

Thursday, Dec 01, 2016

## Model UN team wins first place at international conference

For the third time in four years, Oakland University's Model United Nations team took first place overall at the Lake Erie International Model UN Conference. More than 200 students from 12 schools competed at the conference, which took place in Huron, Ohio.

During the event, participants were judged based on how well they represented the interests of different countries on United Nations committees and organizations. Students debated numerous issues, including the crisis in Syria, the Syrian refugee crisis, promotion of clean energy and smart agriculture, limits on military spending and the first Gulf War.

Of the 19 OU students who competed at the conference, nine won individual awards.

The following students won "Best Delegate" for their performance:

- Ryan Dempsey – Ukraine, Security Council
- Adam George – New Zealand, Security Council
- Marissa Coloske – Israel, Disarmament and Security Committee
- Alex Bertges – Holy See (Vatican), Climate Change Conference

The following students received ratings of "excellent" for their performance:

- Brian Quinn – Egypt, Security Council
- Jenna Blankenship – France, Security Council
- Richard Williamson – Zaire, Historical Security Council
- Amanda Adams – Vanuatu, Climate Change Conference
- Abigail Brown – Sudan, Disarmament and Security Committee

To prepare for the conference, students spent weeks learning about the issues – developing research and presentation skills – to effectively advocate for their country's interests. Model UN is open to students of all majors and can be taken as the course PS 362.

Now in its ninth year, the Model UN team continues to add to its award haul. The team holds regular meetings and practice sessions, and those efforts have paid off, according to Paul Kubicek, faculty adviser and professor of political science.

"In my experience, the only way to learn how to perform well in Model UN is to actually do it in practice sessions, so you know what to expect at the actual conference," Dr. Kubicek said. "Our more experienced students also have helped train those new to Model UN, and we have a very cohesive and supportive team. We had many newcomers for this conference, some of whom won awards and all contributed to our team's success."

The team's next competition will be at the North American Model UN Conference in Toronto in February. Members will also staff a Southern Michigan Model UN high school conference in February, host the second OU High School Model UN Conference in March and compete at the New York University Model UN Conference in April.

For more information on OU's Model UN team, contact Dr. Kubicek at [kubicek@oakland.edu](mailto:kubicek@oakland.edu).



*OU's Model UN team was the top overall winner of the Lake Erie International Model UN Conference in Huron, Ohio.*