

Boston University Academy Model United Nations Conference VI

Saturday, January 27 to Sunday, January 28, 2018

Boston University Academy

Boston, MA



HJCC: Peloponnesian War

Background Guide

Dear Delegates,

My name is Anisha Prakash and I will be your chair for the HJCC Peloponnesian War at BUAMUN this year. Ben Isakoff, a freshman at BUA, will be my vice chair for this committee. I am currently a sophomore at Boston University Academy, and this is my fifth year being a part of model UN throughout my middle and high school experience so far. This is also my fourth year participating in BUAMUN (two years as a delegate in middle school, one year as a vice chair in freshman year). I am so excited to be chairing my first joint crisis committee, and I am looking forward to see how all of you will try to solve one of the biggest conflicts between the two major powers in Ancient Greece.

When not doing model UN, I also play violin for the NEC orchestra or BUA's chamber orchestra, or playing the piano. I am a general member in student council, participate in science team, and I am also a coxswain for BUA's crew team.

In committee, we will operate under a modified version of parliamentary procedure, reverting to a permanent moderated caucus rather than a speaker's list. We will review all other procedural matters for all new delegates at the beginning of committee. If you have any questions about research, writing a policy paper, or anything else, please don't hesitate to email me (address below). I am looking forward to meeting you all at the end of January!

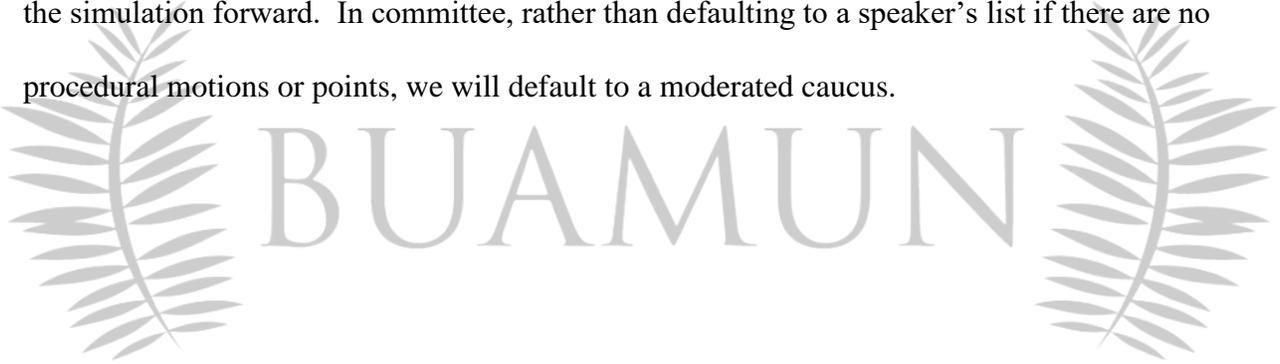
Sincerely,

Anisha Prakash

aprakash@bu.edu

Introduction to Committee

This committee will represent members of the Peloponnesian league which was lead by Sparta, during the Peloponnesian War crisis. The other committee in this crisis will be the Delian League which was led by Athens. Each delegate will receive a *portfolio* power, or a set of powers unique to them. This can also refer to an assigned person's set of skills or expertise. Delegates will be given portfolio powers at the start of committee. Each delegate will be a member of the cabinet and, although debate will consist of cooperative discussion that leads to unified decisions, individual delegates will possess these portfolio powers to independently move the simulation forward. In committee, rather than defaulting to a speaker's list if there are no procedural motions or points, we will default to a moderated caucus.



Position Paper Information

All of the BUAMUN joint crisis committees require position papers from each delegate.

Position papers are short pieces of writing indicating a delegate's stance which contribute to a chair's perspective regarding awards. A position paper should be approximately 1-2 pages, double spaced, and should include the delegate's reaction to each of the topics.

Example of header:

Delegate: Anisha Prakash

School: Boston University Academy (Your school here, not necessarily ours.)

Committee: Peloponnesian War Historical Joint Crisis

League: Peloponnesian

City State/Person: Sparta

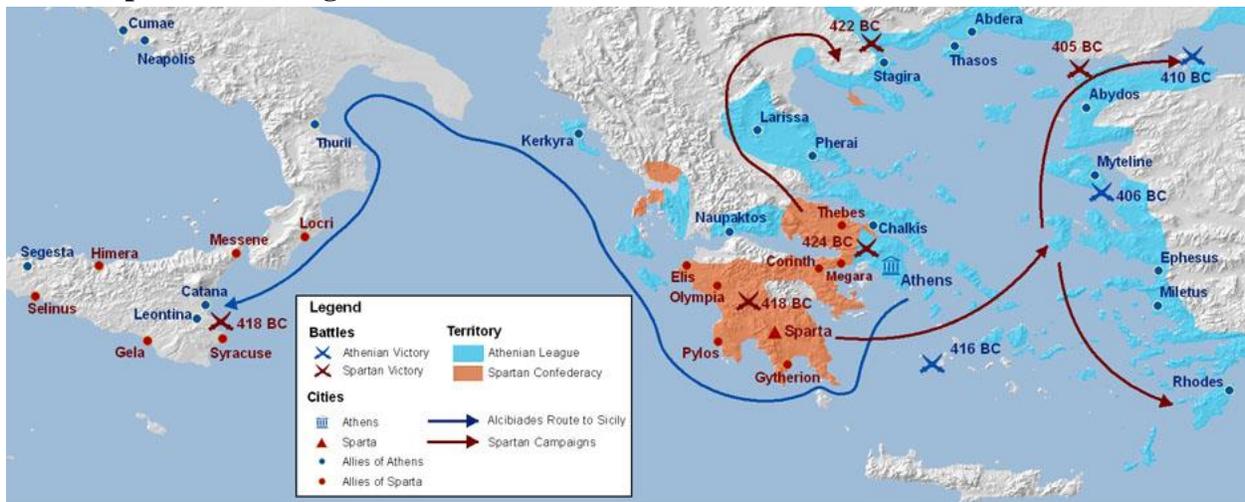
Position Summary: **The war is necessary as long as Athens keeps expanding**

But please make sure to change the header so it is appropriate to you and your committee.

There should be one position paper from each delegate touching on all three topics, with a focus on that delegate's position in the committee. Thanks!

You should conduct additional research to write this paper. See the "Suggestions for Further Research" section at the end of this guide, for helpful researching resources.

The Peloponnesian League



<http://explorethemed.com/Pelop.asp?c=1>

From the years 431 to 404 BC, almost the entire Greek world was engulfed in what modern historians call the Peloponnesian War. The two major Ancient Greek city-states, Athens and Sparta, gathered their allies and fought each other in order to settle their disagreements. This memorable war was thoroughly documented by a historian, Thucydides, who wrote a true account of the events.¹ The Delian league of city-states was led by Athens and the Peloponnesian league was led by Sparta. Ultimately, Athens surrendered to Sparta with their resources drained and their city-state in distress. After the Peloponnesian War, however, Athens rebuilt the Long Walls and once again became a significant player in the politics of the Hellenic region, while Sparta, owing to its significant population loss in the War, faded into obscurity.

Like most wars, the Peloponnesian War had a complex origin. Neither the Spartans nor the Athenians wanted to go to war. When the other members of the Peloponnesian League decided that Athens was getting too powerful, Sparta decided that they should go to war too. They gave the Athenians the ultimatum to either stop the sanctions of Megara and stop invading

¹ Ancient Greece

Potidaea, or go to war. The Athenians chose to go to war due to their repeated unwillingness to negotiate peace terms².

Athens, along with 150 other city-states, formed the Delian league in 487 BCE as a way to defend Eastern Greek cities from possible invasions from Persia following the Greek victories at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea³. Around 300 city-states including Aegina, Byzantium, Chios, Lesbos, Lindos, Naxos, Paros, Samos, Thasos, and many others across the Aegean were members of the league. Initially, members swore an oath to hold the same enemies and allies. They were also required to “donate” to the treasury in Athens which was used to build and maintain the Athenian fleet. After the major defeat of the Persian navy, many of the Delian league members thought the threat of Persia was gone, and the league was no longer necessary⁴. Despite this, Athens became increasingly more aggressive in its control of the alliance, and compelled continued tribute from member states in the form of money, ships, or materials. If city-states refused to give their resources directly to Athens, they would tear down their walls and take their ships, insisting they continue to pay the league taxes⁵. This alliance in which Athens refused to let member states return to independence would eventually be so dominated by Athens that it would evolve into the Athenian Empire.

The Peloponnesian League, formed in 550 BC, was a loose confederation of city-states led by Sparta. Although it is not clear how or why it was created, evidence suggests that they needed a system of political control over their conquered city-states⁶. It was also created in order to protect itself from a possible uprising from Sparta’s helots (semi-free agricultural laborers)

² <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/imperialism/notes/peloponnesianwar.html>

³ https://www.ancient.eu/Delian_League/

⁴ <http://www.penfield.edu/webpages/igiotto/onlinetextbook.cfm?subpage=1649849>

⁵ <http://www.penfield.edu/webpages/igiotto/onlinetextbook.cfm?subpage=1649849>

⁶ <http://www.livius.org/articles/concept/peloponnesian-league/>

and Argos, a regional rival north of the Peloponnese⁷. Unlike the Delian League, The Peloponnesian league had no binding agreement. Instead, the alliance was a loose organization of city-states each having negotiated their own terms with Sparta. The members only had to contribute militarily when required.

Since Athens' establishment of the Delian League, after the Persian War, Athens and Sparta had a lot of tension. The cities had many disputes about their control of less powerful cities, but the greater conflict was that both city-states feared each other's power.⁸ Tensions between two powerful states is natural; Sparta noticed that Athen's navy was getting more formidable and Athens noticed that Sparta's infantry was getting more powerful.⁹ The course of action that both city-states took was to gather more allies and resources to appear stronger. Leading up to the Peloponnesian War, there was a conflict between Athens and Sparta referred to as the First Peloponnesian War. It lasted for fifteen years.¹⁰ To stop the fighting, the cities negotiated an agreement in 445 BC called the Thirty Years' Treaty.¹¹ The peace, however, did not last thirty years. The peace between Athens and Sparta lasted only fifteen years, and during this 'peace' both sides continued to see each other as a threat. Their disputes continued about control over various city-states.

Athens set sanctions on Megara which angered members of the Peloponnesian League. Furthermore Athens invaded Potidaea which angered Corinth, the city state that founded it. Corinth was also angry at Sparta for their support of Corcyra against Corinth. For that reason Corinth and other members of the Peloponnesian League threatened to leave the Peloponnesian

⁷ https://www.ancient.eu/Peloponnesian_League/

⁸ Ancient Greece

⁹ Khan Academy

¹⁰ Khan Academy

¹¹ Britannica

League which meant that Sparta had to deliver an ultimatum to Athens. The ultimatum was what ultimately started the war, and told Athens that if they did not end sanctions on Megara and back out of Corinthian colonies, then Sparta would be forced to go to war. Under the urging of Pericles, who stated that “if you give up on these points you will immediately be ordered to give up something greater,” Athens decided that it was necessary to go to war (Thucydides, *On Justice Power and Human Nature*. Translated by Paul Woodruff. Page 32.).

Throughout the course of the Peloponnesian War, Athens had to face multiple set backs that weakened their nation and their army. A significant one was the Epidemic of 430-426 BC. In the year 430 BC, Athens had a victory strategy when they were hit with a horrible illness. The plague was a gruesome disease that drastically decreased Athens’ manpower. The plague started when Athens gathered every citizen from Attica and resettled them into Athens to protect them against the Spartan army (the Spartans were destroying Attic settlements). This massive population density increase accompanied by unhygienic practices provided optimal conditions for a plague. Thucydides’ description of the plague does not match any disease known to modern medicine. The death toll from this plague reached seventy-five to one hundred thousand people. The Athenian army, though exhausted and weakened, proved to be effective during the years of the epidemic. However, the Athenian leader, Pericles, died in the plague in 429 BC. Pericles’ death marked the start of Athens’ fall. After his death, the Athenian Assembly started the Sicilian campaign, ultimately resulting in a major loss of Athenian manpower and the triumph of Sparta over Athens.

After Sparta defeated Athens, they received a temporary increase in the economy. Sparta was unable to grow for long after the war because their government was not suitable for expansion. However, Thebes was able to become one of the most powerful city states in the

region. Other members grew in power, but for many Greek city states, the war proved catastrophic.

Furthermore, Corinth, in an effort to become the most powerful city state in the region, decided to again start a war with Athens. This was known as the Corinth Wars. This war in conjunction with defeated nations ends up destabilizing the nation.

Guiding Questions

1. Based on the league's economic standpoint, what are some strategies [Athens/Sparta] could take in order to win the Peloponnesian War?
2. What is [Athens/Sparta]'s driving reasons to fight [Athens/Sparta]?
3. What are way to ensure future security in both the regions



Members:

Sparta

Corinth

Kythera

Melos

Pylos

Mantineia

Ellis

Epidaurus

Boeotia

Lefkada

Ambracia.¹²

Thebes



¹² <http://www.legendsandchronicles.com/ancient-civilizations/ancient-sparta/the-peloponnesian-league/>

¹³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Peloponnesian-League>

¹⁴ <http://www.livius.org/articles/concept/peloponnesian-war/>

¹⁵ <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/imperialism/notes/peloponnesianwar.html>

¹⁶ https://www.ancient.eu/Peloponnesian_War/