

Bridging Ivory Tower and Real World: My Experience at Model WTO

Unveiling the World of International Trade: An Insightful Journey

In November 2023, I stumbled upon an email from my college announcing the Model WTO event, marking my first foray into activities beyond moot court simulations in the realm of law. Little did I know that this experience would solidify my belief that every university student should venture out from the ivory tower into the bustling streets.

Embracing the Challenge: Why Model WTO?

When faced with the application process, Model WTO posed two thought-provoking questions: Why do you wish to participate in Model WTO? Why do you think you are suitable for this activity? These questions prompted deep introspection. They urged me to ponder not only my understanding of Model WTO but also what I aimed to glean from it. Was it merely to attain the honor of being the best delegate, or was it to grasp a deeper understanding of the operational rules of organizations like the WTO, or perhaps it was simply to network with diverse individuals? Simultaneously, it compelled me to evaluate myself—why should the organizers choose me from among countless applicants? It was an effective scrutiny of my abilities and aptitudes, akin to the self-assessment requisite for graduates entering the workforce: Am I suitable for this position, and what skills do I need to excel?

Navigating the Negotiation Terrain: The Model WTO Experience

The event unfolded in two parts. In the first segment, over 50 representatives were divided into 9 countries and 6 committees at the University of St. Gallen, with trade subsidies as the central theme. Negotiations were conducted based on WTO negotiation rules, requiring each representative to ensure their viewpoints aligned with their country's stance and didn't contradict those of their delegation members. This demanded adept communication and problem-solving skills as representatives engaged in negotiations with counterparts from other countries, striving for consensus or cooperation while balancing national interests. Additionally, I was fortunate to be selected as the Head Delegate of Australia, affording me dual role experiences. On one hand, as the delegate of Australia in the Service Trade Subsidies Committee, it is important for me to take into account Australia's national position when negotiating service trade subsidies with other countries. On the other hand, as the head delegate of Australia, it is crucial for me to promptly and effectively stay informed about the

negotiation progress of other members in our delegation within their respective committees. This will enable me to communicate in a timely manner with the chief representatives or chairs of other countries, ensuring smooth and successful proceedings.

From Committee Rooms to Global Arenas: A Glimpse of UN and WTO Headquarters

The second part led us to Geneva, where we toured the UN and WTO headquarters. Here, I encountered Australia's representatives to the United Nations, who exuded professionalism and enthusiasm. Their insights not only clarified Australia's trade stance but also demystified the experience of working at the WTO and UN. Witnessing their confidence and expertise in handling professional matters was truly inspiring. The culmination of the event involved receiving feedback from WTO professionals on the resolutions submitted by each committee, a truly invaluable experience. In the afternoon of the last day, we had the opportunity to attend the final academic panel where experts from WTO, IMF, and World Bank shared insights on how different international organizations are playing a role in today's increasingly complex international trade landscape. It was fascinating to learn about their perspectives on the growing complexity of global affairs and the interconnectedness of national economies.

Recommendations and Reflections: Bridging Academia and Professionalism

Reflecting on this enriching journey, I wholeheartedly recommend Model WTO to all law students aspiring to delve into international trade law or research. It offers insights beyond conventional classroom learning, bridging theory with real-world application. Preparation and an open mindset are paramount. Delve deeply into the negotiation topics, even beyond your field of expertise, and maintain receptivity to diverse perspectives. By doing so, you not only refine your viewpoints but also broaden your horizons.

Conclusion: A Stepping Stone Between Academia and Career

In conclusion, Model WTO serves as a vital bridge between academia and the professional world. It encourages a balanced perspective, practical application of legal knowledge, and interdisciplinary connections. Aspiring legal minds willing to venture beyond the ivory tower will find in Model WTO a transformative experience that fosters growth, understanding, and collaboration.

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