

Dominican Students Shine in International Competition

Abdurahman Almaini and Dorn Carranza, representing [Dominican's School of Business and Leadership](#), achieved superior results in all nine performance criteria in the semester-long Capsim Capstone business simulation competition. The Dominican team competed against teams from Europe, Asia, and North and South America.

Almaini and Carranza scored in the 96th percentile following eight rounds, with each round lasting two weeks. Almaini graduated in May with a double MBA in both Global Management and Strategic Leadership. Carranza earned his MBA in May in the Strategic Leadership program.

The Capsim project was integrated into Dr. Franco Vicino's [Strategic Business Policies](#) class. Vicino has involved his MBA students in the Capsim Capstone competition for the past nine years.

"I was looking for something that integrated the various concentrations of business and a colleague had recommended this business simulation program several years ago," Vicino says. "This product requires decision making in four areas: research and development, sales and marketing, manufacturing, and finance. It is designed to get an MBA student ready to walk out of my class with an understanding not of just functional areas but how a business functions."

Classes can have up to six teams (companies). Vicino's class consisted of six teams with two students per team – with each team working with a 14-page financial reporting system.

The project lasts 16 weeks. Each team is evaluated over a simulated period covering eight rounds, with each two-week round representing one fiscal year.

During each round, the teams had to work together in order to make nearly 400 decisions in order to address all of the issues they are facing. They had to enter these decisions into a central database every other Friday.

"Teams had to identify a strategy which would enable them to compete in five different markets (from low-end to high-end) within their industry in order to cover the full range of market/customer demand. They then had to determine performance, size and reliability specifications, as well as pricing for each of their products in each of the chosen markets," Vicino says.

A balance score card measures success of all teams. The score card includes four key components – a financial component, a business processes component, a customer component, and a learning and growth component. Each component has two or three measures, for a total of nine measures. These measures include cumulative profit, turnover rate, and gross margin. Each team can earn points for successful outcomes in each measure, and then the total points earned by each team each round are benchmarked against all of the other schools participating in the competition.

Each team must enter their decisions into the Capsim's central database by midnight every other Friday. A couple of seconds after the decisions are entered; the teams would receive 14 pages of results showing market demand given what the other five teams entered.

The exercise is invaluable in that it provides students with hands-on learning in leading a business enterprise, while encouraging them to work with colleagues and make sophisticated business decisions.

“This exercise emphasizes strategy and the importance of making long-lasting decisions, but execution is what really pays off,” Vicino says. “Students learn that discipline is important and that attention to details is important. They see that they often have to do all it all in a team. So, while one student might be the finance person it is important to be aware of what R&D, marketing and production are doing. The program teaches functional competency but cross functional accountability.”

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