the Star Wars the Clone Wars TV show I used to watch as a middle-schooler. The fourth sentence slows down the pace unfortunately, since the list of parties is rather long. However, it does set up the idea that the room is very diverse, and it clearly lays out the scene for someone looking over the topic.

When it comes to trying to get decent turn out for your committee, remember the process in which delegates are assigned. First, their faculty advisors send in a list of committees they'd like their respective MUN travel teams to have slots for. Given that topic guides will not be posted by this point and in any case most advisors won't spend too much time reading about each available committee, having an eye-catching name and an interesting blurb is crucial if you want delegates to even have the option of attending your crisis.

In the next part of the process, schools are given assignments by the USGs of Internal Affairs based on their requests. Then, each MUN team contacts their student body and shows them their available spots, in which case prospective delegates may sign up for your committee. Again, having an interesting exterior (the so called bells and whistles) gives you a much higher turn out, which in turn increases the likelihood that the better delegates come to your crisis.

As for requiring a position paper, consider the fact that most Crisis committees do not require a position paper. And invariably you will have one or two delegates that for some reason do not read the written warning. However, thankfully all but three of the 22 delegates that came submitted one. I required one because I wanted to make sure all delegates knew what was going on and did their research - simply because the topic was rather obscure and I hoped to ensure all delegates had a plan of what they wanted to do. I feel in my case it was justified in requiring a position paper, but you should think carefully about whether or not you do it yourself. At the

very least, you will have to read a sizable amount of position papers yourself if you require them

- I stayed up till 1 am the night before AMUN giving feedback about position papers.

The Topic Guide

Now for the big part ticket item of the summer - creating your topic guide. I feel that

creating a topic guide is your first real test as a CD, and a major test of your staff. It allows you

to see who is dedicated and willing enough to pull their weight (and more) and who needs to be

given a talking to. Set goals and timetables for when you wish to get things accomplished, and

make sure you team follows through with it. Create regular, scheduled times in which your entire

team can work on the document (we used a shared google folder filled with various google

docs). Michelle Suret's JCC team provides a nice anecdote about the effort required in this

particular stage of managing a Crisis. In her words:

> It started off with me screaming and yelling at my team [of 7] to get on the same call at
>
> the same time. Finally, I managed to get Emily and Anand to show up at the same time
>
> and they worked hard to help me with the topic guide. It was around then that I knew I
>
> wanted to move Emily up from being a chair to a Crisis director - she clearly showed
>
> commitment to the job.
>
> [Surets, M. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

As for the topic guide itself, go "all in" on it. For me at least, it was my proudest

achievement in all my time in BCA. I **wanted** to work on it, it wasn't just another paper I

half-heartedly BSed the night before. And my team followed my example. Though only rising sophomores, they worked tirelessly with me - even when I asked them to help me write what would become over 70 pages of Background Guide.

My topic guide had 5 sections (and a character guide split off), and was filled with various notes I wanted my delegates to be aware of. Said notes are important because 1.) they give insight into what you want to see in committee 2.) they allow clear up any confusion that delegates may have about the topic. This is especially important when you deviate from history - **make sure you note every time you have a "deviance" or deliberate historical inaccuracy**. Having these deviations are okay, Model UN crisis committees cannot possibly represent

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history perfectly - we are all just highschool kids, right? But if you do not note these changes to the historical timeline, delegates will run into trouble and get confused. And it is not fair at all to them if you give them one set of facts while you use another.

rather than Beiyang symbols, ultimately leading the puppet Reorganized National Government of China (the merging of Provision and Reformed governments). His name is synonyms with traitor in China today (akin to Benedict Arnold in America)

Chair Note: In real life Wang would not receive his post as Vice Director-General of the KMT until 1938, however for this committee Chiang has granted Wang this position at the start of the crisis.

PP: Trusted Official - While in truth you are a figurehead for Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese people trust you and your decisions since you have served them faithfully for many years. Public opinion is mostly in your favor and in theory you hold the powers of the vice director-general of the KMT.

PP: Heir of the Republic - To reflect Wang's stature and his historic defection, you can form a rival government using a joint personal directive with just ⅓ of the room (for most it is ½). However, you will not be able to form a lasting collaborationist government without the majority's support (unlike real-life) (see 'Rival Governments' in the Special crisis mechanics section).

Case in point - here are some chair notes in the Character Guide for the delegate Wang Jing-wei .

It is spelled out really clearly what he can and cannot do in this crisis (vs historically) as well as

the slight change in timeline we made to make crisis more convenient. Crisis timeline (CTL) has

Wang as Vice-Director-General of the KMT, while in our timeline (OTL) Wang would gain the

position after committee officially starts (committee starts January 1st, 1937 - as noted elsewhere

in the Topic Guide).

A mistake that is commonly made (in my experience, particularly in futuristic timelines)

is assuming such deviations are insignificant. For example, I was once Marwan Barghouti,

"Co-President of Palestine" in the "Palestinian Joint Cabinet". The problem of course was

Barghouti was (and I'm pretty sure still is at the time I'm writing this) in an Israeli prison, and

Palestine only has one president. The CDs had failed to mention in their background guide that

in their timeline Barghouti was released as part of a peace deal, and that as part of a

power-sharing arrangement the presidency was divided into 3 co-presidents. While I was happy

to email them to clear up any confusion, realize that there are likely newer, more timid delegates that may be too scared to do so, especially for a novice conference like AMUN.

On the other hand, try to avoid concrete economic numbers in committee (unless for some reason you are easily able to come by these numbers). I find that it overburdens the CD and gives the delegates tunnel vision - specificity is nice, but they also should be focused on the bigger picture (in this case am I overspending?). More on that later on in Section 4.

I personally believe in extensive character bios for all characters, they help you give a certain degree of realism to the committee, and also helps make these characters come to life. It also helps you steer the delegates into the role you want each character. In the same thread, you want to include pictures, and lots of them. I believe they help delegates better engage themselves in the role they are playing.

Ciro Randazzo had a slightly different opinion, commenting that "yes [you want character bios] if you're going to limit what they can do for crisis, no if you'll let a lot of things slide. E.g. WAMUNC XIX I was the editor of a newspaper that I wasn't allowed to do anything with." I would say he has a point - make sure your bios matter in your committee, otherwise there is no point writing one at all.

Below is an example from the character guide we made. It is the bottom half of a longer biography with the removed part being a description of the man's early life.

Chiang Kai-shek flanked by his (literal) right-hand man

with the mission to spy on Communist activities.

In 1928 as the Chief of the KMT Army secret service, Dai would help develop the "Clandestine Investigation Section" directly under the Northern Expeditionary Army's Headquarters with the aim of putting a speedy end to the war. This organization would eventually evolve into The Investigation and Statistics Bureau making Dai one of the most dreaded men in China, earning him the nickname "the Himmler of China." Agents were indoctrinated into the Chiang cult of personality and were forbidden to marry while in service. However, for all his sadism and desire for power, he appeared to have a genuine dedication to Chiang, remaining fiercely loyal to his old mentor even in the darkest of times.

Dai was also be appointed head of the Blue Shirts Society, a fascist secret society made up of former Whampoa students that did security and intelligence work for Chiang. However, their drive for radical reform and open endorsement of fascism led them into conflict with other factions of the KMT and Chiang ultimately side-lined them - replacing their original leaders with a loyalist - Dai Li.

Lieutenant General Dai Li (on a side note the secret police-force from Avatar: the Last Airbender was actually named after the terror this guy) was Chiang Kai-shek's spymaster, and probably one of the more powerful roles in committee. So in order to "nerf" him, a not-too-subtle emphasis was put on his historical loyalty to Chiang (so in effect a delegate can't seize power for himself). His leadership of the fascist groups receives considerably less attention (and even then the stress continues to be on Dai Li and his loyalty). A picture (one of two) is put to the side, a small picture of Dai Li when he was alive. Given that the delegate in conference showed nothing but absolute loyalty to Chiang (even when he was about to be executed for said loyalty by the Japanese), I feel that we succeeded.

Section III: The Midyear Preparation Phase

It is now September. The school year has started, and you are ~~really really really~~ kind of overwhelmed by schoolwork. You are short on sleep, short on time and your crisis is the furthest thing from your mind. But that's okay, because this is the easy part - though no less important. The Topic Guide and Character Guide should be done, your lieutenants (the chairs and any Assistant CDs) prepared, and now you are waiting for February. This period, between September and January, is when you will be gathering your resources. You will need staffers, props, and additional information before the start of your crisis committee, and this section will help you do that.

Emotional Blackmail: AKA How to Get Staffers

Staffers are one of the most useful resources in running a crisis, and it is essential that you find some to help you out. I have seen well run committees with only one CD and a staffer, but in general the more staffers a committee has, the better. Why that is however, perhaps might not be as straightforward. Indeed, after my experience running a crisis at AMUN I realize perhaps my default assumption was wrong; I had always assumed that the fact that a person had more staffers meant that they had more people to delegate assignments to, and that is why their crisis ran so well. But perhaps they had a lot of staffers because of their determination/dedication to their crisis, and in fact that same force of personality (not the fact that they had many staffers) was what made crisis run so well. Regardless, these musings will be discussed in Section IV,

which will detail more on how to use your staffers, for now I will just focus on how to amass a large number of staffers for your committee.

If it was up to my Co-USG and I, we would have started recruiting staffers the day we came to school, indeed I had already approached some of my friends before summer even ended! However, we were quickly given restrictions on who we can recruit, as to ensure that GAs + Specialized as well as Ops could also have a fair chance to recruit staffers. Thus, we were told to avoid recruiting people that were expected to volunteer at AMUN anyway (which was detrimental to my Co-USG Michelle's efforts, as many of her friend group were MUN club members) and also we were officially supposed to hold off on recruiting until January.

The latter requirement was not as bad as it seems - people are usually unable to fully commit until a few weeks before conference anyway. But you want to approach them and gauge their interest beforehand anyway. What I did personally was create a series of lists. The first, my "shortlist" was of my close friends who I expected to come. The second, more expanded list also included my other friends who may come out of loyalty to me. The third expanded it to people who may have an interest in the subject (people I know like history/politics, people who took Mandarin, etc).

Later on, I made sure to coordinate my list of people I planned to ask with that of the rest of the Crisis department One of the jobs of the USGs of Crisis (at least in my interpretation) that differentiates them from CDs is to coordinate the efforts of the entire Crisis organ. The most critical effort by the organ is recruiting staffers, which is why this section is so important. The idea is to make sure the same person isn't recruited by different crisis teams. Below is the joint spreadsheet we made. For the sake of privacy the columns detailing their last names and grade

have been hidden.

Committee	First Name	Expected Probabilty	Status	Thursday	Friday	Preference	Experience/Connection/Other Notes
China	Caleb	have not asked, unlikely	no			-	Took Mandarin, Quizbowl
Any	Casey	have not asked, unlikely; staffing SOCHUM	no			-	does JSA
Ad-Hoc	Catherine	pre-confirmed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ad-Hoc	Pre-Selected
Any	Christopher	no	No	no	no	-	Derek Lin's friend, Michelle Suret's friend, Everyone's friend
China	Ciyoon	it was a polite no	no			-	see above
China	Emily	said yes Earlier	Yes	yes	yes	China	Asked by Aaron
China	Ereka	very unlikely	No	no	no	-	Derek Lin's sister (she's a poop)
China	Ericot	unlikely but likely if elliot	No				Elliot's "Friend" - is "busy"
China	Ethan	pre-confirmed	yes	yes	yes	China	Derek Lin's Friend
China	Ginny	unlikely; said yes; 26 January 2019 Note - Call tommorrow, went to GA :(	no				Derek Lin's Friend, Took Mandarin, Decent Handwriting, does
Ad-Hoc	Gordon	probably	Yes	yes	yes	None	Derek Lin's Friend
JCC	Jared	pre-confirmed	Yes			JCC	Pre-Selected
China	Jiwon	no wants to be a del	No				Aaron's friend from debate, has expressed interest in MUN
China	John	no	No			-	Derek Lin's Friend, flipped a coin to decide - might be able to
China	Josh	likley; 26 January 2019 Note Call tommorrow	Yes	yes	yes	China	Does JSA
China	Josh	no wants to be a del	No				Does MUN, might not want to be a del this time
China	Kyle	Maybe	yes	yes	no	-	Chinese Heritage, Derek Lin's Friend,
Any	Lauren	No	No	No	NO	-	Derek Lin's Cousin, no but consider asking for a ktichen time
China	Lukasz	bailed	no	no	yes	China	Derek Lin's Friend
China	Marek	Said Yes Earlier	Yes			China	Derek Lin's Friend, do not give him a talking or thinking job
China	Matthew	Said Yes Earlier	Yes			China	Derek Lin's Friend
China	Max	does not have a ride	no			-	Derek Lin's Friend,
JCC	Maya	Asked, likely	no			-	Emily's Sister
China	Michael	it was a polite no	no			-	Hestitant to say no but yeah probably a no
Ad-Hoc	Michelle	said yes Earlier	Yes	no	yes	Ad-Hoc	Asked by Aaron
Ad-Hoc	Miri	pre-confirmed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ad-Hoc	Pre-Selected
China	Peter	have not asked, likely	Yes			China	Derek Lin's Friend
Ad-Hoc	Priya	pre-confirmed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ad-Hoc	Pre-Selected
China	Ryan	pre-confirmed	yes	yes	yes	China	Derek Lin's Friend, Does JSA
China	Santiago		Yes			China	Sean + Ryan's Friend
JCC	Sarah	pre-confirmed	Yes			JCC	Pre-Selected
Ad-Hoc	Sasha	Likely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ad-Hoc	MUN Club
China	Sean	likley	Yes	Yes	Yes	China	Derek Lin's Friend, Does JSA
China	Stephanie	have not asked, Unlikely, said yes; backed out	no			China	Does MUN, worked as press corp leader
China	Steven	pre-confirmed	yes			China	Derek Lin's Friend
JCC	Victoria	pre-confirmed	Yes			JCC	Pre-Selected
China	Yovel	have not asked, unlikely	yes			China	Derek Lin's Friend

As you can see we asked a lot of people to help us staff. We asked friends. We asked acquaintances. We asked anyone who we thought might have a slim chance of saying yes, and even some we knew would say no. It takes a degree of courage, one I normally would not be able to muster up had I not loved my crisis so much. Hopefully, however, you will be energetic and confident enough to ask enough people to staff all the committees you have been assigned - in my case I was asked to be the USG of Ad-Hoc as well, which meant I was also responsible for finding enough staffers for them too. My formula for the number of staffers you need to recruit to say yes is 1.5 x # of Staffers you want. I predicted 1 in 3 "Confirmed" staffers will bail out in one way or another. By that formula, my target was 15 staffers for China Crisis alone (I was

experimenting with something I kept calling the "Grand Staffing Plan" you will read about later). I had 16 "yeses" in total. Of them, 3 bailed out (one didn't even tell me he wasn't coming), 1 changed her mind and asked to go staff a specialized committee, and 2 were transferred to other Crisis committee due to recruitment short-falls. So I suppose you can draw your own conclusions about whether or not I was right about the 1 in 3 equation.

Now, no doubt hearing "no" hurt quite a bit, and those who backed out after saying yes or asked to be transferred felt like a slight. Even now, I feel some degree of pain about those rejections. However, as a USG you are a member of MUN secretariat, and if you cannot take no for an answer you honestly shouldn't have the job. Besides, if you are a MUN delegate, acting placid (even if you are burning inside) should be second nature. In any case, it is your duty to ensure your crises are staffed to the best of your ability. Crisis is more manpower intensive and if you rely on handouts from GA and Ops recruiters, you deserve what you get (nothing). Or, as Ciro Randazzo notes, the ones you may get are "gonna be trashy people who are only there for community service hours, guaranteed".

So be brave. For what it's worth, I often brag that the Crisis Department was able to raise the same number of staffers as the GAs + Ops combined at AMUN XX, and we got people who mostly wouldn't have done MUN do help volunteer. Ask them earlier in the year, remind them before Winter break, and then when its registration time ask them one final time. Again, and I can't stress this enough, **do not rely on others to get you your staffers.** You eat what you catch so to speak, so make it count. If this crisis truly means a lot to you, tell that to your friends - I bet they will understand the right thing to do is help you out if they aren't busy. Oh, and for the

subsection title, emotional blackmail basically is when you imply that you aren't friends if they won't help you. It's a useful tool.

Once you have staffers, it is also worth examining the qualities of them. The ideal staffer in my opinion exhibits 5, somewhat contradictory, qualities: obedience, autonomy, knowledge of the subject, diligence, and charisma. Depending on their job, you want them to be able to perform tasks without your micromanaging, yet still be humble enough not to contradict your instructions (lest you lose control of your own crisis nucleus). You also want them to be able to process information rather quickly and come up with new ideas for you to use (a good staffer can also serve as an advisor), something that comes much easier if they are well informed about the topic at hand. Naturally, you also do not want your staffers to be lazy. Finally, you also want staffers who are not too shy to act out crisis updates, because that's part of the fun of crisis.

The JCC of this year makes for a more interesting case study into the importance of not just a high quantity of staffers but also a high quality of them as well. In the words of USG of Crisis Michelle Surets:

> Pick your own team, that way you can be sure they are motivated. Otherwise they will have nothing they lose. Make sure they are very committed to the cause or else you will have people that apparently don't know that their mother's birthday is on the day of AMUN until 3 days before conference. Oh yeah and if you're a staffer don't send a text after you quit saying 'if you want to talk, feel free to call me.'

[Surets, M. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

For some context, her crisis team was recruited (well, encouraged with a heavy degree of pressure) from her pool of extended friends. However, while some were clearly motivated and

helpful, others were not. What made things worse was the turnover before AMUN; two of her

core team were promoted to organize Ad-Hoc mid-year. A few dropped out or were otherwise

unable to meet the full time commitment, including an (ex)-chair (who was also an ex-crisis

director). With this drama among the core team, recruiting staffers was effectively an

afterthought. At one point, staffing levels were so low that one had to be transferred in from my

China committee and another round of staffing recruitment was made the day before. At one

point, we contemplated mobilising my little sister and/or bribing people to attend to resolve the

emergency. To combat this situation in the future, Michelle advised:

> Make sure everyone on your staff knows what they are doing before conference. Have
>
> them contribute to the topic guide, so they feel invested in the conference. Especially
>
> your crisis directors; make sure your crisis directors are familiar with the topic and ensure
>
> everyone feels obligated to show up.
>
> [Surets, M. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

Finding More Information:

Around this time you should start coming up with pre-built arcs in the event that your

committee is either slowing down, speeding too fast, or losing direction. You do not necessarily

want to go too far into depth with regards to each scenario. As Nicole Gerzon (Charge d'Affaires

of AMUN XX and a former Crisis Director) put it:

> One room always pulls head of another in JCCs, usually the ones with a more clear arc's
>
> so the Death eaters, who can be chaotic and do their own thing while the Ministry
>
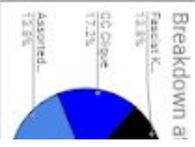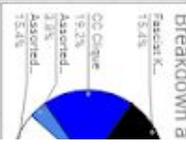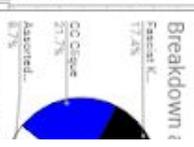> couldn't really do much because they were bound by certain restrictions. As for mine, the
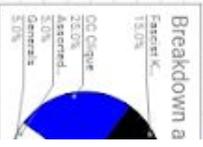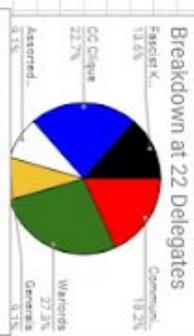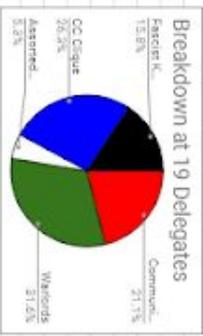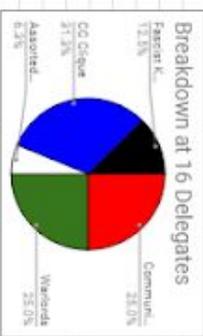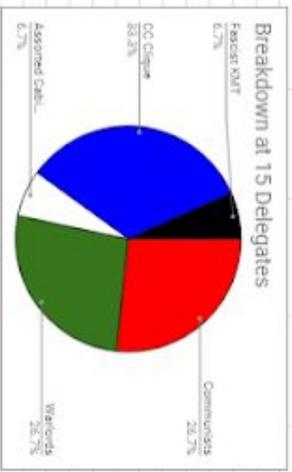
chairs ultimately decided which room pulled ahead. The restrictive chairs who refused to give more leeway for unmoderated caucuses - unmods are essential for little 2 day conferences like AMUN - made for slower crisis rooms. A lot of updates are crucial, I liked twitter because I could give little updates at any time even those that are inconsequential. I also didn't like to write a lot of crisis arcs, I had a lot of ideas for things that could happen but I allowed my delegates to decide whether or that happened.

[Gerzon, N. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

You should also gather auxiliary information you may need for your crisis so you can more quickly react to a sudden change in direction in your committee. Find names of non-delegate characters, companies that may exist at this time, prominent locations, etc. Or make up your own. Because in the chaos and confusion of your crisis nucleus during committee, having to sit down and look up names dramatically slows down your Crisis Updates. And believe me when I say you will be exhausted and stressed as is, before you are forced to lookup the name of the CEO of Mitsubishi in the 2nd World War (wanna guess how I know this?).

Other things that are useful to put in your auxiliary information document are important events in other parts of the world (perhaps only tangentially related to your region-specific crisis), and if you love charts - I created a spreadsheet to estimate the ideological balance of the committee at different numbers of delegates (see below). And yes, I will be the first to admit, that is the most extra thing I have done for my committee (among many).

Ideological Balance ☆

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help   Last edit was on November 19, 2018

75% ▾ | $ % .0 .00 123▾ | Arial ▾ | 10 ▾ | B I S A ◆. ⊞ ⊡ ▾ | ≡ ▾ ↓ ▾ ┃↕ ▾ ▽ ▾ | ⊖ ⊞ ▣ ⊽ ▾ Σ ▾

# of Del.	Character Added	Clique	Communists	Warlords	Generals	Assorted Cabinet	Assorted KMT	CC Clique	Fascist KMT
1	Mao Zedong	CCP	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Soong Mei-Ling	CC	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
4	Dai Li	FA	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
5	TV Soong	CC	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
6	HH Kung	CC	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
7	Bai Chongxi	WL	1	1	0	0	0	3	1
8	Li Zongren	WL	1	2	0	0	0	3	1
9	Wang Ming	CCP	2	2	0	0	0	3	1
10	Chen Guofu	CC	2	2	0	0	0	4	1
11	Chen Lifu	CC	2	2	0	0	0	5	1
12	Lin Sen	AC	2	2	0	1	0	5	1
13	Ma Bufang	WL	2	3	0	1	0	5	1
14	Ma Hongkui	WL	2	4	0	1	0	5	1
17	Zhou Enlai	CCP	3	4	0	1	0	5	1
18	Lin Biao	CCP	4	4	0	1	0	5	1
15	Wang Jingwei	FA	4	4	0	1	0	5	2
16	Zhou Fohai	FA	4	4	0	1	0	5	3
20	Yan Xishan	WL	4	5	0	1	0	5	3
21	Long Yun	WL	4	6	0	1	0	5	3
3	Chen Cheng	NRA	4	6	1	1	0	5	3
19	Wang Chrung-hui	AC	4	6	1	2	0	5	3
22	Sun Li-Jen	NRA	4	6	2	2	0	5	3
23	Chiang Ching-Kuo	FA	4	6	2	3	0	5	4
24	He Jian	AC	4	6	2	4	0	5	4
25	Xie Guangsheng	AC	4	6	2	4	1	5	4
26	Yu Youren	AK	4	6	2	4	2	5	4
27	Ju Zheng	AK	4	6	2	4	2	5	4
28	Dai Jitao	AK	4	6	2	4	3	5	4
29	Sun Fo	AK	4	6	2	4	4	5	4
30	Weng Wenhao	AK	4	6	2	4	5	5	4

Breakdown at 15 Delegates

Breakdown at 16 Delegates

Breakdown at 19 Delegates

Breakdown at 22 Delegates

Breakdown at 25 Delegates

Breakdown at 28 Delegates

By Clique ▾ | Ideology ▾ | Foreign Relations? ▾ | Centralization? ▾

Obtaining Props:

Come up with a list of props you may need to help you out with your crisis - a good costume or even just a nice hat does wonders towards helping make your simulation more lifelike. Of course, make sure you clear your props with the faculty advisors - I learned a little too late that we are not allowed to put potato sacks over staffers and chairs' heads (even willing ones). Recognize that at AMUN, swords are very valuable in crisis - ever since nerf and other toy guns got banned, swords are effectively the only toy weapon you can bring as a prop. So try scrounging your old toys for swords - duels have been a staple at AMUN for a long time (at least before my 4 years at BCA).

Try to share props with the other crisis teams (assuming you are all on good terms). While it is difficult to go to each others' rooms on a regular basis to exchange props, for very important items it is worth a try. And be willing to give thematic props you may have to your fellow CDs if you have any at home you aren't using - we are a team after all.

Oh, and I didn't know where to put this, but bring snacks/drinks. Being a crisis director is really tiring, and I missed dinner day 2 of conference working on the post-dinner crisis update.
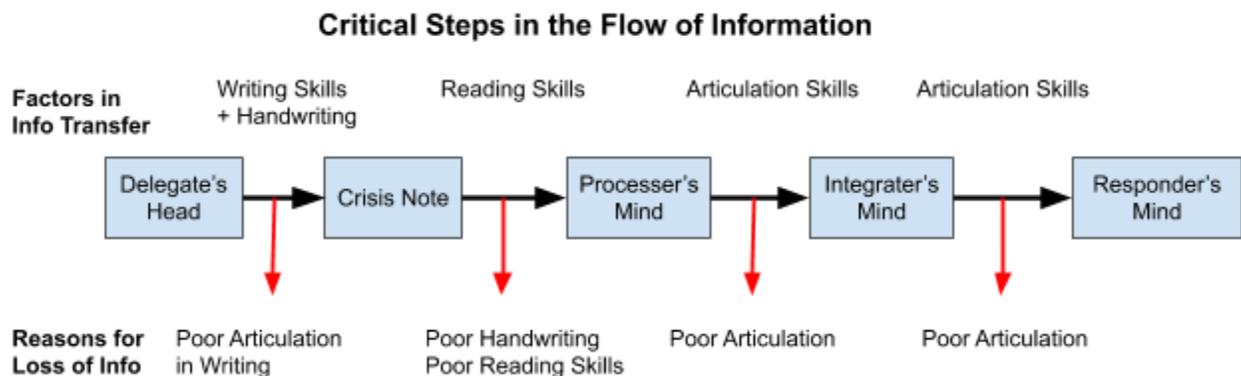

This is a picture of me pathetically begging for food from a friend. Don't end up pathetically begging for food - Crisis is self sufficient and we don't need nothin' from GA/Specialized folks. Clearly I have brought great dishonor to crisis.

Section IV: Philosophies of Running a Crisis Apparatus

I suppose this is the heart of is essay, and honestly if I were in your shoes I would have just skipped to this section. Let's first outline what is expected of a crisis team. What differentiates a Crisis from a Specialized is the evolving world that your team is simulating - every single update the world around the delegates is evolving based off events the delegates have control of and some in which they don't have any control over. Your job is maintain this simulation and it is all about controlling the flow of information - it is up to you to integrate all the storylines being told into one and seal any cracks and flaws within the plot. If you have ever been on the delegate side of things, I'm sure you can remember a time when the crisis team has failed to do that - they forgot a crucial detail about committee, or perhaps a previous crisis note that you sent in that would have changed the scenario. This makes your crisis simulation far less engaging, and it is therefore up to you to do your best to keep track of the timeline and all the flowing stories the delegates want to tell.

Critical Steps in the Flow of Information

	Writing Skills + Handwriting	Reading Skills	Articulation Skills	Articulation Skills
Factors in Info Transfer				

Delegate's Head → Crisis Note → Processer's Mind → Integrater's Mind → Responder's Mind

| **Reasons for Loss of Info** | Poor Articulation in Writing | Poor Handwriting Poor Reading Skills | Poor Articulation | Poor Articulation |

There are also some concepts that one must keep in mind when attempting to run a Crisis. These concepts are the foundation in which your Crisis apparatus will run, as you seek to design your Crisis Committee to be the way you want it to be.

Principle 1: Managing the Flow of Information

Let's go back to the topic of managing the flow of information. The first piece if obtaining all the crisis notes and managing their flow from the committee room. This is is a physical task, but no less important. Notes can be lost in transit by careless (or perhaps sinister) delegates. Team members may misplace critical notes. In any case, your first responsibility is to prevent this. It is also important that a manageable amount of personal directives (crisis notes) are sent to the backroom, lest the backroom grows overwhelmed and a backlog grows. Over the many committees I have participated in, I've observed different methods in which this task has been handled, which I will address in the next section.

Principle 2: Reading Notes

Information will hopefully next flow into your Crisis Nucleus (I do not wish to use the term Crisis Room, as there are alternatives I will cover). From there you will need to perform reading - reading all the notes that have been sent to your room and analyzing the intentions of your delegates. This is harder than it sounds; as a crisis delegate one expects that the Crisis Director and the Crisis Team understands several things - 1.) The immediate action one wants to take 2.) the grand plan/arc one wants to achieve 3.) the big finale/end-goal of the delegate. The problem of course, is that a Crisis has between 15-20 delegates, and depending on the quality of the delegates perhaps 50-75% of your delegates will take the backroom very seriously. I would

propose (anecdotally of course) that there is some an inverse relationship between time/effort reading and the quality of information gleaned.
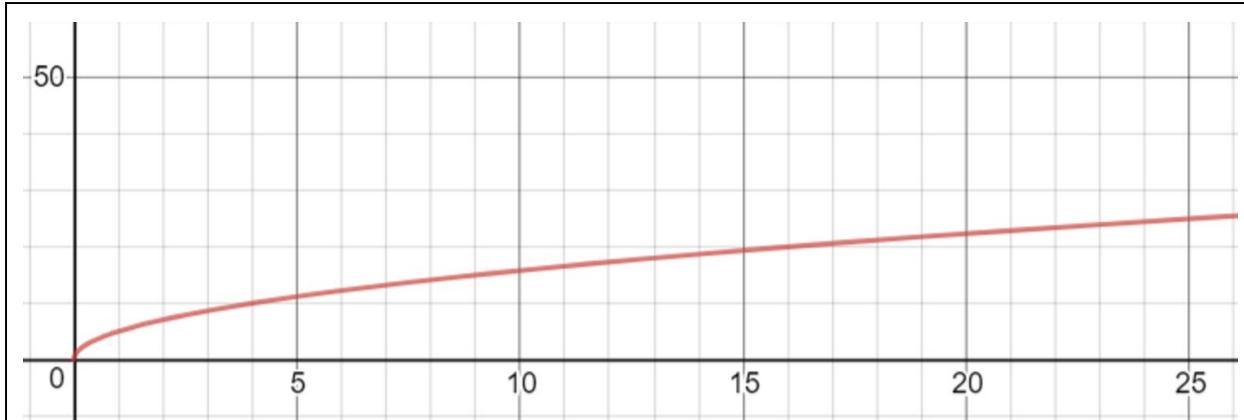
Graph 1: $Y = 5\sqrt{x}$: My Education by BCA's Science Department has rather strictly ingrained in my mind that one should not make assertions without scientific evidence to back it. However, I am willing to speculate that a model relating information gathered (y axis) and time spent analyzing it (x axis) is similar to this graph.

Thus, your "processing power" of your Crisis Nucleus needs to be great enough to accomodate the number of delegates using the backroom and also at the same time give you enough information that you can use for the next step. The quality, or the bar you set for information, is up to you as Crisis Director. But make sure your team knows what this standard is and work with them to ensure that enough information is being passed to the integration step.

Principle 3: Integration of Storyline

The next phase is working to integrate information gathered into the story-line at hand. A crisis, as in real life, includes many stories being told simultaneously - the story being told by the Crisis team, the story being told by the committee(s), and the stories being told by the various delegates. For some notes, it may affect the stories being told by other people or previous notes,

and it is critical that the "integrator" (who may very well be the "processor" and/or "responder" as well, depending on how you organize your Crisis team) be able to note how this new action will play a role in the greater collections of stories being told.

Of course, this requires some way of keeping track of the directives (personal and committee-wide) being sent in, something we will examine in the next section.

Principle 4: Crafting a Response

Once you consider the impact a note may have on the rest of the Crisis simulation, you and your team can start crafting your response. The first thing to consider is if you should even act upon it in the first place; some notes are silly, ineffective, inappropriate, unreadable and/or simply not worth your time. Or perhaps they are good notes but don't fit into the greater story you are attempting to simulate. At the end of the day however, it is your decision and responsibility as a CD to make sure Crisis runs, so do not forget that you have the right to simply veto a directive (though try to avoid doing so for committee-wide ones).

While ideally you'd respond to every one of these notes by explaining why you are not acting upon it, you may find that difficult in practice. Choosing to respond to a personal directive is the second consideration you must have - if you do not have the time/manpower to respond to a directive, or perhaps a directive simply doesn't require a response, don't respond. For example, Wang-Jingwei wrote a PD asking the Japanese to consider him as a possible contender for a puppet government in my Crisis. It was simply noted by the Crisis Director (and did in fact become relevant later) but did not receive a response as other matters were more important and

in any case the response would have been ambiguous since it was not clear which direction we wanted the crisis to go in.

All of this ties back into the question of what exactly you'd like to relay back to the delegate. Would you like them to know all of what is happening as a result of their directive? Or only a piece? Are you going to be direct about what you are trying to tell them? Or perhaps be more esoteric? In the same way that you want your delegates to have a clear/precise plan, try to give your delegates enough information that they can act the way you would like them to. For example, if you'd like them to continue their investigation into corruption perhaps note in your response that there is more to be found if they continue their search.

Furthermore, one should consider who should receive a response to a directive. A committee-wide directive more likely than not requires a response to the whole committee, a Joint-Personal Directive should probably receive a response to the whole group, and a personal directive likely warrants a directive response. However if a note that is acted upon affects multiple people or would be detected by other members of committee (if a delegate tries to take a major loan from a bank controlled by another delegate for example) then it might be worth contacting those other delegates as well, giving them information as appropriate.

Principle 5: Returning Information

The final principle of managing the flow of information is you need to return/deliver the information. It is important to consider how you would like to respond to the directive once you realize what message you'd like to deliver. Crisis has several tools that you can utilize for responding:

The Direct Response:

The first and primary tool for responding a personal directive simply by writing a response on the directive itself. This of course requires legible handwriting, but is an effective way to give a response to a delegate so long as the responder is a decent writer (inverse the diagram at the start of this section for a model).

The Talk:

Another method for responding is a personal meeting/answer - take the delegate you wish to respond outside the committee room and talk with them about your response. This is favorable for when a response is complicated enough that it would take less time or be less confusing in person rather than simply writing back. It is also a method in which a series of questions may be asked of the delegate. The disadvantage of this method is it requires a team-member's full attention and takes them away from a task they could have been doing.

The Crisis Update:

A standard method of alerting the whole room of an event in Crisis is the Crisis Update. The Crisis Update takes many forms in and of itself, and utilizes various measures to illustrate it, which I will discuss in a later section. However, in every case a Crisis Update gives you an opportunity to address the whole committee at once, as well as take questions. Usually the Crisis Director personally delivers said update just because of their importance. However, a critical disadvantage of a Crisis update is committee debate grinds to a halt whenever one occurs. At

AMUN we do not have much time to debate as is, so overloading your crisis with updates can prevent your delegates from reacting to it.

Concept 1: Decision Autonomy vs Centralization

We start now onto the discussion of various "concepts" that will play a role in our evaluations during the next section where various structures of a crisis apparatus are discussed. One of the major concepts to be aware of is the idea of Decision Autonomy vs Centralization. As a leader, you are expected to delegate responsibilities to different members of the team and how much responsibility correlates heavily with the level of autonomy you give each team member. Who can make up new parts of the plot-line? Who can run private meetings with the delegates? How often must everyone check in with you? Too much decentralization often reduces the amount of communication/information transfer between your team members, but too much centralization reduces the flexibility of each member.

For example, in the early stages of my crisis, every time I stepped out to meet with a delegate (delegates would request to meet with leaders of foreign countries not represented by other delegates) the crisis nucleus came to a screeching halt - since I had the veto on every response to a crisis nucleus, my staffers would wait until I returned to send back responses or make decisions. Had I trusted my staffers to run the meetings themselves (which I ended up doing), I could have maintained that level of centralization.

Another anecdote about the relationship between centralization vs decentralization and the personality of the Crisis Director or Head Crisis Director is one relayed by Ciro Randazzo, who was a CD for 2 AMUNs and later Secretary General of AMUN XX:

I was a CD for 2 years. I had David Song as JCD and Shalin and myself as CDs. The

problem was I was the only one who knew how to crisis. But I also didn't know anything

about Korea which made for a very messy Crisis. We had a lot of fun and got where we

got where we wanted to go, but we had no idea what was going on. It was not very

organized.

I feel a highly centralized method, where the CD deals with a lot of the actual crisis while

the other CDs work on notes, can work. The problem with what was going on was that

Shalin and I didn't know what was reasonable. David ran the Crises themselves but they

weren't that good because David didn't know crisis.

<div align="right">[Randazzo, C. (2019, April 4) Personal Interview]</div>

I was actually a staffer for that Crisis and I have to agree with Ciro's assessment - the

backroom could be messy at times because it was difficult to recognize who was supposed to do

what precisely. From my own perspective, I recognized David as leader because he was a senior,

but at times I couldn't tell whose orders I should be taking at a given moment.

Conversely it is also important to remember that you cannot just tell a staffer to be

autonomous and expect them to do a good job. In frustration of the aforementioned event, where

the crisis nucleus was paralyzed, I instructed my Assistant Crisis Director to take full charge

when I was out of the room. I was met by a dumbfounded stare - I had not trained him how to be

the top of the pyramid-structure I had organized my team into,which had a lot of responsibilities,

and with considerably less experience in crisis such a task would have been onerous. That is not

to say he was incompetent - far from it - he had spent hours helping prepare for committee. However, I was expecting him, a GA-trained sophomore, to take on a role designed for a senior with years of crisis experience in about three minutes just about an hour and a half into the first committee session.

In doing so, I was being unreasonable. As the Crisis Director it is up to you to know the capabilities of each of your team-members, whether they be Assistant CDs, Chairs, or Staffers, as well as their weaknesses. Especially during the first committee session, almost everyone will be nervous and awkward even with the jobs they are trained for and will require time to break in and grow confident. Thus, the more you delegate to your staff, the more trained and comfortable they must be to accommodate the higher workload.

It is crucial that you make clear what each team member's responsibilities are and how much autonomy you will be giving them, both before and during committee session. Each team-member should have a good idea of what is expected of them so they can prepare both mentally and knowledge wise. Take for example a quote from Josh Gonzalez, a former president of JSA club and a staffer for the Harry Potter JCC on what staffers desires for leadership:

Specific Directions. They [Staffers] like being involved in the development of the crisis and usually like to explore what is going on, especially in joint crisis. But they still need to be given guidelines on what to do, not necessarily specific directions on where to be at a given moment. You do not want too many cooks in the kitchen, let's say around 1 per 5-7 delegates in manageable.

[Gonzalez, J. (2019, Feb. 11) Personal Interview]

Failing to do so will not only sow confusion, it may cause friction and lead to some to grow insubordinate. Ultimately, as we will see in Section V, the way you structure the your team's autonomy-centralization level must be tailored around your team's size, competence, and self-sufficiency.

Concept 2: Consolidation vs Separation

Similarly, another key concern for organizing your staff is the idea of consolidation vs separation of jobs. Each step of the information pathway discussed in this section (flow of notes - reading notes - integration of notes - responding - returning) can be done by one person or many people, depending on how you decide to structure your room.

Again, the flow of information and the way information will be spread is important. Heavy consolidation of the tasks on the information pathway (e.g. having all notes read, processed, and responded by one person) reduces the amount of communication that must occur at each step. For example, imagine the processor having to speak about the note to the responder who then must speak to the returner, all of which can be done by one person. However, in that same case cross-delegate flow of information is reduced - what is going on in the crisis arc of one delegate is hidden to a staffer not reading that delegate's notes - integration is lacking. This can be solved in a few ways that will be examined later on, but it is one weakness that becomes apparent when it comes to consolidation.

On the other hand, more separation of tasks allows for each staffer to better specialize in one aspect of the job. Like greater autonomy, it also provides a degree of flexibility. Should there

be a problem such as "crisis notes are being processed too slowly", one can send staffers directly

to the weak link in the chain (perhaps 3 more staffers go to responding) rather than a general put

more staffers into processing notes.

Again, the circumstances matter when it comes to running your crisis. And when it comes

time for applications, consolidating vs separating jobs also comes to play.

Concept 3: Fun and Realism

This concept, Fun and Realism, is not related to staffing assignments but rather your

broader vision of what you would like your crisis to be. Notice there is not a "versus" in the

sub-section - one can have both a realistic and fun crisis at the same time. So I suppose fun isn't

quite the right word to use in this case.

On the other hand, reality can be quite a downer to say the least. People die in the great

game between nations, and there are usually nuances that a Crisis Simulation simply cannot

simulate. Is it worth twisting reality a bit to make your crisis more fun? But fun to who? And at

what point are you crossing line? In both ways of course.

For example, during a UNSC committee at WaMUNC the discussion at hand was the

border dispute between Israel and Palestine. It soon became clear that "realism" wasn't

necessarily the most important thing on the CD's mind - a terror group named Ra's al Ghul

appeared after being funded by foreign actors such as myself (I didn't choose the name however)

and began launching attacks on Israeli settlements. Later on, a scramble-for-Africa-esque

situation occurred after all major Middle-Eastern capitals were destroyed by "Jericho Rockets

launched by Tony Downey Stark". In spite of the lack of "realism", it was still a fun and an

engaging debate/experience for me because the CD kept the story moving and the world

consistant (invasions did not work well but occupations did).

That is not to say that realism is the enemy - far from it. In another case, at YMUNC, at a

Palestinian Cabinet Crisis regarding the same issue, one particular delegate escaped multiple

attempts by the committee to arrest/execute him. In fact, he led a popular revolt against the

establishment on his own, much to the chargin of the rest of the delegates. The CDs in this case

justified their repeated saves by arguing that the Crisis must keep going on and that

killing/arresting/stripping away the vote of one particular delegate interrupts that. I'd argue that

such an effort was a mistake - it made the committee far less fun for everyone else and broke the

realistic aspect of the crisis, particularly as said delegate continued to promote a vague

"pan-Palestinian-Israeli peace" ideology from his "New Wave Movement" that had little to no

support from the rest of committee. By contrast, everyone else had worked to smooth over

Hamas-PLO tensions (a real world issue) and rebuilt Palestine rather than start a revolution.

Funny enough, the fact that said delegate won Best actually inspired me to create multiple

backup characters for my own crisis - that way killing off delegates would be no problem should

the need arise (5 were executed by firing squad at one point).

The balance you need to achieve again ultimately depends on you and your team - what

do you value in your crisis?

Concept 4: Debate vs Maneuvering

Another topic to consider with regards to values in MUN is what is the point of a MUN

conference. Most MUN conferences are a competition with awards and gavels, but for Crisis

there are multiple skills be evaluated. Broadly, it is the traditional skills like debate and politicking and then the unique Crisis skill which is creative use of the backroom.

But there is a chance that you and your backroom staff will disagree with the Chairs (the front-room staff). Perhaps a delegate is a savvy diplomat who writes all the committee-wide directives being passed, yet does not have the time to write to the backroom. Does said delegate deserve an award? Or maybe the opposite; a delegate writes creative personal directives that greatly influence committee, but is a shy speaker during committee. How about then?

I personally believe that at the end of the day committee performance comes first - because Crisis is an offshoot of Model UN, and the UN is about diplomacy first. Of course, every delegate should be participating in the backroom and a delegate that does both well should be heavily considered. But then again, to what extent? This is an important philosophical question that can decide awards, and as any delegate knows, awards are really touchy.

Section V: Administering a Crisis

Finally, we reach the fifth section, where our principles and concepts are applied. As you prepare to run your crisis, you must design the structure of your Crisis Apparatus (note, I eschew the term Crisis Room) to fulfill all the different roles required of your crisis team. There is no one "best" structure - your available resources should influence how you administer your crisis. I have observed and theoreticized several different methods in which Crisis Directors and their teams utilize their resources to attempt to fulfil all their expected mandates of a good crisis. Each have their own advantages and shortcomings, and the extent in which said advantages or disadvantages present themselves depend heavily on the size, skill and resources of your team.

The Front Room:

The Circle Method:

Many crisis rooms are organized in a circle, square, or some other closed loop - the goal in this case is to allow for notes to be passed around the circle with comparable ease. When done right, it also means that there is considerably less of an issue of identifying where everyone is seated - simply passing it in one direction should mean that it'll eventually reach the target delegate. This method is perhaps the easiest and most common method of ensuring all notes reach their target destinations - either to the Crisis room or to another delegate.

Of course, there are some drawbacks to the closed loop. First it constricts the size of your crisis, as finding space for everyone to sit around the table is difficult. As one approaches 20 or more delegates, finding enough space to fit the circular shaped tables grows difficult and grows

cramped. Moreover, another critical flaw to this method is the participation of the chairs within this loop - said configuration means that there will be delegates at the peripheries of the chairs' vision that may have more difficulty being seen. In addition, notes being passed to the chairs' bench have to be examined as to whether or not it should be passed back around the circle.

This method was used in my committee during AMUN, though there were just short of two dozen delegates present, creative (if somewhat tight) arrangements of the tables in the room allow for the creation of a pentagon shaped committee-room. Reaching the delegates surprisingly was of little issue - despite appearances, there was enough space for staffers to travel to delegates in the back.

Mailboxes:

A popular and rather cheap choice for collecting Crisis Notes is having a "mailbox" by the dias to store them before they are collected by the backroom. Usually it is a box with shorter walls just large enough to contain personal directives and committee-wide directives without being too bulky to carry. It is a minor quality-of-life improvement, but it might be helpful. Ultimately, I overlooked this addition (despite years of seeing it in play), which received some complaints by delegates - particularly after some crisis notes were lost. I don't know if a mailbox would have actually helped in this case, but, in retrospect, it couldn't hurt.

Two (Note)Pad System:

This year was the first time I was exposed to the so-called "Two-Pad system". It is pretty much what it says on the tin - every delegate is provided (or allowed, if they bring in their own) two notepads at a time. Delegates may submit one note-pad at a time to the backroom, and depending on the roles only the first visible page is read by the crisis team.

What is this system designed to do? The first chief advantages of this method is to stem the flow of personal directives into the backroom, reducing it to one at a time from each delegate. Particularly in college conferences, where I have observed this being put into place, experienced delegates have the tendency to rapidly write new crisis notes and send them en masse to the dias in hopes of a few of them passing. Putting a constraint on the number of notes flowing theoretically increases the quality of each note, and encourages the use of Joint Personal Directives. The second principle advantage is the reduction of loose notes - cleanup is always a concern in crisis and a notepad system may help fight litter.

The disadvantages of the Two-Pad system are its restrictiveness. Delegates who would like to do a lot at the same time are inhibited and forced to condense their notes - possibly losing quality in the process. It is also somewhat annoying to enforce - one has to ensure that no delegate is "cheating" by using more notepads. The biggest responsibility however, that comes out of using this system is that a response by the backroom is needed within two collections of Crisis notes - lest delegates are left without a pad to write on.
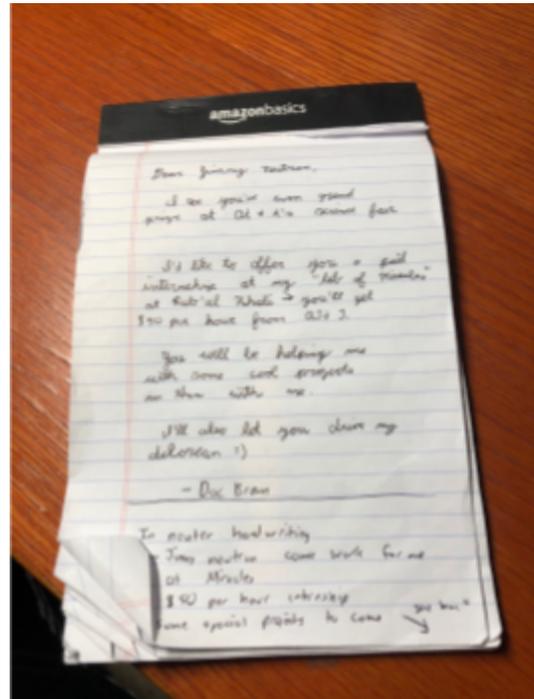
My Beat-Up Pad From WaMUNC, Crisis Lost the Other One :(

Ciro Randazzo had very pleasant words to say about his experience with the 2-Notepad system that provide insight into the possible benefits of using it:

You really need to all be on the same page. My WaMUNC committee was really good, because everyone knew what was going on. And they were only able to pull it off because of the 2-pad system. The two-pad system is a really good way to streamline the note system. It means that there isn't is a constant stream of notes coming in.

[Randazzo, C. (2019, April 4) Personal Interview]

In the end, I chose to not use the "Two-Pad" system because of my experience at AMUN XVIII as a staffer. I remember the Crisis Director struggled to get the delegates (who are largely inexperienced) to participate with the backroom, and in some cases had to beg to get them to write crisis notes. It would be counterproductive then, in my case, to use this method as it addresses a problem opposite of what I expect to see at AMUN.

Electronic Delivery System:

Perhaps one of the more novel systems I have seen this year is the use of electronic crisis notes. At HoMMUNC, the UNSC committee utilized no notepads, but instead had committee work almost entirely on laptops. Chairs had made Slack accounts for each nation, and all notes (inter-delegate, crisis notes, etc) were sent through slack. Likewise, responses to personal directives were also sent through slack chats.

While I ultimately decided electronic deliver was ultimately not in the best interests of my committee, and ultimately ruled it out - I found this concept rather novel and have to commend the crisis director(s)'s ingenuity. This type of system results in quick delivery of information while also leaving little mess with regards to pieces of papers lying on the ground. It also allowed delegates to communicate with one another during moderate caucus, which helped changed the dynamic of the committee.

I feel this system compliments heavily centralized systems, a reflecting a move away from the tradition model I had seen in crisis past. In the particular circumstance I described, the crisis team included two or three people - including chair(s) and CD. Manpower was low for this team, and I highly doubt they would have been capable of having dedicated staffers for transporting notes back and forth. In addition, with just one (perhaps two) person responding to

notes and also writing crisis updates being able to type- rather than handwrite - response likely greatly improved efficiency. And moreover typing probably reduced the amount of time each party had to spend deciphering bad handwriting. This is actually a rather major sticking point: as a member of my Crisis staff Ethan O'Malley points out "[bad-handwriting] probably took up a half of our time with some delegates".

There of course are some downsides to this system, both dynamic-wise and logistically. Right off the bad however, one must consider the maturity of your delegates - there will be some who cannot resist the temptation of using their laptop to play video-games or surf the web. I personally believe the professionalism/quality of the delegates that attend AMUN are too varied to trust them with laptops, however this may change. And that is a judgement call you have to make, particularly in devise a system to enforce proper use of laptops.

Dynamically, this system can result in spam - particularly given how quickly delegates may be able to write their crisis notes. In particular, this format encourages short, quick personal directives on the part of the delegates. It also amplifies a certain pressure for delegates to pay more attention on writing notes than paying attention to the speakers/directives on the floor, which can damage the quality of debate. Delegates, who can communicate in almost real time now that notes are immediately delivered, may spend a much larger portion of their attention directly communicating with one another and neglect their efforts to publically speak. This comes back to the concept of Debate vs Maneuvering - what do you value in your delegates? I feel electronic delivery system favors those who are good at maneuvering, at the expense of those who can debate.

An Internal Conversation Between Myself and My Double-Delegate using Slack
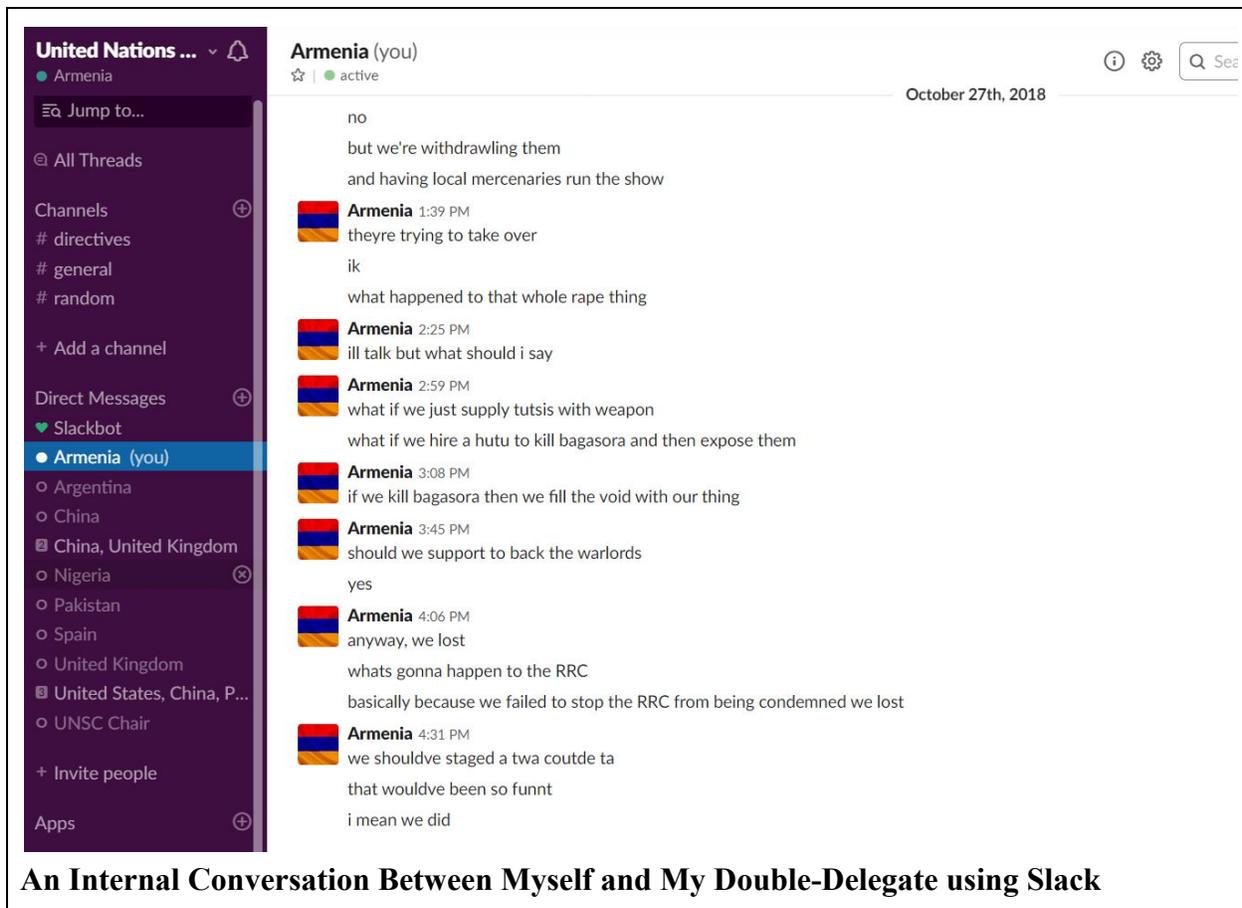
We also reach logistical challenges with regards to having laptops. AMUN, at least as of

AMUN XX is not a laptop conference. If you wish to have a laptop committee, you will have to

negotiate with the Sec-Gen and the teach advisors. You will also have to communicate directly to

your delegates that they must bring a laptop, and of course there will probably be a delegate that

simply forgets despite all your warnings. If you are ambitious, you can ask to borrow a school

laptop cart, so all delegates are guaranteed a laptop - however consider that it will take time to

set up and require more hurdles. Also, also a common communication application will be needed

- if you choose slack as the HoMMUNC team did, you will need to find a way to ensure all

delegates have slack during conference. Or, as the CD took the time to do, create accounts for

each delegate for use during conference. And as said CD mentioned quite openly, it required a lot of emails to set up.

In the end, I made the call that an electronic delivery method for notes was not practical for my committee at AMUN. I wanted the focus of committee to be more about debate and compromise between the fractious warlords, communists, and government officials of 1937 China, rather than mostly backroom. Moreover, the fact that AMUN is not a laptop conference made logistics a burden should I have chosen to take this method, and the benefits it may have conveyed were not worth it to me. My planned staff was large (ten staffers expected along with myself, an assistant CD, and two chairs) and, therefore, the advantages that using the electronic delivery system would not be as significant as it would if I only had four people total. However, things of course change and it may be right for you.

The Crisis Nucleus:

All the crisis simulations I have attended have included a Crisis Nucleus - a place where crisis note processing and decision making is made. In the past I would simply refer to this as the "Crisis Room", however recent simulations I have had the pleasure of participating have introduced me to new perspectives on how this "Nucleus" may appear. Thus, I feel compelled to include a much larger section regarding the physical accommodations for your crisis nucleus.

The Crisis Room/Center:

The default system in my experience when it comes to creating a crisis is that of a crisis room. In BCA, thanks to the goodwill our club has generated with the teachers as well as AMUN's visibility among the staff, many teachers are willing to allow the use of their rooms for

our committees. As a consequence, every crisis in my time at BCA have been allotted a seperate room for the Crisis team to make decisions, change into props, and process notes.

This approach is just about standard in my experience (and pretty much required for JCCs) because it allows the team to have the privacy to make decisions and plan out crisis arcs without the delegates being aware. This become especially important when it comes to awards, as it is always wise to not alert the delegates of when awards have been decided. Having a seperate crisis room also allows for one to have more staffers in general, as fewer space in the committee room needs to be taken up by staff. This can be especially important at AMUN because most rooms that are given for Crisis are on the smaller-medium size and it might not be feasible to have seats and tables for a larger staff. Finally, it is important to remember that Crisis Rooms are often loud - and having a In-Room Crisis Center would not be pertinent.

However, there are disadvantages to this approach, which make up the advantages of the In-Room (Shared) Crisis Center which I will discuss next. I will say however, to inspect your Crisis Room before conference and make sure there is an available printer and electric outlets for you to use during your crisis.

In-Room (Shared) Crisis Center:

I have seen In-Room Crisis Centers twice this year, first at HoMMUNC and second at YMUNC. While initially I looked down upon them, after being a delegate in committees such as these I realize they do have uses and some crises are better off using this method. Having the Crisis Center share the room with committee (with the Crisis Director sometimes serving as a co-chair/moderator when the situation allows) makes for a much more compact and effective crisis team.

The advantages of this system is the closeness of the Crisis Director to the committee-room itself. In the traditional Crisis Room system, it can be difficult for the Crisis Director to have a feel for the pulse of the room; crisis updates can come at inopportune times and disrupt heated debates, it is difficult to tell if some notes will hinder or advance committee, and it becomes much more difficult to understand what the intentions of delegates are. Having the Crisis director working directly in the Crisis Room circumvents this problem, and allows for him/her to get a better feel of what's going on and make decisions accordingly.

The disadvantages of this system are the Crisis Room center's strengths - privacy in decision making, difficulty in communicating between Crisis Center staff, etc. These disadvantages are mitigated in a smaller staff, especially with one crisis director responding to all crisis notes/directives. In those cases, there is much less need for communication and the crisis director reaps the rewards for being in the same room as committee. It is also complemented well with either an electronic delivery system or a two-notepad system, as mentioned previously, since both are effectively intertwined with small-staff strategies.

For my purposes this approach was unused because of the size of my staff and my decision to use a rather traditional model of running a crisis room. However it is a very valid and probably effective strategy to work around a shortage of staff and still deliver an effective crisis.

Meeting Spaces:

Briefly it may be worth discussing having an dedicated area for out-of-committee meetings between delegates and other delegates or delegates and characters played by the crisis team. These meetings become particulary of importance in JCCs, where members from both

rooms may seek to meet with one another. What is certain is that one never has delegates meet in the crisis room - should you be operating with a crisis room structure, it is expected for the most part that you'd like to keep operations away from the prying eyes of the delegates.

Hallways:

For the most part, crisis usually has these private meetings occur in hallways. Hallways are an easy place to allow delegates to meet with supervision, especially since you do not need to secure them before committee. On the other hand, hallways have a tendency to echo and feel slightly less private. Nonetheless, by default you always have the hallways as an option for meetings with delegates.

A Meeting Room:

If you are quick and do a good job planning before the day of conference, you might be able to secure another teacher's room for your crisis. In my case, I went to Mr. Alschen and asked him if he would be willing to allow me to use his room after school for AMUN (after he was done with his elective). By securing permission, I was able to have bigger private meetings between delegates (in fact, a parallel committee at one point), which served me well in my committee, which was larger and deliberately disharmonious. I do not have much to say as to whether or not an additional room is needed, but it is something you should consider.

Presenting Crisis Updates:

As part of the experience of running a crisis, you will be expected to present Crisis Updates to the entire committee room. Said crisis updates are expected to propel forward debate,

and also alert delegates of the actions other delegates have undertaken in committee. What you decided to present depends on you and your opinions on what deserves to be a crisis update - I personally believe that all information that would be reasonably detected in real-life by other delegates should be announced (if the Ministry of Education is handing out pamphlets en masse, please let everyone know about that), but this section is dedicated to physical means of conveying that information.

<u>Verbal Reading:</u>

The most basic (but not necessarily least effective) way of conveying information is to simply create a list of events that occurred in your simulation (perhaps on a notepad) and read it out to the delegates. You can fill in any details you would like as you go and answer any questions the delegates may have for the update. This works surprisingly well, and allows you to announce many different smaller updates in quick succession that may impact the room. Announcing peoples' smaller arcs also can make delegates working with the backroom feel validated and also helps keep the room informed of other delegates' actions.

However, verbally reading a list of events does have the short-fall: lacking a visual aspect of your presentation. This can make following along a bit harder, especially if you are dealing with more abstract concepts that are difficult to visualize. In addition, using this method for larger updates (the primary crisis update) can feel underwhelming, so it would be advisable to use a different method for the crisis update you'd like to stress.

Acting It Out:

One of the staple means of delivering a crisis update is by acting it out with your staff. This requires you and your staff to be a bit creative and to have some degree of courage, but these types of updates are some of the most fun parts of crisis - both for the staff and for the delegates. I wouldn't worry about your acting skills - very poorly acted scenes are still rather hilarious, especially if it is one of the more reserved staffers trying to be emotional.

The only real drawbacks of acting something out is it does require people (though if you are short on staff, you can likely request the Ops team to come help) and also requires coordination beforehand. Also, props are particularly useful in this case - since this is AMUN, try having at least a sword in case you need to do an execution or too.

Videos and Maps:

Videos are another way of conveying information to the room. Depending on your skills with video-editing software, they can range from videos you took from your cell phone to a mixture of clips from online (as you can see, I have no familiarity with videos at all). You may also try to find youtube videos that may be able to illustrate the event you are trying to announce - you can use a video of a Tsunami and claim it was the one that affected your crisis. How much of this you use depends on you and what you are willing/able to do.

Another thing you can try is making maps using MS paint (or other editing software). This is especially pertinent in war committees, and some skill (by either yourself or a staffer) in photo editing is arguably essential in those committees. There are a few methods of making a map.

One method that I was taught at YMUN was how to mark a region using google maps.
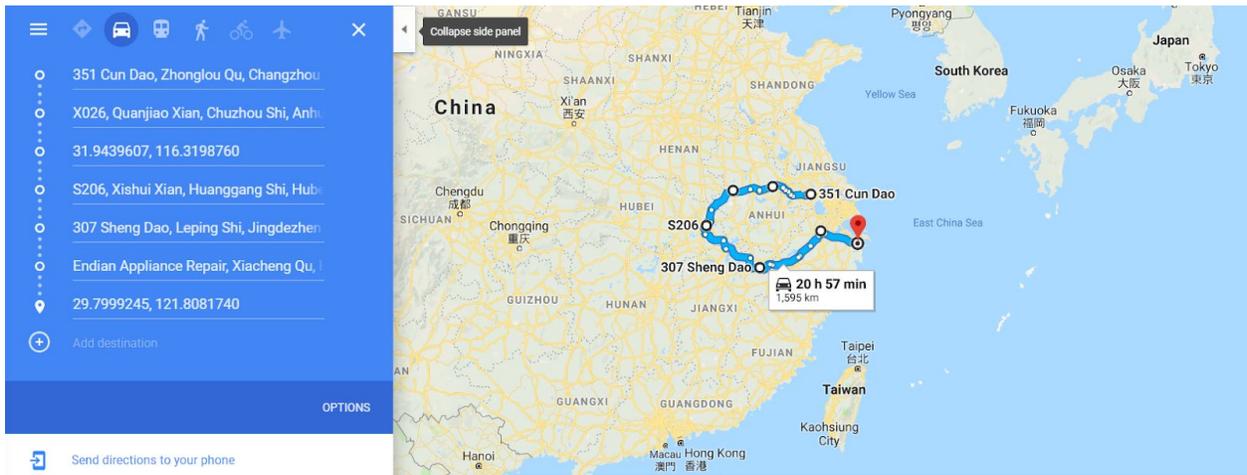
By creating a route, you can help make a region you'd like your delegates to look at. I believe the Calculus math final uses a method like this to design your route that you need to calculate the distance on, and might be helpful to look at.

MS paint is another method in which you can create maps. For my committee, I had to illustrate many warlord states within China and the relative control of each region, so I took a base map of China from online first. Then began drawing in each warlord "clique" using a historical map as reference.

Historic Map That I Based My Borders Off Of

Modified Map of China: Dark Lines Are My Borders

Next, I filled in the colors of each faction into the states they controlled and proceeded to label everything to make my map. The end result was close to this map below (a saving error overrode my original 1937 map.

It is worth noting however that making maps and editing them take a rather decent amount of time, and as a CD it might be better for you to train a staffer to make and edit map rather than doing it yourself. I missed dinner making an updated map, as I had failed to delegate the responsibility to someone else.

Also make sure to save your maps a lot if you are working with MS paint - you do not want to make the errors I frequently made with overriding old maps saves, losing them forever.

Newspapers:

A frequent tool used by Crisis is the newspaper. Newspapers work by giving both visual and written information for your delegates and combines photographs, drawings and text together. I heavily depended on newspapers as my primary source of crisis updates, without considering the downsides of it - which severely hampered my ability to deliver crisis updates in a timely fashion.

There are a few ways to create newspapers. One popular way in crisis set in modern times is to go to an actual newspaper site and then edit the contents using inspect element and playing around with the text.

You need some degree of familiarity with how to inspect element and change the text, but it isn't too hard once you get familiar with it.

After you are done, just screenshot it and you are ready to present.

Of course, there is the possibility of creating your own newspaper using google slides (the google Powerpoint expy). A year prior I had developed a large newspaper-sized google slides newspaper, which theoretically would have allowed me to present the main crisis update and also side stories. My pride in this development was tremendous, which ultimately blinded me to its flaws - namely that creating sufficient articles in a reasonable amount of time was difficult and it made the pace of crisis updates clunky.

The Nanjing Times:
The News of a Free Republic

Edition II   Friday, July 30th, 1937

VIOLENCE AT MARCO POLO BRIDGE
A Breaking Point for Sino-Japanese relations?

The Marco Polo Bridge: Soldiers and officers hovering across the Lugou bridge as violence escalates in Northern China.

Mutiny in Tongzhou

Islamic Rebellion in Xinjiang?

KUNG INDUSTRIES RAILROAD EXPANSION

THREE NEW SCHOOLS

COMMUN. OPS IN HUNAN

Field testing in mini-Crisis simulations showed early signs that even a 2-person newspaper writing team would struggle to keep up with the pace of updates, and I should have known that just adding another person would not have solved the problem of pacing. As my head newspaper writer Ethan O'malley would note is that the pacing was erratic, in his words: "the main problem was inconsistency: it would range from no updates and a lot of downtimes to 5

updates and we need to present it in 10 minutes...it might be better to allow people to switch

between positions depending on workload."

I would recommend in retrospect to only do one main article at a time and leave the

side-articles to verbal readings. I know that at Seton Hall MUNC, the crisis team managed to pull

off a large newspaper rather well and in a timely manner, but that was because text-wise they

didn't spend much time on the side articles, rather they verbally explained each side one.

I feel there is a balance that must be reached, but, given my circumstances, I will never

see it. Hopefully you will, however.

Twitter Updates:

Some Crisis Committees use twitter updates for minor crisis updates. These can be

particularly useful, as they are short by their very nature, and don't even require a Crisis Director

to travel between rooms. One can send pictures or text to the committee room, and they can be

quickly viewed and then discussed.

Twitter updates were used to great effect according to Nicole Gerzon during the Yemen

JCC of AMUN XIX, indicating that they can be efficiently and practically applied at Model UN.

Apparently, they are particularly useful for smaller, delegate-drive updates which wouldn't merit

a full crisis update. Assuring your delegates that their notes are being read by using smaller

update methods such as this feels rather nice on the delegate end.

However, there are some push-back against the use of twitter. As Maya Schonberg notes:

At WAMUNC XXI they had twitter and it was really hard to keep track of updates. And

if the chair wants to show updates they have to keep clicking "show new tweets", which

they frequently forgot to do. And it was a big committee which made it difficult for a short person, such as me, in the back to keep track of everything. Twitter would be effective if each individual delegate has independent access to twitter, or if it's a smaller committee, or there is a chair constantly checking it. I feel it requires too much attention and too much energy put into it to be effective.

[Schonberg, M. (2019, April 8) Personal Interview]

Having never quite interacted with this form of update, I do not wish to make any personal comments about the matter. However, if I was to speculate based off the opinions expressed by my peers - twitter updates should not be the means of giving updates for the more important news, but they may have a role for smaller arcs.

Staffing Arrangements

I had some trouble writing this particular section, because it is very difficult to look at staffing plans in a vacuum. Originally I had decided to split it into sections of polarity, departmentalization and motivation levels, but in my opinion they are too intertwined to look at systems as components. In summary, your crisis should have different number of "poles" in terms of who is able to make key decisions in your committee - either unipolar (one decision maker) or multipolar (several decision makers) - depending on your view of the centralization/autonomy debate. Moreover, you will need to create several jobs for your staffers to accomodate all key parts of the information pathway based off your beliefs of consolidation vs

separation. Instead of effectively repeating the section of Concept 1 and 2 from Section IV, I will present several staffing models from this year and their crisis director's comments on them.

<u>The Lin Plan: A Grand Staffing Plan</u>

My so called "Grand Staffing Plan" (because being pompous is fun, also Grand Battle Plan is my favorite doctrine in HOI4) was based of a uni-polar, semi-centralized premise, with three separate departments within my staff. In addition to the jobs of Crisis Director, Chair, and Assistant Crisis Director - I had a system of Analysts, Page(s) and Writers.

The Page(s) would collect notes from the committee room and sort them by delegates before handing them to the corresponding analyst (each analyst was assigned a few delegates to process).

Analysts would read each crisis note and then summon the Crisis Director. They would then give a brief summary of the note, any other contextual information, and a proposal of how they would like to respond. The Crisis Director would then approve/disapprove the suggestion and give a skeleton summary of how to respond. The analyst then writes a response to the note and fills in the blanks of the summary as needed. The note is then given to a page to respond.

The Crisis director then goes to the Writing Team, which was to be led by the Assistant Crisis Director. The writing team was to create a newspaper response for each crisis update, which would include all major events triggered by delegates and the backroom. All Committee-wide directives would be personally read and processed by the Crisis Director in this system.

This structure was built for a larger, relatively inexperienced team handling a relatively large (for a crisis) room of novice delegates. The core of the crisis team was an experienced

crisis delegate with little Crisis Directing experience, and three with non-crisis MUN experience. Supporting this core was a large staff of friends with no background in MUN, but eager to help out because of personal loyalty (rather than loyalty to MUN).

In centralizing the structure to heavily involve the Crisis Director in almost every step of the process, this system helped leverage the experience of said Crisis Director to the maximum advantage. The chairs were experienced committee delegates, which meant that their lack of Crisis experience would be largely hidden. At the same time, having more simple, clear-cut jobs allowed for a team of novices to quickly specialize and adapt to their tasks, which made for better processing in the long run and took full advantage of the large team.

It was essential, since I was working with my close friends, to make it clear that I was in charge of the operation and that there would be limits on how silly we could be on the day of committee. I succeeded in doing so by stressing how important this conference is to me and also promising to give them relatively decent autonomy when it came to answering notes.

This system had a very fatal flaw, and that was the centrality of the Crisis Director. As mentioned earlier, the moment I stepped out of the room for a meeting this ground to a halt. What's worse, since I had failed to alert my team of my greater vision of where our crisis was to go, this problem dramatically worsened the more complicated the crisis simulation became.

The plan became more modified by day two. In the interest of increasing the autonomy of my crisis staff and also increasing efficiency, I tried to adjust the structure of my crisis team. When delegates requested out-of-room meetings, I also permitted my staff to run said meetings without my supervision, trusting them to be able to manage themselves so I can remain in the

crisis room. This allowed me to remain at headquarters and continue to coordinate responses to crisis notes.

This efficiency was also improved by allowing my staff to make most decisions on their response to personal directives, with minor notes being responded to with a brief summary to the entire room (including other analysts) and a quick nod by myself. This part was most important - the analyst team began to communicate with one another, answering some as a team which improved the understanding of all the arcs going on in the room. While major decisions and crisis updates were handled by myself, integrating story lines was self-delegated. In addition, my assistant crisis director began to take on the responsibility to processing all troop-movement related notes, which allowed for the rest of the staff to focus solely on ensuring that person directives were handled well.

A major change with regards to the infrastructure of debate was the "rival government" established by some members of committee. A civil war effectively began between KMT loyalists and collaborators of the Japanese, which broke off a sizable portion of committee to the spare room. Originally, it was planned that this second room be in a perpetual unmoderated caucus, however thanks to a member of secretariat volunteering to help chair and the stepping up of one of my staffers to be a moderator, committee fell into a JCC format for a short duration. This created a logistical challenge, as notes had to be delivered from two rooms and processed, but greater teamwork on the part of my staff made up for this challenge.

The Surets Plan: The Tight Pyramid

The organization structure of Michelle Suret's JCC team was based around 3 Crisis Directors - herself as the head as well as two other very experienced and dedicated members of

the BCA MUN team. In her words, this team worked as a very "nice closed circuit", with Michelle making all the overarching executive decisions and individual notes were responded to by their corresponding crisis director in their joint crisis room. Each crisis director was able to work self-sufficiently and effectively - personally responding to each note.

To help them organize and communicate with one another at the integration step, a board was set up to all them to record a list of allies for each side of war and what resources they had at hand. To help record the individual actions of committee, an excel sheet was maintained to view crisis arcs. The few staffers in the back-room were primarily used for crisis updates and helping act out events.

The circumstances that led them to adopt this style of crisis management was the low numbers of staffers - a large number of her friend group were already tapped to help out at other parts of AMUN or serve as chairs for the JCC. Furthermore, turnover (mentioned in other sections) meant that a relatively small staff ended up serving the day of AMUN, and few were able to stay both days. On the other hand, she had a relatively well trained staff of Crisis Directors, which she successfully leveraged using this multi-polar, centralized system.

As for weaknesses they identified in their system - it would be appear that the three grew tired at some point during committee. In one description, they grew "uh, a bit hysterical" a few hours in and organized a "horcrux hunt" for the death eaters to slow them down. Another weakness they shared was the "introduction to crisis" component. Apparently, one JCC room had an adequate explanation of how crisis worked, and the other did not - despite assurances by the chair that they had. Unfortunately, this led to complaints, and dramatically weakened one side of the JCC. As for she would organize a hypothetical future crisis team, Michelle suggested:

I would definitely say that more experienced delegates should be in the backroom.

Preferably people with experience as chairs. Staffers should be in the backroom with little

experience. One staffer should be assigned per room to carry notes back and forth. Two

or more staffers in the back to support the back, and two to three to act out things. And

you can always switch things around. Most notes would be processed and responded to

by the crisis directors.

[Surets, M. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

The Randazzo Plan: The Great Tree

Ciro Randazzo's experience in crisis had led to his developing a centralized system for

crisis that retains distinct jobs between Crisis Directors and the USG. His two years of

experience as a Crisis Director in two seperate JCCs prior to his ascension as Secretary General

of AMUN XX is tremendously insightful and led him to advise the following model for a

hypothetical 3-room JCC:

I do big tree. So we have the USG overseeing. A crisis director for each room. And under

them one or two assistants each. And those assistants will be talking to each other a lot.

The USG is going to be overseeing pretty much everything. Especially the major crisis

arc, the major updates that's gonna be the US. The crisis directors are gonna be in charge

of mainly responding to notes. They can do that independently within their little sub

team, as long as it's nothing really major or if it's not really iffy. In a case like that they

should consult the USG. In case of the assistants, they'll be running around the room and getting them to places, you want them to talk to each other so each committee knows where each other are going. And that's another thing about JCCs you want to make sure they're all going around the same places.

<div align="right">[Randazzo, C. (2019, April 4) Personal Interview]</div>

This hypothetical model requires a smaller team (relative to the number of rooms served) but also a rather experienced and dedicated one. Crisis Directors for this plan would be better off selected from dedicated crisis staff, from the regular MUN team as opposed to the less trained people from our school. Ciro notes this need earlier in his interview when he discusses what a model USG should look like:

They know what they are doing. They know the topic. They're organized. They've done crisis before. And I would say that they were actually involved in the process throughout. Because if your Crisis Directors does not have guidance from their USG, especially in a JCC, they'll go off in their own direction and their JCC will not converge as often. And don't be static - you can tell when the CDs are forcing arcs, but also don't let it completely get away from you. It's a balance between realism, what you want to happen, and what the delegates. Not having a centralized figure is tough. You need someone who is committed, who knows what is going on. Part of the problem last year is none of us really liked our topic but we were told we had to do something about the middle east.

<div align="right">[Randazzo, C. (2019, April 4) Personal Interview]</div>

In my opinion, Ciro's hypothetical model might work quite well for a JCC with the right type of staff. Similar to Michelle's plan, it helps leverage the most out of the experience of the Crisis Directors, and with a good USG and CDs it can make 3-way JCCs work well. However, as Ciro warns, a less experienced USG for such a centralized system might very well fail.

The Barnea Plan: A "Well Oiled Machine"

Ariel Barnea, an experienced Crisis delegate, devised a strategy for organizing his Ad-Hoc Crisis this year. Having been transferred from the Harry Potter Crisis to take over the UNSC committee and co-lead it with Bertina Kudrin (an experienced Specialized Committee delegate) early in the 2018 school year, Ariel decided due to the lack of time to prepare that it would be transformed into an Ad-Hoc committee. Bertina, despite working diligently on creating a topic guide and preparing for committee, would unfortunately not be able to attend AMUN itself due to scheduling conflicts. This left Ariel to make the majority of executive decisions regarding structuring his committee. He also faced similar problems as Michelle and I when it came to his resources at hand, in his words:

> Most of my team had no experience in crisis except for me. I was the only one who had ever been in a crisis before. In fact most of my staff have never done mun before. So pretty much the first half of the first day it was me showing my staffers what was essential and what wasn't

[Barnea, A. (2019, April 12) Personal Interview]

As he describes, his team was largely inexperienced when it came to both Crisis and in some cases Model UN in general, which means his planning would have to work around it. As a result, he also developed a rather centralized organization plan based around the Crisis Director, which would help maximize his ability as a director and take full advantage of his staffers while nullifying their weaknesses. His plan looked like this:

The first day we have 5-6 staffers the second day we have 7. I had one staffer serving as moderator and also note collector, and the rest working on crisis notes. Essentially we structured our notes into 3 categories. Essential, non-essential and fun. The fun notes I had my staffers reply to however they want. The essential went to me, I would figure out how I wanted to respond and I would have someone else reply; I rarely did any writing...By the end of the second day they got the hang of it and we became a well oiled machine. They could verbally tell me quickly what was going on and I could make decisions quickly as a result.

[Barnea, A. (2019, April 12) Personal Interview]

Similar to Michelle and I, his crisis team had a relatively heavy focus on the Crisis director to make executive decisions. This makes sense of course, as the qualities and size of our staff were relatively similar. Doctrine-wise, some autonomy was given to the staff with regards to "nonessential" and "fun" notes, which freed up Crisis Director Barnea to focus on the bigger picture. Jobs were relatively consolidated, with everyone working to sort notes and respond to them individually rather than having specialized teams. The only exception was that of the page,

but over the days as he would describe there would be no dedicated page but rather 2-3 people running back and forth. Ariel described some weaknesses that would arise from his strategy:

I would say that since most of them have never been delegates, slight issue is they would try saying something and it wasn't correct. Sometimes with non-essentials they put them as essentials. For awards I was the only one who knew what to look for which is problematic. They often believed frequently sending in notes was a hallmark of a good candidate, and didn't know how to look at the quality of the notes. It was also hard to keep everything organized. We forgot what some people did and sometimes it wasn't always continuous. Eventually when they understood what to do, it was 2-3 people going back and forth. And sometimes I could let them be autonomous and go visit committee

[Barnea, A. (2019, April 12) Personal Interview]

As you can tell, Ariel's presence was essential to the continued success of his committee. Being the only experienced MUN Crisis delegate meant that it was up to him to train his staffers and keep an eye on their work before committee. Ariel noted that should he ever run another crisis or advise others in how to run one, he would suggest the following:

I would try to make sure I have 7-8 staffers and chairs who know how Crisis works. They would be able to identify essential, nonessential and fun. Essential ones go to the CD. 2 people would be keeping track of what's going on, essential and non-essential. Keep track of who is sending notes and who isn't. For next time I would make sure I have good

responses and also that I would guide delegates a bit more - for my committee I had to probe delegates to get them to investigate the disease. I would also stick to 1 major arc and 2 subarcs, I think I did it pretty well but I could have done better. Crisis updates I would also try doing a bit better, second day we made it a lot better and helped make it more interactive and more fun. So really making sure it starts good from the very beginning

[Barnea, A. (2019, April 12) Personal Interview]

I believe Ariel's plan is very useful for a mid-sized team of relatively inexperienced people. It allows for the crisis director to focus on the main points, while still respond to less important notes in a quick fashion. It appears he was much better able to delegate more autonomy to his staffers with regards to what he had to see. Unlike my arrangement, which is similar in terms of number of staff and unipolar centralization, it appears that his staffers had more freedom to answer notes without his oversight. By contrast, I reviewed every response to note, at least at the beginning. This allowed me to micromanage and allow for better integration of storylines but sacrificed speed and flexibility, which benefits extensively in Ariel's consolidated plan.

Conclusion to Section V:

As you can see from this section, there are a lot of ways to structure a crisis and different modules that can be included to improve your crisis. I will stress again that there is no one way to run a crisis committee and you must take into account what resources you have on hand before

structuring your team. It is said that there are many different ways to skin a cat, and frankly and I feel that despite my best efforts I have only been able to scratch the surface at all the possible combinations.

I regret that I do not know of anyone else who can provide an interview for a more radically different crisis structure, however I hope this section has helped you in creating your own staffing plan.

Section VI: On Chairing a Crisis

I feel I should spend a little bit reflecting on how to be a good Crisis Chair, and comparing it to that of a GA one. Crisis has a unique flow to it, perhaps most fundamentally it is based around many directives rather than one or two resolutions. Blocs fluctuate constantly, forming and then dissolving based off each new topic. In addition, with fewer delegates each vote "counts" in the sense that it is difficult for a delegate to be rendered irrelevant and hide in a corner - in many cases passing or failing resolutions hinges on one or two critical votes. As such, as a chair you should refrain from focusing on balancing opportunities for blocs to speak but rather focus on balancing individuals.

Unjamming Committee:

In my experience, one of the most important tasks a Crisis Chair must perform is ensuring a balance of debate and directives. A very dangerous situation that can occur in committee is when committee becomes "jammed" - that is when committee is perpetually discussing directives. This negative cycles occurs when directives are being introduced, one-for-one-against, and voted on - all while new ones are being drafted and signed. By the time the current directive stack is voted on, a new stack has been made and then committee returns to the cycle of introducing and voting on directives.

This is corrosive because 1.) it is boring for the delegates 2.) not a lot of intense debate is occuring, even with one-for-one against 3.) delegates tend to tune out as they work on their new

directives. But thankfully there are a few ways to prevent this and allow for more moderated caucuses and unmods for effective debating.

First, one can raise the number of sponsors and signatories required to introduce a directive. This reduces the number of directives that will reach the stack. Second, one can limit the number of directives that can be on the stack at once - and stress that you would like to see more merging of directives. Another popular decision is to "look favorably upon" an unmod with the expressed purpose of merging directives and then return all directives to their sponsors to facilitate said merging. Furthermore, you may ask the committee to have a moderated caucus(s) before voting, which allows for more debate. In any case, as a chair it is your job to ensure the flow of debate continues. Naturally if you want the opposite result (say there are too few directives being presented), you would reverse course by lowering the number of sponsors and signatories. Just as committees shouldn't just be about introducing and voting on directives, neither should it be just moderated and unmoderated caucuses.

Communicating with the Crisis Director:

To help facilitate debate, a chair should also take care to alert the Crisis Directors when a crisis update would be welcome and when it would not. If committee is grinding to a halt because of the lack of updates, signal to the the backroom (if you have one) that a minor update might spice up discussion. If your crisis director is interrupting an intense debate with an irrelevant update, asking them to hold off may be a good idea.

Crisis Mechanics:

As a chair (or a Crisis Director instructing your chairs), make sure you know some of the special mechanics/procedures in crisis:

A Gentleman's Unmod:

Gentleman's unmod is a rather popular format for discussion, in which all delegates remain seated while discussing. Depending on the conference, only one may speak at a time - though how long is up to the delegates. As a chair, you may decide to enforce limits on how many speakers may speak at once, or allow delegates to decide that on their own. This format is useful on the delegates' perspective for having a prolonged period to present their arguments, while also retaining some element of moderated caucuses. When well done, it allows for faster and effective arguments and then merging/consolidation of blocs before a particular vote.

Introducing Directives and Voting:

Introducing a directive and voting on it are two separate actions, though they may be linked depending on a delegate's motion. One can motion to introduce a directive without going into voting, or they may move to introduce a directive and then have an action. Said actions may include speakers for and against or go into Q&A, etc. Of course, they may also link voting into the original motion to introduce.

Depending on how debate is going, encourage delegates to have debate before voting in some manner. Either by only introducing directives and then later motioning for a moderated caucus to discuss them or by having delegates speak for and against. Remember that if no one

speaks against (or for) it automatically passes (or fails). On the other hand, should you feel too many directives are trivial or too similar, take actions to encourage delegates to merge them together into something more comprehensive.

The Continuous Moderated Caucus

Note that after debate is opened, should all motions fail committee defaults into a moderated caucus. I personally feel this isn't the worst thing to happen - should the committee be lost on what to discuss then having speakers talk about what they'd like to discuss next is important. Make sure a speaking time is established beforehand though.

Section VII: Being a USG of Crisis

The last thoughts I wanted to write down before I wrap this paper up is what is expected of a USG of Crisis. Being a USG is a secretariat level position, and you are expected to make sure that AMUN runs smoothly. As such, it is a higher level job that simply being a Crisis Director, and you will have to take on responsibilities that is not expected of a CD. Quoting Nicole Gerzon, who has had experience managing USGs of Crisis (including yours truly):

> When you are looking at USG of crisis, you need to know that they can organize their time and can deal with other people. From a management perspective, I believe that they should be able to find their own staff and get all their materials in order. Make sure things get done on time, like the character bios and get things in on time...Training materials should be secretariat level job and coordinating preparations for crisis because Crisis does exist in its own world.
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> [Gerzon, N. (2019, April 2) Personal Interview]

In other words, first and foremost you need to ensure that the Department of Crisis runs smoothly. This means making sure communications are set up between all crisis teams, making sure everyone is working well together, and that trains are running on time. Next, you need to be able to stand up for your crisis staff and bring any problems/grievance they may have up to Secretariat. You are their representative in Secretariat, make sure Crisis is treated fairly and all

problems are resolved pleasantly and peacefully before conference. Also be able to relay decisions made by your higher ups down to your team(s) and be a good intermediary.

Finally, make sure your crisis teams have the resources they need to run. Recruit staffers, from the peripheries of your friend group if need be, and make sure each CD under you (including yourself) have enough people to run their committees. Make sure props are obtained before conference, and all rooms have enough chairs and tables.

Other than that, I wish you luck in your job at AMUN! I know you will do awesome!

Section VIII: Acknowledgements

Section IX: The Glossary

Committee-wide Directive: Crisis's counterpart to a resolution. Broadly speaking, these directives are the most likely to be responded to by the Crisis Director and must be voted on by committee in order to pass. It should only really include operative clauses.

Crisis Apparatus: The term I use to describe the overall structure of your crisis team and how it functions. This includes how information spreads and travels as well as how you organize your chain of command to ensure all tasks are carried out successfully. I do apologize for the inability to come up with a better term for this concept.

Crisis Arc: A storyline being told throughout the Crisis, either for individual delegates or the entire committee. If a delegate wishes to accomplish something major, an arc building up to it is usually the way to go.

Crisis Committee: The Crisis committee itself, as far as I will use it in this document includes the committee room itself and the delegates inside of it. A Joint Crisis Committee (JCC) is a type of Crisis where two or more Crisis Committees are joined together in one simulation (but in distinct committees). Your chairs should be in charge of the Crisis Committee itself.

Crisis Director: The person put in charge of a Crisis Apparatus/Committee. Crisis directors are meant to run a crisis room and are usually assigned to a committee - in JCCs for example there may be two Crisis Directors working under one Crisis Director (who is a USG as well).

Crisis Nucleus: A broader term than a crisis room, as some crisis committees do not have a seperate room for crisis processing. Thus, a general term for where crisis notes and directives are processed is the Crisis Nucleus.

Crisis Room: A physical, separate room where the crisis nucleus is located. At AMUN this phrase is used simply because we have enough rooms and staff to have a crisis room for each crisis team.

Crisis Stack: A term I use to describe all the directives on the floor.

Director/USG of Crisis: A Secretariat Level Position in charge of running the Crisis Organ at AMUN. Responsibilities (as far as I interpreted it) included recruiting sufficient staffers for all committees, obtaining props, representing the Organ before the rest of Secretariat, organizing communications, and ensuring all work is done before committee. I prefer the use of USG to avoid confusion with the position Crisis Director (a person may be both, but not always).

Jammed Committee: A situation in committee where there is a constant cycling between introducing, 1 for 1 against, and voting on directives - and new directives are written in the meantime. This makes committee boring im my opinion and takes away from the individual focus of each directive.

Joint Personal Directive: Joint personal directives are personal directives (see below) that have been "jointed" in the sense that it is signed by multiple delegates seeking to combine their powers together for a more "powerful" directive. These do not need to be voted on by committee. In most cases you want to encourage these notes to be fewer and special; they should be reserved for very important moves by the delegates.

Personal Directive: A Personal Directive is a Crisis note that a delegate writes to utilize their portfolio powers and help influence the world that the Crisis is trying simulate. Personal directives are usually addressed to a figure outside of committee, perhaps a secretary or a superior, and seek to accomplish an objective for a delegate, perhaps through a Crisis Arc.

Section X: Biographies:

Ciro Randazzo - Ciro is a member of AAST Class 2019 and a longtime member of MUN and skilled in GA, Specialized and Crisis. He has won many awards, including in Crisis and participated in many activities in our club. His long tenure also includes distinguished service as a leader of MUN club in 2017-2018 school year, Secretary General of JAMUN III, Crisis Director at AMUN XVIII and XIX, and finally Secretary General of AMUN XX.

Nicole Gerzon - Nicole is a member of AEDT Class 2019 and another longtime member of MUN. She is one of, if not the best crisis delegate in our school at the time I am writing this. She has been appointed Head Crisis Delegate for the 2017-2018 school year, served as Crisis Director of AMUN XIX, and finally was appointed Charge d'Affaires of AMUN XX.

Michelle Surets - Michelle is a member of AAST Class 2019 and has also been a longtime member of MUN. She was a Crisis Director for AMUN XVIII and XIX, and finished her career as a USG of Crisis for AMUN XX - running the First Wizarding War JCC.

Josh Gonzalez - Josh is a member of ABF Class 2019 and a very experienced member of JSA club, having served as its president during the 2017-2018 school year. He was a chair for UNSC during AMUN XIX and helped serve as a staffer for Harry Potter JCC at AMUN XX.

Maya Schonberg - Maya is a member of AAST Class 2022 who aspires to be a member of the Crisis Unit of our MUN team. She has had some experience as a delegate in crisis and specialized, and will be serving as an Assistant CD at JAMUN V.