

Corporate Rebels ready to compete

By Bonar Tucker
YELLIN' REBEL

While most college students are relaxing on the beach or skiing down a mountain during Easter vacation, select teams of students from universities throughout the United States and Canada are putting in many hours of preparation to carry off their final strategic plans in Reno, Nev.

The 26th annual International Collegiate Business Policy Competition will be held at University of Nevada, Reno beginning on April 18 and culminating on April 20 with the announcement of the winners during a formal banquet at the Reno Flamingo Hilton Hotel.

This is the first year that UNLV will be there among the other 35 university teams in a competition that provides "real world" application of academic skills in business.

The team members, who are hand-picked at registration, represent each of the functional areas of the business college (marketing, accounting, finance, management, economics and computers). The basic idea is to run a "make believe" company for a semester.

The company name chosen by this group is "Corporate Rebels" and they are determined to bring home the trophy to UNLV.

Dedication is a necessity with each student spending up to 30 hours in a week making business decisions concerning their company. All that time for a mere three credits?

Dr. Wayne Label, chair of the accounting department and faculty advisor for the group, said the students benefit a lot more than three credit's worth.

"Instead of a class just being over at the end of the semester, these students have experienced the things

that the text books just talk about," HE he said. "It brings together all the units they have learned about and allows them to be used in real life."

Every university competing is given the same company which is said to have been in business for two years, he said, adding the main objective is to run this company better than the others who are competing.

Twice a week it is necessary to make decisions concerning the company management, such as how many sales people are needed? What will their salary be? How much money will be designate for research and development? How much shall we put into advertising? Shall we finance this with stocks or sell bonds?

After what may take several hours, an agreement is reached and the decision is sent to Reno via modem. Three hours later the results are sent back which tells how the team did along with the other teams in the competition.

"We have some of the top business minds in the business college," said Terry McMichael, vice president and treasurer for the Corporate Rebels. "It's a very intellectual group, so we don't always agree. That's what causes the 10 to 12 hour meetings sometimes."

According to Label, the group is fed by the competition. "The folks on this team are by their nature good students and so they are stimulated by the competing. It keeps them going to get higher and higher," he said.

Right now, the teams are led with Reno in first place and UNLV in second in the graduate team competition. But the real heat is just around the corner.

After 10 weeks of making two decisions per week, Reno will in-



CORPORATE REBELS -- Going to Reno to compete! (left to right Dr. Wayne Label, Mark Hettner, Danny Siciliano, Vanessa Florence, Gaillard Peck, Terry Michael and Michael Close)

tensify with the teams making seven decisions in two and a half days. A single hour is allowed to make each decision on the first day, forty-five minutes the second day, and a half-hour during the final day.

"There is no sleep; we go pretty much round the clock," Label said. "We do try to rotate so some can rest and we keep food coming in. But if a team is close to winning, then the competition becomes more intense and the stress keeps going up."

To compete, each team has previously made up a business policy manual telling how they'll run the company. They are only allowed to deviate from the manual if it is for a very good reason. Pres-

sure is on to stay within the guidelines of the manual to obtain a better judgement in Reno.

As if that weren't enough, the team will be using a dorm room for their office during the competition with six computers, three printers, a plotter, an overhead projector, seven chairs and one six foot long table inside. Add to this the six eager-to-win teammates, and stress abounds.

Why would anyone want to do this?

"The educational experience is hard to match. The competition is nationally known. It brings recognition to the university. And, almost every year at Reno, the president of a corporation will, on the spot, make offers for jobs," Label said.

Some of this year's judging committee will include, the president of Ballys, the president of a life insurance company, the president of Aerojet General, the chairman of the board of Sierra Pacific Power, the president of Harrah's Hotels, and the president and publisher of several Reno newspapers.

Oral presentation skills are also tested when a two hour presentation is also given to the judges.

By the time the final judging rolls around, the winning team will have been evaluated in several areas. It is considered to be a "game" with the winner being ahead, but the judges are looking for the corporation that will be productive into the future as well.

"They look for a team that isn't necessarily in a position to be number one today," Label said, "but for

one that can go on to be strong into the future."

Label said he is confident in the team. This will be his fifth trip to the competition in Reno, having gone before with his team from University of San Diego.

He said, "The manual this team has made up is by far the best I have ever seen. This team has worked harder than any team I've ever worked with. I think we're peaking at the right time."

McMichael agrees. "This is so enthralling. You get so involved you find you have to discipline yourself to do your other studies because this becomes all you want to do," he said.

The team representing UNLV consists of Gaillard Peck, Mark Hettner, Danny Siciliano, Vanessa Florence, Terry McMichael and Michael Close.

Dr. Norval Pohl, dean of the College of Business and Economics initiated the project and offers continued monetary and moral support.

Label compares the final competition in Reno to a marathon runner. "A runner competes for 26.1 miles and will tell you that he or she hits a 'wall' at about 20 miles.

Only perseverance and hard work will get them through the wall and on to the finish. It takes a lot of intestinal fortitude and this team is prepared for it," he said.

"When it's all over with, I've never not had a student say to me 'This is by far the best-experience I've had in my entire university life,'" he added.



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