

MLB Lockout

Background Guide

GWCIA XXXI

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Conference Policies

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Technology Policy — Crisis & Historical/Specialized

Using technology is prohibited in GWCIA historical/specialized and crisis committees, unless a delegate has an approved accommodation. GWCIA will provide delegates with one white legal pad and a pen that they may use to write notes if they wish. Delegates are free to bring their own additional notepads, staplers, pens, Post-Its, or other supplies, as these will not be provided.

Plagiarism, Pre-Writing & AI Policy

All pre-written, plagiarized, or AI-generated content, which can include working papers, draft resolutions, directives, or crisis notes, is strictly prohibited at GWCIA. Pre-writing constitutes any language or content that was written outside of unmoderated caucuses in general assemblies and outside of when debate is formally opened in crisis committees. This means that creating content before or after committee sessions or during moderated caucuses in assemblies & specialized committees is pre-writing. Writing during USG feedback or announcements or during guest speakers equally constitutes pre-writing. All dais members and undersecretaries general are specifically instructed to monitor for pre-writing by checking typed and written materials that delegates may have prepared before the conference if potential pre-writing is suspected.
By participating in GWCIA, your delegation acknowledges that they understand this policy and the consequences if it is broken. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, verbatim or near-verbatim copying and pasting from academic sources or other websites. Any delegate found guilty of pre-writing, plagiarism, or flagrant AI usage will be immediately disqualified from any award in their committee. The GWCIA Secretariat reserves the right to search computers and laptops, notebooks and binders, USBs, and any form of electronics for Model UN specific documents in response to allegations. They additionally reserve the discretion to run any content through an AI detector. In order to report a case of substantive misconduct, please see the anonymous misconduct form on our Conduct Policies page or contact a member of the Secretariat.

Awards Policy

While GWCIA recognizes that the core value of participating in any Model UN committee is education in international affairs and the development of related skills such as productive collaboration, public speaking, and critical thinking, we also recognize the value of rewarding delegates who are exceptionally prepared and proficient in these skills. At GWCIA, we value delegates who can leverage creativity, diplomacy, substantive knowledge, and critical thinking skills to debate effectively, lead negotiations and blocs, and write comprehensive clauses. We especially look favorably towards delegates who individually develop meaningful solutions to the committee's main issues while keeping in mind the realistic diplomatic dynamics of our world, as well as those delegates who are able to advocate for their solutions and ideas to be adopted. The dais encourages delegates to lead in a manner that uplifts and respects their competitors while also introducing strong, unique solutions that consistently anchor their group's directive or working paper. On the other hand, attempts to undermine the goals of the committee without reason or acting without detailed thought of consequences are discouraged. Any rude, disrespectful, or demeaning conduct towards other delegates' ideas will not be tolerated.

Letter from the Chair & Crisis Director

Dear Delegates,

My name is Aarush Bhatt and I'm your chair for the Major League Baseball Lockout. I am currently a sophomore studying Public Policy and minoring in Economics. Besides Model UN, I enjoy playing golf, hanging out with friends, and watching movies. I began Model UN in high school and have continued to compete since then. This committee will be super fun and I cannot wait to get started. I'm excited to meet you all and have a great day full of new MUN experiences and learning moments. Do not worry if it's your first time in a committee like this or even first time competing. Model UN encourages new people to try and push themselves to get outside of their comfort zone as it creates great opportunities to improve so many skills that will be useful in the future. I made so many friends competing in MUN throughout the years and I'm sure you all will too, and will do great. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions regarding our committee. See you all soon!!

All the Best,

Aarush Bhatt
aarush.bhatt@gwmail.gwu.edu
Chair, MLB Lockout

Reminder: Delegates must CC their advisor on any email sent to the Chair or Crisis Director.

Overview of Committee Procedure

Specialized Procedure

GWCIA XXXI Specialized committees will bring together components of both GA and Crisis procedure to create a dynamic, fast-paced debate environment for delegates. Instead of writing a long-form resolution throughout the conference, delegates will write multiple shorter directives. These directives will be submitted to the dais and, if passed, alter the committee in real time, resulting in crisis updates that will drive the direction of debate. Debate will use a combination of moderated caucuses, unmoderated caucuses, and round robins to discuss crisis updates and directives, functioning similarly to a Crisis front room. Please note that Specialized committees will not utilize backroom, so delegates should not expect to send crisis notes.

Introduction to the Committee

Welcome to the United Nations Conference on the Major League Baseball (MLB) Lockout. As a delegate in this committee, you will bear the responsibility of creating a solution to the lockout that currently threatens the 2022 MLB season. Currently, the previous Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) has expired, and the MLB ownership has banned the league from operating until a new agreement is reached. The CBA contains information regarding logistics of the league, such as the duration of the playoffs, player salaries, and free-agency rules. Many of the issues covered in the CBA are disputed among the Player's Association (MLBPA) and the ownership. These disputes motivated the owners (hoping that negotiation would ensue) to lock out the players. These negotiations are the heart of this committee, and the decisions that you make will impact the seasons to come.

While representing either a member of the MLBPA or the ownership, you will strive to see your beliefs reflected in the new agreement. Will your two parties agree on edits to the CBA? Will you rewrite the entire agreement? Will you abolish Collective Bargaining Agreements in the MLB all together? Most importantly, will your solution result in the MLB season starting promptly, or will disagreement drive baseball apart? Delegates, it is your job to protect the fate of the 2022 MLB season by resolving the lockout and creating a fair environment for players and owners.

Background

First and foremost, it is important that you have a sufficient understanding of the MLB Lockout to effectively debate during committee. We have provided you with the general background of the topic; however, we highly recommend that you gather additional information on your specific character and on the lockout as a whole. The MLB Lockout began with the expiration of the CBA. Without a CBA that the MLBPA and ownership agrees on, the season cannot begin. MLB ownership took this as an opportunity to push for demands and force more negotiation to occur between the two groups. All thirty team owners voted unanimously in favor of the lockout. By beginning the lockout, the ownership commanded the situation, as the players were no longer able to make money without games being played. However, with no broadcast revenue or fan attendance at stadiums, the owners risked losing hundreds of millions of dollars if the season did not begin punctually. While the fans do not play a key role in the lockout, both sides still want to appeal to their fans and keep the love of baseball alive.

Additionally, the MLBPA and MLB ownership both have leaders inside of their groups that represent the needs of either the owners or the players. The MLBPA contains what is called an **"Executive Subcommittee."** This group of 8 MLB players deals with negotiation among the MLBPA and the ownership. While the MLBPA strives to fulfill the desires of the players, they only fight for those who are on forty-man rosters. A forty man-roster is the forty players that a given MLB team has registered on their team. The representatives of the subcommittee are elected by their fellow players, and such elections are held every two years. The current executive subcommittee consists of Francisco Lindor (New York Mets), Marcus Semien (Texas Rangers), Zack Britton (New York Yankees), James Paxton (Boston Red Sox), Jason Castro

(Houston Astros), Gerrit Cole (New York Yankees), Andrew Miller (Retired), and Max Scherzer (New York Mets). Moreover, the MLB ownership is made up of the owners of each of the thirty MLB teams, the Commissioner of Baseball (Rob Manfred), and the Deputy Commissioner (Dan Halem). Following the expiration of the CBA, Manfred signed the lockout into effect. Manfred typically represents the ownership, and Halem frequently argues for the ownership and engages in negotiation.

It is important to note the demands each party made to fully understand why the lockout remained stagnant for so long. The MLBPA, for example, raised concerns about the decrease of player salaries. The MLB has a luxury tax, which puts a cap on the amount of money a team can offer its players as a salary. This cap has caused salaries to decrease over the past few years. During the lockout, the MLB proposed to raise the cap to $220 million in 2022 and to keep it at that level until 2024. However, this would keep player salaries at a standstill, which the MLBPA argued would discourage competition and would incentivize a reliance on new, less paid players. To combat this, the MLBPA proposed raising the cap to $238 million in 2022 and $250 million in 2024. Additionally, there were disputes over the length of the playoff season. The MLB proposed an extension to fourteen games, and the MLBPA only wanted an increase to twelve or less. The MLB pushed for a longer playoff season to increase game revenue from television views, tickets, food and beverages, and merchandise sold at stadiums during games.

The ownership also recognized that if more teams made the playoffs, then their teams would not have to win as many games during the regular season and owners would not have to spend large sums of money on star players for their team. The MLBPA did not agree with an extended playoff season because the players knew that the league simply wanted to make more money off of them.

The two parties remained at an impasse for several weeks until the MLB ownership finally drafted a proposal on January 13th. The MLBPA was extremely opposed to this proposal because it only included minor changes to the CBA: an increase in minimum salary and revisions to the draft process that would prevent tanking.[1] In late January, the parties discussed the aforementioned proposal, which the MLBPA largely voted against. However, the two sides made some progress during these sessions, as both the MLBPA and MLB ownership compromised on certain issues. The MLBPA stopped requesting age-based free agency, which is when the time a player can reach free-agency is determined by their age rather than their years of service.[2] They also gave up on earlier arbitration, and the MLB ownership reneged on their requests to get rid of the "SuperTwo" tier of arbitration. **Arbitration** is for "players with at least three(but less than six) years of Major League service time [who] become eligible for salary arbitration, through which they can earn substantial raises relative to the Major League minimum salary."[3] The MLBPA strongly encourages arbitration as it allows players to be paid more, and they would like to see younger players qualify for arbitration. The **Super Two tier** is a group of players who obtain between 2-3 years of service on a given MLB team and are in the top 22% of this margin (based off of service). This allows younger players to reach arbitration before completing their three years of service. In February, the two sides discussed prominent economic issues and the prospect of a **universal DH** (designated hitter). In mid-February, Manfred spoke to the media for the first time and assured fans that the season would begin promptly. Following this media announcement, the MLBPA introduced a new proposal for the CBA in which they expressed their desire for an increase in the "Super Two" pool and conceded their demand for two-year

[1] Tanking - Removing better/older players from an MLB team in hopes of receiving a better draft pick for the next season.
[2] Free Agency - A player who has played out his contract, or is no longer under contract with a team.
[3] "Service Time: Glossary." MLB.com. MLB. Accessed August 26, 2022. https://www.mlb.com/glossary/transactions/service-time#:~:text=Upon%20reaching%20six%20years%20of,his%20free%2Dagent%20seasons.

salary arbitration. By the end of February, the league was forced to announce that spring training would be delayed. The league also confirmed that they would meet with the MLBPA every day for one week at the end of February to confirm a CBA deal. In the early days of this week, the MLB proposed a slightly different CBA plan, and the MLBPA countered this proposal with a request for a raised minimum salary. The luxury-tax complication was still not discussed after these first two days. The MLB ownership agreed to increase the minimum salary by $10,000 each year until the expiration of the new CBA. On February 25th, both parties reached a compromise regarding the draft lottery. Spring training games were postponed until later in the season. The next day, the players gave up on their hopes of making 75% of players with between 2-3 years of service eligible for the "Super Two" tier and instead asked for 35% of players. When no significant progress was made by March 1st, the season was officially postponed, and the first two series of the season were canceled. In the first week of March, the two groups made and countered economic proposals, and they finally **came to an agreement on March 10th, 2022.** After the first baseball stoppage since 1994, the lockout's ninety-nine day run finally ended. The final CBA included a **$230 million luxury tax cap** (which will reach $244 million by the end of the CBA), **a minimum salary of $700,000** (peaks at $780,000 by the end of the CBA), a **pre-arbitration bonus pool of $50 million**, a **12-team postseason**, a **universal designated hitter**, and an **amateur draft that is 20 rounds**

Current Situation

This committee will begin at 12:01 A.M. on December 2nd, 2021 right after the lockout goes into effect. The previous CBA has just expired, and no negotiations between sides have begun. The setting of this committee will be a series of negotiations between the MLBPA and the MLB ownership in which delegates will discuss the specifics of the lockout and reach a solution that will (ideally) effectively end the lockout. During negotiations, delegates are not constrained to working solely within the framework of a CBA. Delegates may use directives as they see fit to both outline formal negotiations and drive action that impacts negotiations, the MLB fanbase, and the league as a whole. Please note that although, yes, the MLB ownership and the MLBPA eventually agreed on a specific set of conditions for the CBA to end the 2021 lockout, we encourage delegates to think outside the box and avoid simply advocating for the terms of the 2022 CBA. Delegates should work to create reform that satisfies both parties within the CBA or, if they wish, abolish the CBA and create a new contract mechanism that both the players and management oblige with. Delegates, you are racing against the clock, and the fate of the 2022 MLB season lies in your hands. Play ball!

Questions to Consider

1. Is a Collective Bargaining Agreement the only way of settling negotiation issues within the MLB?
2. Do all players in the MLB agree with what the MLBPA is representing?
3. To what extent should Rob Manfred play a role in coming to a new agreement?
4. Does the ownership of the MLB take the MLBPA's desires seriously?
5. How can the needs of both parties be balanced while reaching a decision in a timely manner?
6. What are some flaws in the way the MLB handles negotiations, and how can they be addressed?

Character List

These descriptions are accurate to the titles and perspectives of the following players/managers as of December 2nd, 2021. Delegates should only use information about their characters that is true as of this date, and should not take future information into account when researching. Please use these character profiles as a template for your character's personality and position, but remember to acquire additional research as this should only be an initial guide.

Commissioner of Baseball (MLB Ownership)

Rob Manfred: Commissioner of Major League Baseball since 2015. Previously led MLB's labor relations department and has participated in collective bargaining negotiations for decades.

Deputy Commissioner of Baseball (MLB Ownership)

Dan Halem: MLB's Deputy Commissioner for Baseball Administration and Chief Legal Officer. Serves as MLB's lead negotiator and oversees legal affairs and labor relations.

Team Owners (MLB Ownership)

Bob Castellini: CEO and controlling owner of the Cincinnati Reds since 2006.

Chris Ilitch: President and CEO of Ilitch Holdings and owner of the Detroit Tigers. He also oversees the family's ownership of the Detroit Red Wings.

Arte Moreno: Owner of the Los Angeles Angels since 2003. He became the first Mexican-American to own a major American sports team.

Dick Monfort: Owner and CEO of the Colorado Rockies and chairman of MLB's Labor Policy Committee, which helps establish the owners' negotiating strategy.

Mark Attanasio: Chairman and principal owner of the Milwaukee Brewers. Member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

Ray Davis: Co-owner and managing partner of the Texas Rangers. Member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

Ron Fowler: San Diego Padres executive chairman and vice chairman. Member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

John Henry: Principal owner of the Boston Red Sox and a member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

Jim Pohlad: Chairman and principal owner of the Minnesota Twins. Member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

Hal Steinbrenner: Managing general partner of the New York Yankees and member of MLB's Labor Policy Committee.

Steve Cohen: Owner of the New York Mets since 2020. Represents the perspective of a newer, high-spending owner in discussions about MLB's financial structure.

Jerry Reinsdorf: Owner of the Chicago White Sox since 1981 and a longtime figure in MLB ownership. Provides an additional ownership perspective on the league's financial and competitive structure.

Executive Subcommittee (MLBPA)

Max Scherzer: Veteran starting pitcher and MLBPA Executive Subcommittee member. Played for the Arizona Diamondbacks, Detroit Tigers, Washington Nationals and Los Angeles Dodgers before joining the New York Mets in 2021.

James Paxton: Canadian starting pitcher nicknamed "Big Maple." MLBPA Executive Subcommittee member who was a free agent as of December 2, 2021.

Zack Britton: Relief pitcher for the New York Yankees and former Baltimore Orioles pitcher. Member of the MLBPA Executive Subcommittee and a representative on the union's Pension Committee.

Francisco Lindor: Shortstop for the New York Mets and member of the MLBPA Executive Subcommittee. Previously played for the Cleveland Indians.

Marcus Semien: Infielder and MLBPA Executive Subcommittee member. Played for the Toronto Blue Jays in 2021 and was a free agent as of December 2, 2021.

Jason Castro: Catcher and MLBPA Executive Subcommittee member. Played for the Houston Astros during the 2021 season.

Gerrit Cole: Starting pitcher for the New York Yankees and member of the MLBPA Executive Subcommittee. Previously pitched for the Pittsburgh Pirates and Houston Astros.

Andrew Miller: Veteran left-handed pitcher and MLBPA Executive Subcommittee member. A key player representative in the negotiations who was a free agent as of December 2, 2021.

Executive Director (MLBPA)

Tony Clark: Executive Director of the Major League Baseball Players Association since 2013. A former MLB first baseman who played for several teams, including the Detroit Tigers, he became the first former major-league player to lead the union.

Legal and Negotiating Representatives (MLBPA)

Bruce Meyer: MLBPA's senior director of collective bargaining and legal affairs and the union's lead negotiator. Previously represented labor unions in major professional sports and took over as the MLBPA's chief negotiator in 2019.

Jeffrey Kessler: Co-executive chairman at Winston & Strawn and a prominent sports and antitrust attorney. Serves as outside counsel to the MLBPA and has represented players and unions in major sports labor disputes.

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