



# SEC MBA CASE COMPETITION RULES

1. Teams must consist of four MBA students who are **FIRST-TIME ATTENDEES** to this competition, and no alternates are permitted to travel or participate. The university represented by each team must not be identified to the competition judges. An automatic 15-point deduction will be applied in the event a team reveals its school affiliation.
2. Each student team will be randomly assigned to one of four divisions (Division) and to presentation order (Team) within the division on the Thursday evening before the competition. The Division-Team assignment will be used to identify the team during the competition weekend.
3. During the competition weekend, teams may not solicit or receive help from anyone not on their four-member team. **Once the case is distributed, the faculty advisors may not communicate with the team members regarding any case topic or issue until after the team's initial divisional round presentation. If this occurs, the team will be disqualified.**
4. **Teams must bring their own laptops and have the ability to put their presentations on a flash drive and to upload their presentation files electronically to the University's Learning Management System (LMS) or Dropbox (to be determined by host institution).** Teams will be provided flash drives. To ensure smooth transitions, all presentations must run on Windows/PC software.
5. The competition case will be distributed on the Friday morning of the competition and presented by the case author and the case company. **The case will be from the general business policy/strategic management area.** No information about the case will be released prior to the competition. Students will be allowed to ask clarification questions about the case at this meeting before going to their case preparation rooms.
6. All teams will be assembled for a **Q&A session on Friday** with the case author and a subject matter expert from the case company. Each team will be allowed to submit up to three (3) questions in writing before the session. If there is time available after responses have been given to the written questions, additional rounds of questions may be asked by the teams. Each team will be allowed to ask the same number of questions. No advisors will attend; only students will attend this session; teams may send one (1) or more team members to the session.
7. **Participants are welcome to use publicly available information in the case presentation.** Publicly available information (i.e., online, university library, textbooks etc.) may be utilized to conduct research on the subject company or industry. During case preparation, teams are permitted to use these same resources for general information-gathering purposes (e.g., clarification of financial ratios or Porter's industry analysis). Teams may utilize such resources to locate graphics for the presentation; however, teams should not assume they have permission to use the company logo. Permission must be expressly stated by the company when the subject company is revealed. **Directly contacting any individual working for the company is strictly prohibited.**
8. The first slide of the PowerPoint presentation must contain the assigned Division-Team number, names of the team members, and corresponding photos ("headshots"). The photos must not identify the team's university or business school. Each slide in the presentation and appendix should be numbered. **Teams are prohibited from identifying their university affiliation in any way during their presentation. Teams who identify their university affiliation will automatically lose 15 points from their score.** All presentations are to use the equipment provided. A computer, projector and screen will be available for team presentations.

9. **Each team's presentation must be submitted electronically via the method utilized by the host institution (to- be-specified by each host institution) by 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning.** Presentation files must be named with the Division-Team assignment. Each team will provide and label two files as "presentation" (what students will access via room computer) and "printout" (includes presentation deck and appendices - contains ALL materials to be provided to judges). **The "presentation" file should be provided in PPT format and the "printout" file should be provided in PDF format.** In addition to the items submitted, each team is responsible for and encouraged to have a backup of the two presentation files on a flash drive. No revisions can be made to any portion of the team's electronic presentation once submitted. Any demonstration aids must also be presented, approved, and given to the case officials at this time. A hard copy of each team's presentation (one slide per sheet) will be provided to each of the judges by the competition staff. [NOTE: No materials will be printed for the virtual SEC MBA Case Competition.]
10. The preliminary round of presentations on Saturday morning, will consist of four divisions (two divisions of four teams and two divisions of three teams). Each team will present to a panel of at least three judges in the divisional round. Winners of the four divisions will advance to the final round on Saturday afternoon. The four finalist teams will present to a panel of at least five judges in the final round. The majority of the judges on each panel will come from the case company.
11. Business professional attire is required for the presentation (please ensure that attire does not indicate school affiliation in any way).
12. Except in the event of an emergency (e.g., illness, death in the family, etc.), all four members of the team must present a portion of the case to the judges; however, all team members do not need to speak the same amount of time. If a team member is unable to present due to an emergency, the team will be permitted to proceed with three members. The steering committee must be notified of any anticipated absence of a team member as soon as possible. Universities may substitute team members as needed until their arrival on campus for the competition.
13. **The competition judges will act as the Board of Directors of the case company and the teams are considered outside consultants.** The judges are familiar with the company and the case, so teams do not need to repeat the case in their presentations. Teams are expected to define and analyze the issues, and to present and justify a plan of action.
14. The following presentation time allotment will be strictly enforced: **DIVISIONAL ROUND: 20 minutes** – Team presentation\*, **15 minutes** – Q&A, **10 minutes** – Judges score and discuss presentation, **5 minutes** – Team changeover  
  
**FINAL ROUND: 20 minutes** – Team presentation\*, **15 minutes** – Q&A, **10 minutes** – Judges score, **5 minutes** – Team changeover \*Five-minute and one-minute warnings will be given by the timers.
15. During the Q&A portion of the presentation, questions from judges may be directed either at individuals or to the team as a whole. The judges have been instructed not to interrupt the 20-minute formal presentation, if at all possible.
16. Teams will not be permitted to observe other teams' **divisional round presentations**. Faculty advisors may sit in their own team's presentation, if desired. **Teams CANNOT make changes to slides once submitted.**
17. Teams advancing to the final round may watch presentations after their final presentation. Advisors of the final round teams can only sit in on final round presentations after his/her team presents.
18. Teams not advancing to the final round will receive feedback from judges following lunch and will be able to observe the final round of competition.
19. Once team brackets are announced at the opening ceremony, teams are not allowed to post anything pertaining to the competition on social media until a winner is chosen at the closing ceremony.

During the closing ceremony, the individual awards will also be presented in the following categories: Best Presenter in each division (\$250/winner) and Best Q&A in each division (\$250/winner). Following the final round, 1st place (\$10,000), 2nd place (\$6,000), 3rd place (\$3,000), and 4th place (\$1,000) teams will be announced.