**International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition**

**Important Information and Application**

**Overview of the Competition**

For 60 years, colleges from the United States and around the world have sent undergraduate and MBA teams to compete in the International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition. Each team takes over the management of a manufacturing company competing directly against 4-5 other firms in its Simulated World. The team assumes responsibility for key strategic and operational decisions in marketing, finance, and operations. Eight quarters of historical data are provided as the starting position wherein all teams are identical; then 20 sets of quarterly decisions are submitted by the teams for company operations over a simulated period of five years. Each team is responsible for a strategic business plan, an annual report, and one formal oral presentation to judges (who serve as the simulated Board of Directors). Team members have the experience of running their own company and learn first-hand how a group effort can result in synergy and enthusiasm. For more information about the competition, please visit its website at <http://www.icbsc.org>.

**Student Benefits**

Each year students say that the competition has been the most rewarding experience of their college career. Some have said the greatest benefit was the realistic opportunity to apply academic concepts; others said the greatest benefit was being an integral part of a closely knit, finely honed team. Students listing the competition on their resume have discovered that it has helped them land a job. Some have even benefited from interviewing with a person that had earlier participated in the competition. For students the benefits include:

1. Hands-on experience of actually "running" a corporation
2. Bringing together functional academic concepts resulting in an integrated, applied management experience
3. The taste of battle with, at times, stirring success, or, at times, stunning failure--at least in the perspective of the moment
4. Feeling the synergy of the team experience
5. "The single most rewarding experience in my entire college career." (quote from former student)
6. Become part of the CSULB winning tradition.
7. Great resume builder!

**Who Should Apply**

Acceptance to be on a team is through application. The best candidates will be those students who have completed their core coursework and are close to completing their degrees. Students who have GPA’s of at least 3.0, like a challenge, are problem-solvers, and have a flexible schedule that will allow them to meet on weekdays, weekends or other times with their team members are encouraged to apply. The competition is time-consuming. **Expect to spend at least 4-10 hours outside of class each week working with your team.** Good writing and analytical skills are essential to being successful in the competition.

**Who Should Apply**

Acceptance to the team is based on an application process. Ideal candidates are students who have completed their core coursework and are nearing the completion of their degrees. Specifically, we are looking for:

* **Academic** Performance: Students with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
* **Attributes**: Students who enjoy challenges, are skilled problem-solvers, and are motivated to compete on an international stage.
* **Schedule Flexibility**: Students with flexible schedules who can commit to weekday afternoon and occasional weekend practice sessions. The competition requires a significant time investment, with an expectation of dedicating 4 to 10 hours per week outside of class for team activities.
* **Skills**: Strong writing and analytical skills are essential for success in the competition.
* **Travel Commitment** (April 22 to April 27, inclusive): *If you have final exams, internships, part-time work, or other obligations, please* ***secure the necessary permissions*** *to fully commit to the competition during this time.*
* **Post-Competition Requirement**: After the competition, you will be expected to submit a comprehensive *learning report* summarizing your key takeaways and experiences.

**Costs**

**Expenses Covered**: All essential expenses, including flight, hotel, registration fees, and some meals not provided by the competition, will be fully covered by DeGroote. This is considered a DeGroote-sponsored case competition.

**Application Process**

To apply, students should fill out and submit an **application** and a **personal statement** (see application form). Although it is not asked for on the application, students should indicate in the essay if there are any constraints (work or school or other) on their meeting outside of class – particularly on weekday afternoons and weekends as most of the work in this course will be in teams.

The deadline to apply is **November 17, 2024, 23:59**. Please send all documents to Amir Taherizadeh ([amir.taherizadeh@mcmaster.ca](mailto:amir.taherizadeh@mcmaster.ca)).

Interviews may take place to finalize the team members. To be held from November 20 through 30. Team members will be notified of acceptance no later than December 2nd. All applicants will receive emails with their status for this role.

**Competition Class Schedule**

The course schedule will follow the competition – not that of a regular semester. The tentative schedule for participation in the competition is as follows:

* Week 2 December: Required orientation meeting – discussion of materials and getting started. Meeting date and time TBD by student availability.
* January 2025: Preparation kicks off. There will be at least two meetings of approximately two hours each. During this time, we will familiarize ourselves with the simulation and run four quarters of practice decisions.
* Late January: Remote Phase begins with team contact information sent to the competition and starting position files received.
* Week 1 February: First official decision submission to the remote site. The competition begins.
* Mid-April: Travel to the on-site location for beginning of the “Intensive Phase” which begins on a Thursday afternoon and ends the following Saturday night with an Awards Banquet.
* Following the competition, students will write a two-page learning report on key takeaways from this experience. There will be a debriefing lunch/dinner hosted by Amir Taherizadeh, Faculty coach.

**Contacts**

1. For financial and logistic matters: contact Ms. Jennifer McCleary (Director of Student Experience), [jmcclea@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jmcclea@mcmaster.ca).
2. For academic/recruitment related matters contact Prof. Amir Taherizadeh (Strategic Management Area), [amir.taherizadeh@mcmaster.ca](mailto:amir.taherizadeh@mcmaster.ca).

**Participant Application: Spring 2025 International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition**

**Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Program (circle) Commerce or IBH**

**Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Area of Focus):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Year in Program \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Expected Grad Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ GPA \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **Business Courses Taken** | | | | |
| **Marketing** | **Accounting** | **Finance** | **Management/HR** | **Other** |
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**Business professor who would be willing to serve as a reference for you.**

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Department:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Please write, and attach to this application, a one-page essay addressing the following questions:

1. Why you want to participate in this competition.
2. Why you think you should be chosen for a team. This would include things like your work ethic, your work experience and special talents or skills (quantitative or other) that you would be able to bring to your team.

Please read the following statement. Your signature at the bottom indicates that you accept the responsibility that is being given to you should you be chosen for a team.

I ­­­­­­­promise that, should I be chosen to represent McMaster University in the International Collegiate Business Competition in the Spring of 2025, I will do my utmost to represent my university in a committed and ethical manner. I realize that participation will require that I spend up to 10 hours per week from the fourth week of January through April and travel to Anaheim, California with my team from April 18-20, 2025. I have or will receive release from any employment or other commitments I have that would interfere with travel on these days.

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Signature Date

**Application Deadline: November 17, 2024, 23:59**