

Multilateral Conferences and Diplomacy

Background

Governments and increasingly other actors such as international and non-governmental organizations use multilateral conferences as a means, and sometimes the only means, to achieve important policy objectives. As the number of conferences and meetings has risen considerably over the past twenty years, the number of government officers and other stakeholders involved in conference processes has also increased significantly. While diplomats remain at the centre of diplomacy, government officials assigned to line ministries and agencies, as well as staff of intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, are increasingly finding themselves in the role of the multilateral conference delegate.

This online course will help students enhance their performance as a conference delegate, and as a result contribute to the overall efficiency and productiveness of conferences.

Learning objectives

At the end of the course, participants should be able to:

- Identify how conferences unfold;
- Name the rules of procedure and their value in advancing delegate objectives;
- Explain the importance of informal consultations;
- Use appropriate language;
- Detect and incorporate other delegations' strategies.

Content and structure

The course includes four interactive training modules, defined as follows:

- **Module 1:** Introduction to the World of Multilateral Conferences
- **Module 2:** The Formal and Informal Processes of Conferences
- **Module 3:** Negotiation and Decision-making
- **Module 4:** Preparing for an International Conference

Methodology

E-Learning: The course is internet-based, moderated by senior international experts, asynchronous, and places emphasis on online discussions and self-paced learning. The participants will be primarily responsible for their own learning over the four-week span of the course. The course will consist of the following components:

- Compulsory and optional reading material, intended to teach the basic concepts and principles of the lesson's subject-matter.
- External links to additional books, articles, documents, and websites related to the lessons.
- A glossary of terms provided as a learning tool throughout the course.
- Quizzes and case studies at the end of each module. To be eligible for the course certificate, a passing grade of 80% on both quizzes and case studies is required.
- A Community Discussion Board will be available for participants to post questions or comments visible to the instructor and other participants. This discussion board will be moderated by the course director and UNITAR.

Targeted audience

The course targets mid to senior-level government officers in ministries preparing for and/or taking part in conferences as well as staff of intergovernmental / nongovernmental organizations. It also targets entry-level and mid-career diplomats working in a multilateral setting. Private sector specialists and students whose work or studies are related to this subject are also encouraged to apply.