

# My United Nations Externship

Laura Niday, '20

Political Science, Philosophy, and History



# Who I Am...

- ❖ I'm Laura Niday
- ❖ I'm graduating in December 2020
- ❖ I'm a political science and philosophy double major, history minor
- ❖ In February I attended the session of UNCITRAL's Working Group II in New York City with Coe Board of Trustee Member Dr. Alan Anderson.

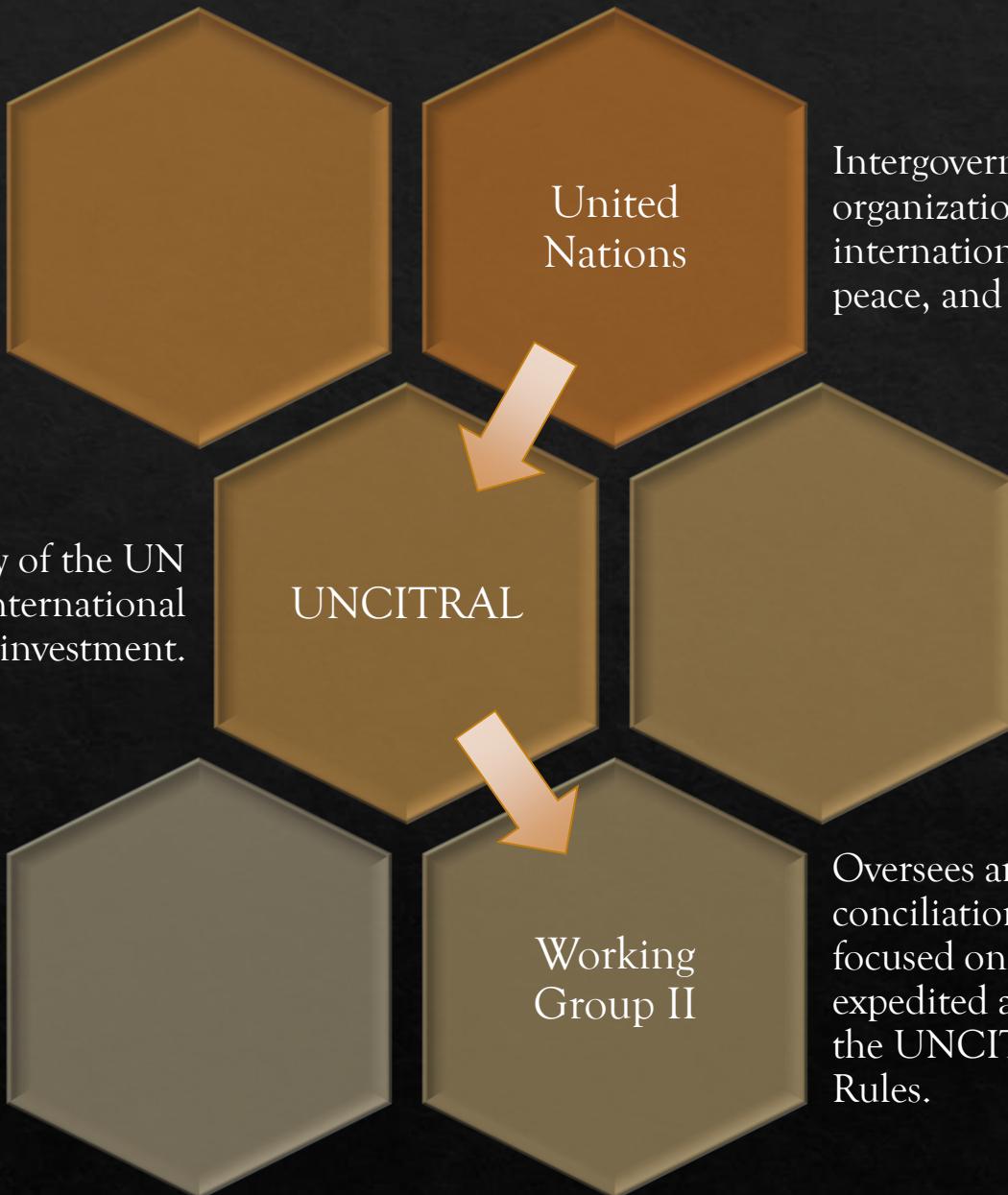


*In the delegates lounge in the UN building in New York City*

# The United Nations, UNCITRAL, and Working Group II Breakdown

- UNCITRAL stands for the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
- **Arbitration**: an alternative form of dispute resolution where parties agree in a contract to a certain set of legal rules that they will follow if a dispute arises between the two parties during the course of the agreement.

Subsidiary body of the UN focused on international trade law and investment.



Intergovernmental organization focused on international cooperation, peace, and security.

*The view of the UN Conference Room from my seat in the chamber.*



## The Opportunity

This externship gave me the opportunity to travel to New York City for one week in February, where I spent eight hours a day attending UNCITRAL's Working Group II sessions on expedited arbitration. In attendance was over 60 country representatives, as well as observers from many different organizations. Dr. Alan Anderson is a member of FICA (Forum for International Conciliation and Arbitration), so I was a guest of theirs.

# Why I Was Interested in this Opportunity



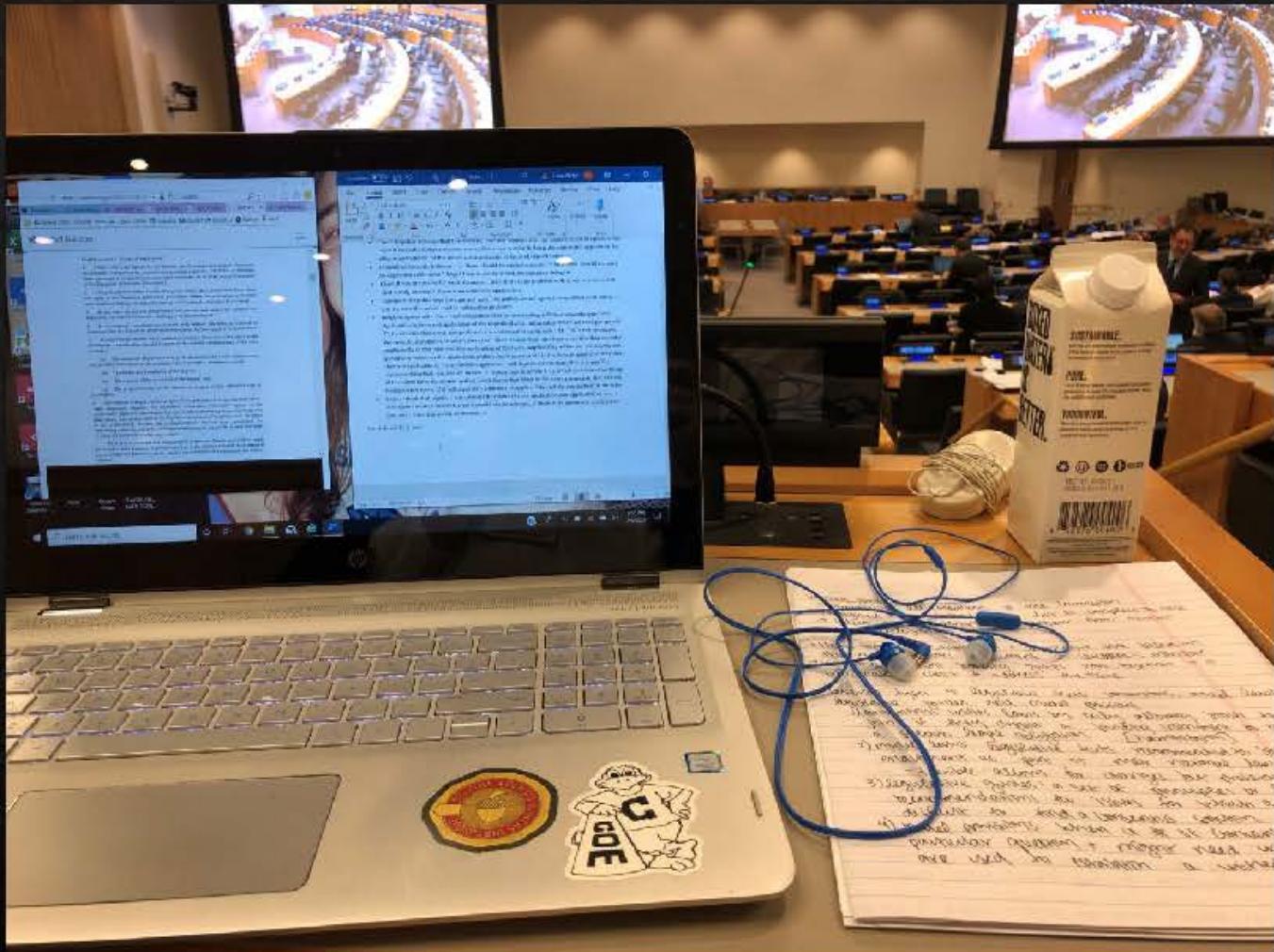
*In Washington DC in front of the Kennedy Center last September*

- ❖ I am very interested in politics and international relations
- ❖ I interned in a personal office in the US Senate in Washington DC last fall, where I worked with the foreign policy senior advisor on research projects and legislation—this peaked my interest in foreign policy and international politics
- ❖ I had seen the gridlock within domestic politics, so I was eager to see how countries and organizations with different goals and interests were able to come to consensus

# How I Prepared for My Externship

Prior to the start of my externship, I created a number of learning goals for myself for things that I wished to get out of the opportunity.

I also wrote down a series of questions that I had for Dr. Anderson or other members of the Working Group that would help me better understand UNCITRAL, its mission, and the role it plays internationally.



*This was my workstation during the sessions. As you can see, I have pages of handwritten learning goals, questions, and notes that I took prior to the start of the experience.*

# My Experience



# Day One

- I flew into New York on a Sunday
- Checked into my hotel
- Saw some of the city
  - Times Square, Rockefeller Plaza, etc.
- Had dinner with Dr. Anderson to go over what we were doing during the week
- Prepared some things for the session starting on Monday



Times Square on Sunday night

# Day Two

This was my first day having to attend the Working Group II sessions.

During this first day, there was a lot of discussion regarding the proposed UNCITRAL Expedited Arbitration Rules on whether there should be an opt-in or opt-out mechanism, and whether one party can opt-out when the other wants to continue with the expedited process.



*North view from the UN building*

# Day Three



*My view in the UN conference room*

On Tuesday, most of this day of session continued the previous discussion regarding whether a single party can opt-out of the expedited process, when the other party wishes to continue with the expedited process.

I was also able to have lunch with both Dr. Anderson and his colleague in the delegate dining room in the UN building.

# Day Four

On Wednesday, I was able to have lunch with a large group of country representatives and organization observers in the UN dining room. I was able to connect with diplomats from all over the world, including Germany, Sweden, Singapore, Romania, and many more.

The Working Group also discussed who would have the power to appoint the arbitrator or arbitration tribunal in international expedited arbitration cases.



*The view from the UN building overlooking the East River*

# Day Five

*A street view of New York*



After Wednesday, Dr. Anderson had to fly out of New York, which means that I was more on my own for the rest of the week.

This day we went through a large variety of topics during the sessions and made it through most of the Secretariat's documents by the end of the day.

# Day Six

This was my last full day in New York.

We only had session in the morning and had completely wrapped up all of the week's business by noon.

This gave me some more time to explore the city on my own. I went for a walk around Central Park, got some pastries, and did a little window shopping on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

I also had bought a Broadway ticket in advance, and I got to see Wicked this evening.



At Wicked on Broadway

# Day Seven



*The view of New York from my plane window on the flight home*

This was my last day in New York.

I spent my morning visiting Times Square one last time, and then I picked up pastries from a nearby café before packing up my things and heading to the airport.

# My Biggest Takeaways

01

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN POLITICS, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, LAW, ETC., THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO DIP YOUR TOE IN THE WATER WITH SOME REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCE

02

MEETING PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL HELP EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS AND MAKE YOU MORE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS

03

THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO LEARN SOMETHING THAT YOU WOULDN'T NECESSARILY LEARN IN THE CLASSROOM, WHILE ALSO BEING A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME CHANCE TO SIT IN A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE AND LISTEN TO FOREIGN DIPLOMATS DISCUSS INTERNATIONAL LAW

# Recommendation

I would highly recommend this externship to future Kohawks. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me, and I took so much out of this experience that has shaped my future.

Because of my interest in international politics and relations, I am now planning on applying for a Fulbright Scholarship, where I can learn even more about international relations and be a cultural ambassador worldwide.





## That is my United Nations Externship Experience

I hope you enjoyed this virtual Research Symposium presentation about my experience, and I hope everyone is staying safe, staying healthy, sheltering in place, and washing their hands.

If you have any questions, feel free to shoot me an email! [LNiday@coe.edu](mailto:LNiday@coe.edu)