

1941 UNITED STATES SENATE: PEARL HARBOR GMUNC XIII



BACKGROUND GUIDE

Conference Information

GMUNC will be held in person on **October 24th** at Henry M. Gunn High School.

It's our immense pleasure to welcome all delegates to the Gunn Model United Nations Conference XIII! Before delegates start reading this background guide, please remember position papers are due on October 21st to be considered for a research award. With the final deadline on October 23rd for general awards (all awards except research awards). If you do not submit a position paper by this date by 11:59 PM PST, you will **NOT** be eligible for any committee awards. If delegates are in need of an extension for position paper deadlines, please contact the committee email below for the inquiry. For questions on position paper requirements please check out the position paper writing guide on the GMUNC website (<https://gmunc.org/conference>). In addition we will not tolerate any use of AI, if a sufficient detection of AI is found you will be disqualified from **ALL** awards and your Delegation will be made aware. Please send position papers in **PDF format** (we will not accept sharing of google docs or any other methods) and committee-specific inquiries to the committee email address uss.gmunc@gmail.com. All delegates are also required to complete contact and medical forms to participate in the conference, so please ensure that your delegation has submitted these forms.

We look forward to working and having fun with everyone on conference day!

Chair Bios

Head Chair: Rayla Chen

Greetings Delegates!

My name is Rayla and I'm incredibly excited and honored to return as head chair for this year's iteration of GMUNC. If my name rings a bell for some of you, that's because I'm the former Gunn MUN SG and DG of GMUNC XI! I am now a freshman at New York

University studying economics + politics and intend on continuing my MUN career on the collegiate circuit. As a previous delegate and staff of GMUNC, having the opportunity to collaborate and solve

global issues is something extremely valuable to me and I hope everyone will learn something new attending this amazing conference. Outside of academics and MUN, I enjoy figure skating and hiking & backpacking. I look forward to working with you all and seeing everyone soon!

Please don't hesitate to email me with any questions or concerns: tc4827@nyu.edu



Co-Chair: Aradhita Singh

Hello Delegates!

My name is Aradhita Singh and I am so excited to be a co-chair at GMUNC this year! I have been in Model UN all throughout high school and have truly enjoyed competing in and now chairing for conferences. Outside of MUN, I love to draw, read, hike, and eat. I'm excited to meet all of you!

Here is my email in case you would like to reach out: aradhitasingh15@gmail.com



Letter from Chairs:

Dear Delegates,

At this conference, you will represent a delegation within the U.S. Senate covering the consequences of Pearl Harbor. GMUNC welcomes delegates of all skill levels, and a review of standard parliamentary procedures will take place at the beginning of the committee. Remember that GMUNC is a novice conference so make sure you are contributing to the committee and collaborating with other delegates. Remember to consider your delegation's stance through plenty of research and think about potential plans you would like to discuss throughout the conference. Most importantly, we hope you have a fun and engaging experience as well!

As delegates take action in the "front room," keep in mind that crisis updates provided from the "back room" may influence the committee significantly. These updates will encourage the committee to tackle pressing issues in a timely manner and acknowledge how any action taken in committee can affect the problems that may occur.

We hope that all delegates will enjoy the conference and get a deeper knowledge on World War II. Delegates must be prepared to compromise and face challenging discussions in these unprecedented and urgent times. In respect of the committee set as the US Senate, we will be following a unique set of voting procedures that will be addressed in the beginning of the conference.

We hope everyone can have a good time at the conference and are open to any questions you may have. If you have questions regarding how to write your position paper, conference information or any general questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at uss.gmunc@gmail.com.

Background

This committee is set after the **Pearl Harbor** attack by the Japanese when the U.S. officially entered the war on December 8th, 1941.

After the U.S. 's intervention in WWI, which the majority of Americans viewed as a mistake, America sought a policy of nonintervention. Thus, **President Roosevelt** established the Good Neighbor policy which ended American interventionism for that time. In fact, Congress passed the **Neutrality Act** that maintained America's isolationism. Meanwhile, Germany invaded most of Europe, and Japan conquered many of the European territories in Asia. During this time, the unemployment rate was 9.9 percent. Despite Japan's military strength, it was suffering from the embargo on oil imports to Japan imposed by America. Its desire to become a global power and the oil shortage prompted Japan to attack the U.S. In fact, Japanese Americans and religious leaders were arrested without evidence hours after the attack. By then, the public sentiment had turned against Japan and the U.S. was ready to join the war.

Historical Context

World War II was caused by the instability of Europe after WWI. The **Treaty of Versailles**, which required Germany to pay a compensation of 132 billion gold marks (or 33 billion USD), resulted in the unrest of the German public and the rise of Hitler's **Nazi Party**. Due to hyperinflation, the demand of the treaty could not be met by the people. At one point, 4 billion German marks were equal to one U.S. dollar. Adding on to the **Treaty of Versailles**, there was an economic crash, the **Great Depression** in 1929, which made conditions worse. As frustration grew, **Adolf Hitler** with the support of the Nazi Party gained military and political power. Hitler exerted political influence in Germany, eventually culminating in various atrocities

against Jews, whom he viewed as “trying to take over the country.”

World War II began when Nazi Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. On September 17, Poland fell to the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union and Germany divided control of Poland through the **Non-Aggression Pact**. On September 27, 1940, the **Axis Powers**, an alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan, was formed. The pact assured mutual assistance in case of a sudden attack by another country.

Germany and the Soviet Union started to invade other parts of Europe. On June 10, Italy declared war against France and Britain. Germany had invaded and conquered France by 1940. By then, Britain was the one of the few countries left fighting against the expansion of Nazi Germany.

On November 5, 1940, **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** was elected for a third term. The instability of the situation allowed him to be elected a third time. He was the only president who served more than two terms.

On June 22, 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union in a strike that would come to be known as **Operation Barbarossa**. On the other side of the globe, by 1941, Japan had invaded China to expand its territory under **Prime Minister Hideki Tojo** and seized control over European colonial territories in Asia.

The **Hull Note** was the official **Outline of Proposed Basis for Agreement** Between the United States and Japan. This was the final proposal that was delivered to the Emperor of Japan, **Emperor Hirohito**, before its attack on Pearl Harbor. To Japan, this was an ultimatum: they felt their only course of action was a full-on war with the United States.

On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese fighter planes. Naval ships suddenly exploded and within 2 hours, 21 of them sank. 188 U.S. planes were destroyed. Pearl

Harbor resulted in 2,403 American deaths. The U.S. was not prepared for Japan's attack because of Japan's failure to declare war beforehand, a formal act outlined in the **United Nations Charter** which most countries follow. Instead, two hours after the attack, Japan declared war on the U.S. and United Kingdom.

Japan attacked the U.S. due to its oil shortage which was caused by U.S. economic sanctions on Japan and its desire to become a global power. Before this, the U.S. had been following an isolationist policy as a result of American sentiment post-WWI.



Roosevelt requesting a declaration of war on December 8, 1941

Past Senate action

In the 1930s, several **Neutrality Acts** were passed which prohibited Americans from aiding other countries in cases of war. This was mainly due to America's involvement in WWI and the devastating effects it had on the country. Despite the prohibition, this act did allow the cash-and-carry purchase of weapons by non-belligerent countries.

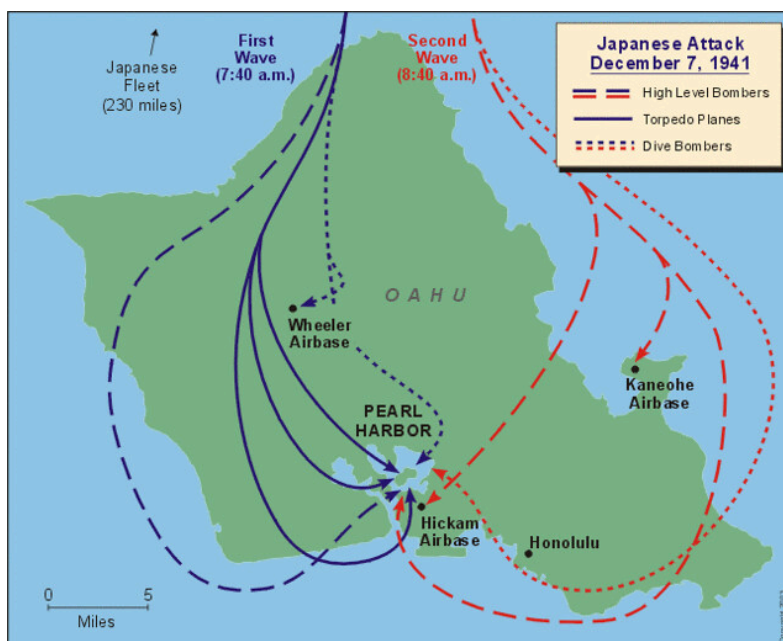
Around this time, Japan started colonizing other parts of Japan and committing war atrocities. In an attempt to stop the spread of Japan's military power, an embargo against Japan

passed in the House in 1932. There were senators who wanted to pass other embargos, but there was strong opposition to them.

By 1940, Nazis had defeated numerous countries including France. At this point, Great Britain was in desperate need of support. However, the **Neutrality Acts** banned the U.S. from aiding them. On June 5, 1940, the Senate passed **bill S4025** which allowed the Department of Defense to sell outdated weapons to belligerent countries. This allowed the Roosevelt Administration to send vessels to the U.K.

On July 15, the Senate voted to confirm **Frank Knox** as the Secretary of the Navy. He was sympathetic towards the British. This pushed the U.S. to be more involved in the war.

Few months after, the situation became more dire as Britain became one of the few countries aggressively fighting against the Nazis. With Britain needing more aid and becoming unable to afford additional military weapons, the **Lend- Lease Act** was passed in Congress. This allowed other Allies countries to borrow American military equipment.



Japan's strategy of attack

Current Situation

Please keep in mind the following information while continuing reading through the background guide:

- Senate Majority: Democrats
- Majority leader: Alben W. Barkley
- Minority leader: Charles L. McNary

The day after the attack, on December 8th, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt requested Congress to declare war on Japan. Congress unanimously agrees to declare war on Japan considering the significant amount of damage the American Naval Facilities suffered in and around Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack has killed 2,403 U.S. personnel, including 68 civilians, and destroyed or damaged 19 U.S. Navy ships, including 8 battleships. 129 Japanese soldiers have been killed and one has been taken as a prisoner of war by the U.S military. The U.S hopes to recover immediately from the unexpected attack and retaliate against Japanese forces. However, days after Pearl Harbor was struck, they continue to be faced by continuous conflicts with Japan. Despite the damage Japan was expected to undergo, they immediately followed the Pearl Harbor assault with attacks against U.S and British bases in the Philippines, Guam, Midway Island, Wake Island, Malaya, and Hong Kong. Many of their attacks were successful and the Japanese have expanded their territories in the Pacific by continuing their threats to the U.S. Currently, tensions are growing between the U.S and Japan as the Japanese military refuses to call a ceasefire. After Japan shifted their attention to the Philippines, the U.S intervened in an attempt to defend the country. However, the aftermath cost more than 23,000 American lives and an additional 100,000 Filipino casualties. As of now, the U.S military suffers

from a shortage of soldiers and military arms due to their numerous interactions with the Japanese military. It is unknown whether Japan will stage another surprise attack on the mainland U.S.; however, the American intervention in the Philippines has aggravated the Japanese severely.

This committee is set in late December of 1941. The primary goal for the U.S Senate is to recover from the consequences of this attack. As a committee capable of influencing all aspects of the issue, it is crucial that delegates discuss the following:

Japan has left Hawaii completely, which gives the state the chance to commence the recovery and recuperation efforts. However, the **large Japanese ethnic population on the islands have been targets for discrimination and hate**. In the west coast, similar discrimination fueled by suspicions of spying have led to similar incidents. It has been reported that nearly 2000 Japanese immigrants have been detained by the FBI immediately after the attack.

Furthermore, 9.7 million people living in the **Pacific Coast are living in fear of being targeted in future foreign attacks**, especially since many know of the German bombs during the Battle of Britain, that has become ingrained in the minds of Americans. All images related to the Pearl Harbor attack are censored, and radios often include misinformation in false reports that fuel chaos and anxiety on the extent of the attack.

With rising fears of further foreign assault, **independently owned businesses and public places are severely regulated**. All public stores are closed and there is a strict curfew at 6 pm. All food sales have been suspended as well. Additionally, schools are closed and gasoline rations are in effect.

Most importantly, the **Hawaiian economy is collapsing** as their major labor force, Japanese Americans, have been held as suspects by the U.S government. It is expected that a considerable number of Japanese immigrants located in Hawaii and reaching across the Pacific Coast will be investigated thoroughly by American military personnels and held as suspects until they are proved innocent.



Islands attacked and occupied by Japan

Proposed Solutions & Goals for Committee

In the “front room,” it will be your job as the U.S Senate to enact policies that will:

1. Ensure the safety of Hawaiian residents while conserving the rights of Japanese Americans who have faced unfair discrimination.
2. Work towards combating any future Japanese attacks and well prepare to defend against foreign assault.
3. Introduce solutions for how America’s economy can recover after the Pearl Harbor attack.
4. Avoid public chaos by enacting solutions to reduce false media reports.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the U.S senate work to preserve the rights of innocent Japanese American citizens who have faced prejudices as a result of the Pearl Harbor attacks?
2. How can the committee intervene in the media to discourage falsified information from spreading across the nation while preserving the freedom of press?
3. How can the U.S senate support rebuilding of the nationwide economy by increasing jobs and opportunities and supporting small businesses?
4. How can the committee work toward strengthening the military and establishing specialized armed forces after these assaults?

List of Delegates

Majority Leader: Alben Barkley

Minority leader: Charles L. McNary

John H. Bankhead II (D)

Henry Fountain Ashurst (D)

John E. Miller (D)

Sheridan Downey (D)

Edwin Carl Johnson (D)

Francis Thomas Maloney (D)

James H. Hughes (D)

Edward Raymond Burke (D)

Patrick Anthony McCarran (D)

Dennis Wyatt Chavez (D)

James Michael Mead (D)

Josiah William Bailey (D)

D. Worth Clark (D)

Sherman Minton (D)

Peter Goelet Gerry (D)

Joseph F. Guffey (D)

Frederick Van Nuys (D)

Rush D. Holt Sr. (D)

Burton Kendall Wheeler (D)

James Edward Murray (D)

Charles Oscar Andrews (D)

Claude Denson Pepper (D)

Elmer Thomas (D)

Scott W. Lucas (D)

Hiram Warren Johnson (R)

John A. Danaher (R)

Styles Bridges (R)

Charles W. Tobey (R)

Charles W. Brooks (R)

Warren Robinson Austin (R)

Ernest Willard Gibson (R)

Wallace H. White Jr. (R)

Alexander Wiley (R)

Gerald Nye (R)

Joseph H. Ball (R)

Robert A. Taft (R)

Rufus C. Holman (R)

James J. Davis (R)

Clyde M. Reed (R)

Gerald Nye (R)

Arthur Capper (R)

Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. (R)

Joseph H. Ball (R),

Alexander Wiley (R)

Ernest W. Gibson Jr. (R)

Frederick Hale (R)

William Edgar Borah (R)

Gerald Nye (R)

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