

From Best Delegate

Some thoughts on assigning students:

What are your team's educational objectives? Why are they doing MUN?

This is not clearly defined for many teams, but generally advisors and their students want to learn about international issues and foreign countries while developing communication and critical thinking skills. I think that lends itself to placing students in roles where they will learn the most -- this can mean getting a student who's never traveled outside the US to represent a country they've never heard of on the other side of the world so that they can be exposed to a different culture and perspective -- or if a student is interested in or passionate about a particular topic, giving them a chance to explore it by placing them in a committee related to that topic.

But for some teams and delegates, their objectives revolve around becoming leaders in committee, being the main sponsor or author of a resolution, and putting themselves in contention for awards. A team that wants to be more competitive will place their more experienced and stronger delegates in positions where they have a big country in a committee where that country can take on a major role and have a bigger voice in the debate, or where their country can lead a group of neighboring countries.

And if a school is doing MUN as part of a class -- or if students on an MUN team are, say, studying AP Euro or Comparative Government -- then it would make sense to try aligning their assignments with their academic studies, i.e. if Nigeria is one of the countries being studied in Comp Gov., then try to get those students to represent Nigeria, or another African country where they can study related issues, e.g. the "resource curse," the effects of civil war, decolonization, and how governments try to operate amidst unstable political and economic environments.

From the conference's perspective, we typically want more experienced or stronger delegates representing major countries in a committee, because we want them to simulate their roles accurately in order to generate debate. This applies more to DISEC and UNSC because they tend to have the most divisive topics -- hence the "2nd year+ students only" rule -- a topic like "Nuclear Disarmament" won't be as interesting if major players like the US, Russia, Iran, and Israel aren't being accurately represented or if those students are not aware of the recent nuclear negotiations.

But I think the key audience for all teams at CCCMUN to cater to is new delegates, for whom their first-time MUN experience should be about learning something new and less about competing. I would think most advisors want their new delegates to have a memorable experience representing an country that's very new to them and studying a topic they've only heard about in the news.

My quick tip for advisors is to find out what countries and committees their students are most interested in and assigning them accordingly. Just like how schools are giving us their country preferences, students can also complete a form where they indicate their country/committee preference. Before every conference, everyone in my high school MUN class had to fill out a form where we indicated this on a table and submitted by a deadline, then our advisor assigned us, giving preference first by seniority (the seniors and juniors took all "good" positions first!) and then by performance history (students who did well at conferences or scored well on tests or participated most in class). We had to complete paper forms but this could probably all be done online via Google Forms.