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Letter from the Director

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to NGMUN 2021! My name is Claire Mao, and I am beyond excited to be your chair for the Brexit committee. A little about me: I am a junior at Noble and Greenough School, which I've attended since seventh grade. I started going to Model UN conferences in ninth grade and have been hooked ever since! I went to my first virtual conference this November at UCLA's BRUINMUN and hope that virtual committee will run just as smoothly at NGMUN.

Aside from attending Model UN conferences, I love to play flute and piano! At Nobles, I run cross country and track and play squash, though my hand-eye coordination is dubious. In my free time, I like to bake, watch Netflix, and play videogames with friends. I'm especially interested in gender norms in society and politics, and exploring the phenomenon of "social media activism."

In this committee, I look forward to productive debate around the merits and drawbacks of Brexit, and how the coronavirus has impacted the European Union as a whole. Though we are in North America, it is important to study other areas of the world so we gain a broader understanding of world politics at large and the infinitely nuanced factors that shape the global landscape. I hope that by preparing for this conference, you gain not only factual knowledge but experience in shifting perspectives and widening your view of our society. Isn't that what Model UN is all about, after all— seeing and learning from a new vantage point?

Delegates should expect to discuss Brexit's impact on the European Union with care and consideration. Complexities to consider include a potential shift in economic leanings in the council, the coronavirus, and freedom of movement within the EU. This issue may not directly impact those of us living in the United States, but its precedent will certainly have a lasting impact.

Thank you in advance for your preparation and participation! I really know and appreciate how much effort you put in. If you have any questions/concerns or just want to say hi, please feel free to email! I promise there are no stupid questions. In the meantime, stay safe and I will see you in April.

Best,

Claire Mao
Chair, EU: Brexit
cmao22@nobles.edu

Letter from the Co-Director

Delegates,

Hello! I'm Ryan Sanghavi, a junior at the Noble and Greenough School, and I'm excited to be working as your co-chair for this committee!

My experience with Model UN started in 6th grade, and I have been to 17 MUN conferences since then, with many more to come in the future! I worked as a crisis staff member in NGMUN I, and I was going to be a co-chair in NGMUN II before its cancellation due to the pandemic. On top of MUN, I am an avid debater and lead the Nobles Mock Trial club!

One of my other major interests is politics - I have worked on three Congressional campaigns (one of which, Carolyn Bourdeaux for GA-07, won!) and I have interned for one Congressional office (Lori Trahan, MA-03). Though I will try my best not to engage in any debates with delegates during the conference (even during funmun), I guarantee you that the art of arguments is my favorite pastime.

Another major hobby of mine is writing - I am a staff writer for our school newspaper, *The Nobleman*, and I worked with several classmates to found an online, student-run political publication known as The Common Forum.

On a good day, I can type 110 words per minute. I am a massive proponent of procrastination, and I have pasta for almost every meal. I look forward to seeing the resolution(s?) that this committee will pass! Good luck to you all.

Best,

Ryan Sanghavi
Co-Chair, EU: Brexit
rsanghavi22@nobles.edu

Key Terms and Definitions

(Definitions from Oxford Languages)

Tariff: a tax or duty to be paid on a particular class of imports or exports

Free Trade: international trade left to its natural course without tariffs, quotas, or other restrictions

Transition Period: the “post-Brexit” transition period during which the United Kingdom abides by EU regulations, which ends on December 31, 2020 and will not be extended

Freedom of Movement: open borders between the UK and the EU, taken away on January 1 as Brits “will no longer be members of the European Union with all the rights and responsibilities,” which necessitates visas and permissions for those in the UK wishing to start lives in the EU and vice versa¹

European Union (EU): international organization comprising 27 European countries and governing common economic, social, and security policies

Brexit: the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union

¹ [Brexit is Done](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2019/03/29/brexit-is-done/) (washingtonpost.com)

History of Topic

What is now known as the European Union (EU), an international conference of European nations addressing issues of economic and domestic security facing each state, began as a small coalition of six countries (the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, and France) known as the European Coal and Steel Community in the wake of a depleted continent following World War II.² A few years later in 1957, this group of six nations formed the European Economic Community (ECC) which gradually expanded to several other nations throughout the late 20th century. Throughout the following several decades, the ECC, via the means of additional members and merges, transformed into the modern EU, a counsel to aid smaller nations and, similarly, the European community as a whole with broad-based economic and social solutions.³

The EU budget in 2019 was just shy of €150 billion, or approximately one percent of the combined budgets of each EU nation. This money is primarily used to fund agriculture, staffing, diplomatic causes, and public works. Some consider the EU's budget as a possible source for emergency funds in the case of certain disasters for member states, however others advocate that the funds, originating from individual nations, are an unnecessary middleman serving only to drain wealthy nations of their capital.⁴

Largely for such aforementioned reasons, the United Kingdom's status within the EU, per its own sovereign will, has constantly been precarious. In 1975, the UK held a national referendum on whether or not to remain within the ECC, just two years after it first joined. Though attempts to exit the union failed, the UK retained its currency, the British Pound, while the rest of the union adopted the Euro. Several other disputes in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s threatened the membership of the UK. Furthermore, unrest between the UK and the EU grew in 2011 when, for the first time, Britain vetoed an EU treaty with the signature of Prime Minister David Cameron, who soon alluded to the possibility of withdrawing from the union.⁵

In June of 2016, under Prime Minister Cameron's leadership, the British public voted in the affirmative on a non-binding referendum to formally leave the EU. Cameron's successor, Prime Minister Theresa May, soon pledged to continue initial attempts to exit.⁶ May notified the EU of Britain's aspirations, though the British parliament was unable to agree upon an adequate resolution. Following her failure, May resigned and was replaced by Prime Minister Boris Johnson who, at last, captured the parliamentary majority required to mass a Brexit agreement. Britain exited the EU in early 2020, and ratified the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, ensuring free trade between EU member nations and the UK.⁷

² [The History of the European Union](#) (thoughtco.com)

³ [The History Behind Brexit - HISTORY](#)

⁴ [Fact check on the EU budget | European Commission](#) (europa.eu)

⁵ [The History Behind Brexit - HISTORY](#)

⁶ [Brexit Meaning](#) (Brexit.in)

⁷ [What Was Brexit, and How Did It Impact the UK, EU, and the US?](#) (thebalance.com)

Present Situation

Coronavirus:

In addition to health restrictions due to COVID-19, especially with the new strain of coronavirus which has emerged in England, Brexit has isolated the country from the EU economically. As of December 22, 2020, France has cut off supply lines of transport, “adding to growing chaos at UK ports and giving the country a taste of the potential disruption to food and other vital supplies.”⁸ Once Britain exited the “transition phase” on December 31, 2020, if Prime Minister Boris Johnson had failed to strike a deal with the rest of the EU (“no-deal Brexit”), Britain would be further cut off from its former allies. However, as of January 1, 2021, a trade agreement has been struck, confirming the outcome of this lengthy exit process: a two-way deal, wherein the UK and EU agree upon a free trade deal.⁹

Delegates must consider not only political but public health implications that come with proposing solutions and compromises. Variant B.1.1.7 of the coronavirus has spread quickly in the UK since the fall of 2020, and has increased the already staggering death toll.¹⁰

Legal Changes:

The United Kingdom is no longer part of the single market with the rest of the European Union. Rather, its trade agreement forbids quotas or tariffs on goods traded between the UK and members of the EU.¹¹ Free movement between the UK and the EU is now restricted, and non-citizen residents of the UK must obtain documentation which permits their residence, temporary or otherwise.¹² These migration restrictions have decreased labor flow into the UK, slowing economic growth especially as both business headquarters and European nationals return to the continental EU. UK government analysis “estimates that a Free Trade Agreement scenario with the EU would see GDP between 4.9% and 6.7% lower compared with staying in the EU.”¹³ There are many more smaller legal changes that you can read about if you’d like to gain a greater understanding of UK-specific policy.

⁸ [Covid-19 isolation gives Britain a taste of 'no-deal' Brexit chaos](#) (cnn.com)

⁹ [What Does No-Deal Brexit Mean](#) (cnbc.com)

¹⁰ [About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19](#) (cdc.gov)

¹¹ [What Was Brexit, and How Did It Impact the UK, EU, and the US?](#) (thebalance.com)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ [Brexit deal: Potential economic impact](#) (commonslibrary.parliament.uk)

Regional Positions

The Council of the European Union can be broken into two main blocs: the Northern economically liberal states, and Southern protectionist states. Though there are exceptions to this geographic division, it provides us a simplified look into the fissure left by the United Kingdom's departure from the EU. The UK was formerly a member of the economically liberal bloc, and wielded great influence in the council.

The liberal states, proponents of *laissez-faire* capitalism, seek minimal government intervention in the free market and more generally, less government regulation on what an individual can and cannot do.¹⁴ This is of course complicated by the fact that the UK's exit from the EU brings many legal complexities, described above, that impede previously mundane actions such as driving across country borders. Additional interests of these liberal states include expanding market trade to third world countries and maintaining tough sanctions on Russia.¹⁵

The protectionist states, on the other hand, favor government intervention through economic policies such as protective tariffs. Though economies in Europe have gradually become moved away from the protectionism of the 19th and 20th centuries, countries such as Russia still lean to the protectionist end of the spectrum.¹⁶ Recognizing that an overt shift to protectionism in Europe is unlikely, diplomatic conversation must be had to potentially change economic policies between the UK and the EU and within EU member countries.

Germany, of the former (liberal) bloc, is in a unique position in the wake of Brexit. The power vacuum created by the UK's exit points towards potential German dominance in the EU, a prospect which frightens France, Poland, and Italy. Germany in turn feels threatened by this possible protectionary alliance against it.¹⁷ Delegates must consider the precarious balance of power in committee and serve their individual countries' interests while sustaining a willingness to compromise that is a hallmark of the European Union.

¹⁴ [Economic Liberalism](#) (sciencedirect.com)

¹⁵ [The Impact of Brexit on the EU](#) (cer.eu)

¹⁶ [Barriers to trade: as protectionism rises, EU continues opening up export markets for European firms](#) (trade.ec.europa.eu)

¹⁷ [The Impact of Brexit on the EU](#) (cer.eu)

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

How will the balance of power and ideology in the EU, specifically those of economics, shift following the power vacuum formed by Britain's exit?

How, if at all, will the EU support the United Kingdom as it struggles with geographical and economic isolation during the pandemic?

To what extent will the resolution represent the interests of all states in the Council of the European Union (i.e. liberal states and protectionist states both)? Does the resolution need to represent all these interests if the battle for power only complicates matters?

Should the restriction of "freedom of movement" be contested in order to facilitate European nationals' movement to and from the UK?

Considering the current free trade deal with the UK, should the member nations of the EU take precautionary measures to re-incorporate quotas and tariffs in the future? Seeing as the UK is a major trading partner of the EU, how can the potential loss of trade be counterbalanced?

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