

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Mahabharata Crisis Committee! Although the name may only look slightly familiar because of World History (or a bit too familiar if you come from a Hindu background), don't worry about experience on the topic. The characters in this committee will come straight from the Mahabharata, but there could be some twists in the story along the way. There is no prior knowledge necessary; everything you need to know to participate in this committee will be outlined below. The most important skill in this committee is being open-minded and creative.

First of all, let me introduce myself. I'm Adit, and I will be your chair for this Crisis Committee. Let me give you a little background on me. I'm a senior at Briar Woods High School as well as AOS, and I've been involved with MUN since 8th grade. I also do policy debate and am involved with German Club/NHS. Growing up, I loved hearing fantastical stories from my grandma, and I'm hoping to relive some of that child-like excitement with you guys at the SCIMUN conference.

The chair would like to emphasize that this crisis committee will NOT follow the exact storyline of the Mahabharata, but that committee members should follow the characteristics of the characters they are assigned.

Please feel free to let me know if you have any questions

Thank you!
Adit Arya Singh

Mahabharata Background Info

The Mahabharata is an Indian epic poem that describes the horrors and philosophy of war between two factions of the same family (the Pandavas and the Kauravas). There are 5 brothers from the Pandava family (Arjun, Yudhishtir, Bhim, Nakula, and Sahadev). They fight against 100 Kaurava brothers, the eldest being Duryodhan. Although the Kaurava brothers seem to have the upper hand, Lord Krishna himself decides to advise the Pandavas.

The two factions are fighting for a seemingly simple reason: they both want a part of a certain amount of land. Originally, the land had been split in half for the Pandavas and the Kauravas. However, the two groups of cousins played a game of Parcheesi with loaded dice until the Pandavas had lost everything. After this, the Pandavas were told to stay in exile for 13 years to get their land back. After completing this exile, they come back but are told that there were no agreed upon criteria for the Pandavas to get their land back. Duryodhan, the eldest Kaurava brother, is insistent that the only way for the Pandavas to get their land back is through war.

In the Mahabharata, this disagreement eventually led to an 18 day war that led to millions of deaths and destroyed property. The task of this crisis committee is to attempt to prevent this bloody war from ever happening.

The chair will act as Krishna, who is attempting to communicate between Rishis and Devas and the common people. The committee may choose to either collectively represent the beliefs of the Devas or the common people, but not both. The chair will then communicate these messages back and forth.

The most important rule of this committee is to pretend that everything that's going on is real. Although it's whimsical to imagine such stories taking place in real life, it's important to the functionality of the crisis committee that the members imagine these events are happening in real life.

Devas

As the Devas, the committee must try to find a way to use dharma and divine intervention to help prevent the war. Dharma is the concept of right and wrong in Indian religion, and it is important to promote those who are doing good and punish those who are committing wrong. Therefore, it is the job of the committee to assign how the dharma of certain characters will affect their karma. The karma of a character is how much good/bad they have done, and one's luck is determined by karma in Hindi mythology. The Devas can consider the good/bad deeds of common people and then see how much or how little karma they have.

Common people

As real men and women of the world, it is your job to somehow convince Duryodhan not to go to war, or to find a way to prove his guilt in fixing the game of dice. While common people are not omniscient about all matters, they can directly talk to and interact with the characters of the Mahabharata.