



**UNA★USA**

# Universal Periodic Review of the United States

## UNA-USA Local Consultation Toolkit

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## The Basics

- In May 2020, the United States will undergo a “Universal Periodic Review” (UPR) of its domestic human rights record at the UN Human Rights Council.
- The UPR is an exciting and tangible advocacy opportunity for UNA-USA campus and community chapters to engage the UN on strengthening human rights in the United States.
- This toolkit provides background on launching a local UPR consultation – on a human rights topic of your choice – with your UNA-USA chapter.
- The goal of an organizing a local UPR consultation is to constructively set the agenda on a human rights challenge in the United States, collaborate with likeminded community partners, and help catalyze change in the U.S. through a universal UN process.
- The UPR is all about accessibility. Advocates of all experience levels, backgrounds, and interests can participate and influence this process. Ideally, the results of your consultation will be shared with the UN via a brief “shadow report.” UNA-USA is here to help!



## Key Dates

- **February 22, 2019:** UNA-USA UPR Initiative Kickoff
- **September 1, 2019:** Deadline for local consultations
- **May 2020:** U.S. UPR at UN Human Rights Council

## Prepping Your Local Consultation in 5 steps

### ✓ **Step 1: Choose Your Topic**

Pick a human rights issue of interest to your chapter and ideally with some link to your college, university and/or community. The best input for the UPR comes from first-hand accounts and feedback. Keep in mind, the UPR is about human rights *within* the U.S., not elsewhere. Also, the best consultations will have a specific focus rather than being too general.

### ✓ **Step 2: Pick a Local Partner (Ideally) & Event Date**

With your topic in mind (e.g. combatting human trafficking) reach out to a local organization or expert with special or direct experience with the issue to help frame the discussion and jump start the local consultation. If your chapter has this kind of a resource among its volunteer staff, that is okay as well. Pick a date for the consultation that works for you and your partner(s).

### ✓ **Step 3: Touch Base with UNA-USA**

Let UNA-USA know what topic you have chosen for your UPR consultation, what date the event will be, and any troubleshooting questions you have. Remember, UNA-USA is here to back you up as you plan the consultation and take next steps.

### ✓ **Step 4: Designate Roles**

A local consultation should have an emcee from the UNA-USA Chapter, group discussion leader, a notetaker, a local partner, and ideally a communications lead.

### ✓ **Step 5: Send Results to UNA-USA**

Follow up with UNA-USA on the results and notes from your consultation



## Breaking Down the Local Consultation

- A local UPR consultation is about convening human rights advocates to discuss a specific human rights issue in the United States. The consultation should result in constructive and specific feedback in the form of observations and recommendations for the U.S. federal government via written notes. Local consultations should allot time for organic, open group discussion on a specific human rights issue rather than exclusively use a formal “panel” format.
- Ideally content from the local consultation will be shared with the UN Human Rights, Office and UN Human Rights Council in advance of the May 2020 U.S. UPR. With help from UNA-USA, the content from your local consultation will be adapted into a brief “shadow report.”
- Consider developing a communications and outreach plan to support your local UPR consultation. This can include outreach to local press, designating a photographer, and/or social media coverage. Please use #USAUPR.
- Key Local UPR Consultation Volunteer Roles
  - UNA-USA Chapter Event Emcee
  - Human Rights Issue Expert and/or Local Partner
  - Group Discussion Leader
  - Group Discussion Rapporteur/Note Taker
  - Communications and Marketing Lead



UNA-USA Georgetown University UPR Consultation (2014)



Local Consultation: Sample Run of Show About 1 Hour and 30 minutes	
Introductions and Overview of Local UPR Consultation from Chapter Emcee	The Emcee keeps the event moving and provides essential background on UNA-USA, the UPR, and why the topic was chosen. <b>5 minutes</b>
Opening Framing Remarks from Human Rights Issue Expert and/or Local Partner	Helps kickstart conversation on human rights topic with in-depth discussion of issue or details of personal experience with the issue. <b>10 minutes</b>
Directions for Group Discussion(s) from UNA-USA Chapter Emcee	The emcee should break up the participants into discussion smaller groups of 5-10 participants each, depending on the size of the event. Each discussion group should have a designated discussion leader and a note taker. <b>5 minutes</b>
Break into Discussion Group(s). Each Group should have a Discussion Leader	The discussion leader will keep the discussion group on time, on task, and focused on developing constructive feedback on the topic <b>25-45 minutes</b>
Group(s) Report Back on Key Observations and Recommendations from Discussions from designated Rapporteur	The rapporteur should take detailed notes on each group's discussions with a focus on spotlighting the extent of the human rights challenge and constructive recommendations for the U.S. to address the issue. <b>10-20 minutes</b>
Thank You and Closing Remarks from UNA-USA Emcee	<b>5 minutes</b>

## Resources

- UNA-USA Shadow Report on U.S. UPR (2014): Click [here](#)
- Introduction to UPR Video: Click [here](#)
- U.S. UPR Database: Click [here](#)



## What to Look for during the Consultation

- The best content for the UPR comes from first-hand accounts and primary sources. Quotations are excellent but be sure to get permission to attribute to a specific individual if you would like to include in your notes or report.
- Try to identify “SMART” recommendations as much as possible (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) related to your human rights topic. Recommendations should be targeted to the United States federal government – not specific states, cities, or counties etc. Keep the conversation constructive, respectful, and outcome focused.
- Write down observations and recommendations, don’t attempt to just remember what was said. Again, share your notes with UNA-USA because the content from your event will help inform a “shadow report” for the U.S. UPR in May 2020.
- UNA-USA will be in touch regarding follow-on advocacy and impact opportunities resulting from your local consultation!

Sample UPR Recommendations Accepted by U.S. in 2015 at UN Human Rights Council	
Trafficking	“Establish, where appropriate, specialized services required for children and women who have been trafficked or sold for sexual exploitation”
Race and Criminal Justice	“Continue to vigorously investigate recent cases of alleged police-led human rights abuses against African Americans and seek to build improved relations and trust between United States law enforcement and all communities around the United States”
Health Care & Social Services	“While recognizing economic, social and cultural measures, strengthen efforts in ensuring equal access to health-care and social services”
Rights of Women & Girls	“Ensure equal access to equality maternal health and related services as an integral part of the realization of women's rights”
LGBTI Equality	“Keep promoting progress in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex issues, especially in preventing discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation”