

General Information  
1999 OAS--POSC 435  
Spring 1999  
Dr. Joan Serafin  
103 Old Main

Office Hours: M/W 1:30-3:00 p.m. T/R 11-12:00 p.m.  
and by appointment  
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There are certain expectations the student should be aware of early on in this class so that we may avoid anxiety and enjoy this opportunity to participate in the Model OAS. Some of the points raised here are based on common sense, courtesy, and academic integrity and I expect all students to follow these guidelines and represent Frostburg State University to the best of their ability at this international forum. The purpose of these remarks is to help you get the most out of this experience. Your grade will be determined according to three separate components: class participation/attendance (30%); Model OAS performance (20%); and written assignments (50%).

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Class will meet every week without fail (weather permitting) for the purposes of preparing you for the OAS as representatives of BARBADOS and to draft bills for consideration in model committee sessions. It is imperative that you are well versed about the country, its foreign policies, history, and recent political events because you are required to present Barbados' position on the issues, NOT your own. I cannot stress this point enough as this will help you while at the Model more ways than you can imagine.

Attendance, therefore, is MANDATORY. We will meet every week until departing for the model and then only once afterward for you to turn in the written assignment. I will not do all the talking, but rather will require each of you to present remarks on pertinent topics concerning Barbados prior to the model. You will be graded by each of your classmates on your presentation, though I will assign you a presentation grade independent of these opinions. Failure to attend sessions other than your own will also negatively affect your participation grade as you will not be turning in evaluations of your peers. So, participation in class is determined by your presentation and evaluations of your peers as well as the level of interest and awareness of issues being discussed. Several class sessions will be devoted to learning the rules of debate and parliamentary procedure since these are invaluable when you

are in model plenary sessions.

You will notice in the "Schedule of Events" that topics are set out. Each of you will prepare a lecture on the topic of your choice to be presented to the class that week. Your presentations should be around 20 minutes in length and should encourage discussion. Feel free to use visual aids and let me know a week in advance if you need photocopying of your materials. If your presentation is not until March, this does not mean that you can "skate" the whole semester. From the first week when you choose a resolution topic to work on, you should be researching the issue area of the resolution topic and thinking about ways to solve that problem. There is ample literature out there on all these topics, both resolution and presentation, and I will not accept the excuse that you could not find any information on the topic you are presenting or writing a resolution about. So, you can see, there is little time to waste in this class and you should always have some work to do. If you find yourself short of any work, it means either that you are very efficient and have all your work done or that you are in trouble. In either case, you should see me immediately.

You will also present your completed resolution to the class so that the whole delegation is aware of Barbados' position and to solicit the responses of your peers. This exercise will also help prepare you for presenting your resolution to your other committee members once at the Model.

## **MODEL OAS PARTICIPATION**

We will be at the Model OAS for six days and your attendance is required at all official functions excluding the parties, though I strongly recommend that you attend these. It is a good way to meet your colleagues from universities across the country and the hemisphere and to build coalitions for legislation in committee sessions. Socializing is an important part of politics and you are going to be a politician at the Model OAS. So, try to overcome any shyness you may have about meeting new people and do not be intimidated by the reputation of other universities. You will be very well prepared for the Model and Frostburg has a very good reputation for sending quality people such as yourselves.

I will be attending the committee sessions throughout the week in D.C. and do so to make sure you are doing your job as a representative of Barbados. It is very important that you know the positions of the Barbados government well and be ready and willing to defend them. You should behave in a professional manner at all times

and dress appropriately. It is not unusual for men to wear a jacket and tie and for women to be seen in attire demanding hose of some description. My only request is that you look your best and that sneakers be worn only for their original athletic purpose. There is one fancy dress occasion typically which occurs on the first or second night and it has been my experience that anything less than suits and prom-type dresses have made for individuals feeling less than properly attired. But, this changes yearly, so wear what you consider to be fancy dress.

## **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

You will be receiving three credits for this course and therefore, a paper will be required which sums up your experiences at the Model and allows you to present the work you did during the semester. The object of the Model is to allow you to become acquainted with Latin American politics and to draft solutions to problems in the form of resolutions considered in the committee. Getting your proposals through the committee and accepted by the model at the end of the week is the ultimate objective, though you should not feel that all else short of that is failure. What you should learn is how difficult politics and the art of compromise really is. Your paper should reflect how this was a learning experience for you both academically and personally and, as such, is not something that can be done in a day or two. I expect the papers to show substance and reflection and this will become clear to you as the semester progresses.

If you have any questions, you should ask me--that is what I get paid to do and also what I enjoy. However, do not ask me to do your work for you. By this point you should have the necessary research and critical thinking skills to retrieve and analyze information as well as writing skills to put your thoughts on paper. I will help you hone these skills and offer guidance, but you will do the work.

This is a unique learning experience and the format will challenge you to be an active participant in the learning process. Empty your mind of any preconceptions that this is going to be like any other class you have had at FSU. It is not going to be even remotely similar. But I promise you, it will be a class you will not soon forget.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

For the week we are at the Model, we will be staying at a fine hotel close to the OAS building. The rates are prearranged and offer a substantial savings. Everyone is required to stay at the hotel regardless of which relatives live in Arlington or Rockville. The approximate cost per person is roughly \$200 for the week. Each hotel

room has a kitchen with utensils. Students in the past have elected to share rooms to their maximum capacity which usually means 3-4 to a room. I do not get involved with who stays with whom, but require only that there are no co-ed rooms. You may want to have a fund raiser to help defray this cost as you still need spending money and this we will discuss in the first weeks of school.

Transportation to and from the model is provided by the department as is the \$550 registration fee which allows us to participate and parking for the van. The transportation is optional, though I do require advance notice whether you will or will not be traveling with the van. Parking is very expensive downtown, not to mention limited, in case you are thinking of taking your own vehicle. I ask that you limit yourself to one suitcase, one backpack, and one bag of groceries. Otherwise, we will all not fit in the van. It is a wise policy for each room to bring one set of electrical appliances such as hairdryers to save space. Details such as these will be discussed in greater detail as the end of March approaches.

#### A SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Week of:

1 February

Administrative and Procedural Remarks

**Lecture:** International Organization Theory

8 February

**Lecture:** The Promotion of Democracy in the Hemisphere

**General Committee Presentation:** Barbados: Recent Political and Economic Developments

15 February

**Lecture:** The Rule of Law in the Hemisphere: Human Rights and Corruption

**First Committee Presentation:** The Barbados Record on Human Rights

22 February

**Lecture:** Trade and Development in the Hemisphere

**Second Committee “A” Presentation:** The Economic Situation in Barbados

1 March **Lecture:** The Role of Women in Latin America

**Second Committee “B” Presentation:** Children in the Hemisphere

8 March **Lecture:** The Costs of Maintaining International Organizations

**Third Committee Presentation:** OAS Financing: Procedures and Constraints

15 March All committees present draft resolutions

20-28 March Spring Break

29 March Rules of Procedure--Mock Model OAS run by Mary Rosado and Damon Battaglia

**4-9 April Model OAS, Washington, D.C.**

12 April Debriefing Session

19 April Final Papers Due