



2017-2018

# CAPSTONE CUP ANNUAL REPORT

# THE CAPSTONE CUP COMPETITION IN BRIEF

During the Capstone Cup, teams of undergraduate business students have one week to digest a complex business situation, develop a creative and practical solution, and build a presentation that communicates their analyses and recommendations to a panel of judges comprised of faculty, business community members, and alumni.

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**Critical thinking permeates  
every part of the competition.**

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The teams compete in three rounds of a tournament-style competition. Every College of Business Administration student enrolled in an on-campus section of the undergraduate capstone strategy course (Corporate & Business Strategy) participates in this competition, impacting over 300 students each year (approximately 150 students each semester).



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The Capstone Cup allowed for my team's diverse set of skills and business knowledge to take everything we had learned in our specific disciplines and challenged us to collaborate and think on a higher level than we were accustomed to. The Capstone Cup has led me to constantly be questioning the “why?” behind many business decisions that make the headlines, which has pushed me to think about business on more of a macro level and contemplate how these decisions fit into the overall strategic direction of the organizations.

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CLAYTON GIBSON, FALL 2017





# A UNIQUE CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

The Capstone Cup is a semester-long competition comprised of a kickoff event and three rounds of competition. The Capstone Cup was born at UNO College of Business Administration, and is unique to our school and our identity as a metropolitan university focused on preparing our students for success.

## KICKOFF EVENT

All students attend  
Team-building exercise  
Capstone Cup  
information

## ROUND ONE

35-40 teams  
Up to 5 rooms  
of presentations  
25+ external judges

## ROUND TWO

15-20 teams  
Up to 4 rooms  
of presentations  
20+ external judges

## FINALS EVENT

Four teams  
4+ executive judges  
Networking event and  
finalist presentations  
are open to public

## BY THE NUMBERS

7

competitions since 2015

1,023

participants since 2015

40%

of participants are female

30%

of participants are international students

7%

of participants are active military, veterans, or military dependent students

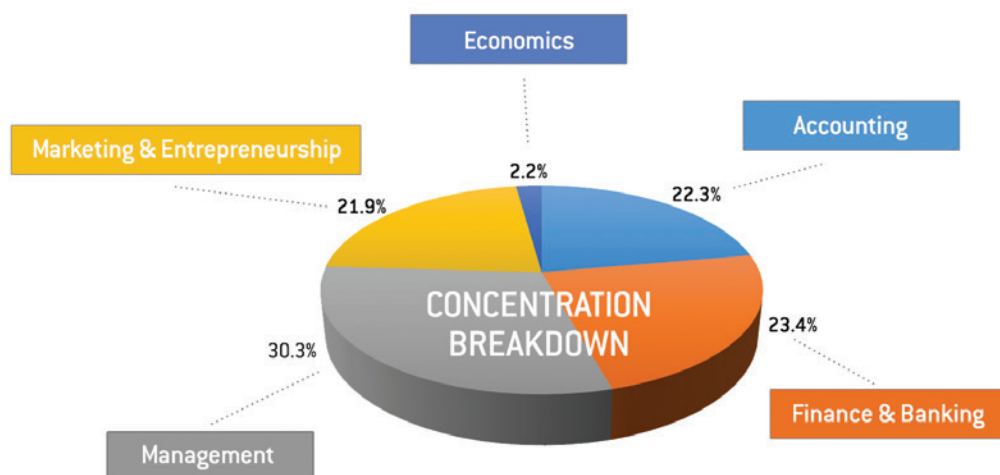
## ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

### FALL 2017

166 students  
40 teams  
46 judges  
9 concentrations

### SPRING 2018

108 students  
25 teams  
44 judges  
8 concentrations



\*Management totals include students concentrating in Management, Human Resource Management, and Supply Chain Management

\*Finance & Banking totals include students concentrating in Investment Science, Portfolio Management, and Real Estate





## FACULTY

Dr. Erin Bass | Dr. Brent Clark | Dr. Leif Lundmark  
Dr. Erin Pleggenkuhle-Miles



The Capstone Cup is a great opportunity for students across different disciplines to come together and solve real business problems. It is truly an impressive format and showcases the talented students at UNO. As a judge, I enjoyed seeing the progression of the teams from round 1 to the finals and watching them incorporate the feedback that we provided. I look forward to continuing to be involved in the Capstone Cup going forward!

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BRIAN WOOLFOLK, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SALES  
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, PACIFIC LIFE



# STUDENTS ON THE CASE

*Complex and practical cases are used throughout the competition so students get a glimpse of the strategic issues they will encounter in their careers and utilize what they learn during their undergraduate business curriculum to solve current, real-world issues.*

## FALL 2017 CASES



### Ingredients Delivered

As a young start-up in Omaha, Nebraska, Ingredients Delivered is a Meal Kit Delivery Service working to provide quality, affordable meals for the fast-paced modern family. However, keeping costs low and margins high in a competitive Omaha market is no easy task.



### Seagate Technology

Seagate is concerned that the future of their core product, hard-disk drives, is in question with the ongoing emergence of cloud services. In order to thrive for years to come, Seagate must find a way to stay profitable in a changing technological landscape.



### Ford Motor Company

Emerging technologies have altered the landscape of the automotive industry. Technological advances include autonomous, self-driving vehicles as well as electric powered vehicles, paired with changing consumer preferences for ridesharing and more environmentally conscious vehicles have created an uncertain future for the automotive industry. What should Ford do to stay with the times?

## SPRING 2018 CASES



### FreshDirect

FreshDirect is an online grocery shopping and delivery service based in New York City. Their website boldly claimed, "Our food is fresh, our customers are spoiled." However, many customers beg to differ. FreshDirect must make some strategic decisions if they are to live up to customer expectations in the highly competitive grocery industry.



### Canadian Solar

The solar power industry is young and growing fast. In the battle to win business, Canadian Solar must find a way to grow or at least maintain market share and successfully position in a highly competitive market. How can Canadian Solar maintain profitability as the price of solar panels continues to plummet?



### 3D Systems

As the originator of 3D printing, 3D Systems has spent over 30 years as a key player in the 3D printing industry. As a result of capricious demand and increased competition, the company's stock price has been volatile over the past several years. What is 3D Systems' next best move for future success?





# THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

BANKING | CONSULTING | RECRUITING | EDUCATION | ENERGY | HOTEL & HOSPITALITY  
INSURANCE | INVESTMENT | RESTAURANT | SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

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The Capstone Cup is a relevant demonstration of how a thought leader and professional engages effectively in the corporate world. The Department of Management team at University of Nebraska Omaha has created a true crucible of learning. One that presents current large business problems to a team of students, and in so doing requires collaboration, innovation and accountability within the team to emerge relevant and applicable solutions. The capstone course is practical experience with local area practitioners and instructors providing feedback to the teams of future business professionals validating solutions and approaches. It has been a pleasure to participate in this forum of learning and development and in so doing this be part of a process that develops behaviors that are valuable to high performance organizational cultures.

DR. JOHN ZURN, SENIOR DIRECTOR RESERVATIONS AND CUSTOMER CARE, RADISSON HOTEL GROUP

**90** judges from  
**29** area employers

**PARTICIPATED IN 2017-2018**

“

UNO is doing an incredible job of creating our next generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders. It has been an honor for me to assist in judging their capstone competitions. My company has been able to hire multiple students from this program and we can't wait to keep coming back!

ERIK BIRD, CEO, EAT FIT GO

# WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY



The capstone course pulled together these hands-on projects, key learning points, and networking opportunities. Not only did the business cases help us see how to tie together all the individual classes we've taken, they also gave us an opportunity to work in a team. Not all of the teams were perfect matches with each other, but that allowed us the opportunity to work through our differences and learn how to collaborate with people that have different perspectives than we do. Having a "specialty" was valuable, especially because up until this course, we've been in groups with people that have the same "specialty" as we do. Mixing it up and being with students that haven't learned everything we've learned was a valuable opportunity.

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JENNIFER FALLON, SPRING 2018



The Capstone Cup pulled together the efforts of the past 4 years in a way that was engaging, challenging, and fun. Working in cross-functional teams allows each individual student the opportunity to highlight their skills and showcase what they bring to the table. It pushed the boundaries of my mind because the industries that we analyzed were fields that I had never been previously exposed to. It pushed our team in research, discussion, and problem-solving. Ultimately, as I have been interviewing, the Capstone Cup is brought up in nearly every interview because it provided me with tangible examples of problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. I would do it all again!

---

JACOB HERR, SPRING 2018





*Over the years, we have been honored and pleased to partner with businesses and professionals across Omaha. Invaluable support has come in either prize sponsorship, distinguished judges or valuable input. Without our generous partners, the Capstone Cup wouldn't be possible. In return for their contributions, valued partners are recognized throughout communication messages on our media channels and have an opportunity to access the best talents that UNO CBA has to offer.*

**For sponsorship opportunities, contact:**  
**Dr. Erin Pleggenkuhle-Miles**  
 erinpiles@unomaha.edu



## PARTNER WITH US

LEARN MORE AT  
[CBA.UNOMAHA.EDU/CAPSTONECUP](http://CBA.UNOMAHA.EDU/CAPSTONECUP)

### THANKS TO OUR 2017–2018 SPONSORS

<b>Premiere Sponsor:</b>	TD Ameritrade sponsored prizes for all 1st place recipients
<b>Executive Sponsor:</b>	First Data sponsored prizes for all 2nd place recipients
<b>Corporate Sponsor:</b>	Union Pacific sponsored prizes for all 3rd place recipients
<b>Business Sponsor:</b>	Jet Linx sponsored prizes for all 4th place recipients



**First Data**



### SPONSORS FOR NETWORKING EVENTS

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 Sojern  
 Spreetail

TD Ameritrade  
 Union Pacific  
 Valmont Industries  
 Werner Enterprises



## 2017-2018 CAPSTONE CUP PARTICIPANTS

### FALL 2017

Colton Adams  
Abdullah Al Azizi  
Adham Al Bulushi  
Hanin Al Jabri  
Khadija Al Khusaibi  
Molly Al Mulki\*  
Mira Al Raisi  
Hasanaa Al-Douhani  
Muataz Almaneea  
Mohammad  
Almuhidib  
Max Anderson  
Tyler Anderson  
Hannah Barks\*  
Josh Barnes  
Jordan Becker  
Cameron Bessmer  
Brandon Booker  
Leslie Booker  
Ashley Bowling  
Steve Bruening  
Colin Buckley  
Katie Bullard  
Kaitlin Bush  
Lauren Butz

Riley Cahill\*  
Chris Calabro  
Connor Carbullido\*  
Ricky Cerda Nolasco  
Brandon Clark  
Josh Cochran  
Kody Collins  
Greg Cook  
Matthew Cordes  
Michael Cornelius  
Jake Cotton  
Brandon Crowe\*  
Rachel Crowe\*  
Joe Denker  
Ryan Dennell  
Sidney Dick  
Spencer Dillard  
Isaac Doty  
Luke Drazic  
Matthew Dugan  
Brandi Eitzen  
Clayton Elliott  
Ashlee Emerson  
Michelle Ervin  
Amanda Ewoldt  
Shangchao Fan  
Katelyn Fenton  
Zane Ficken

Brieland Fripp\*  
Clayton Gibson\*  
Aaron Gloyne  
Ayoub Hadi\*  
Holly Hall  
Dillon Hansen  
Megan Harley  
David Harper  
Jay Haskins  
Justin Hauder  
Brad Heldt  
Ashley Hobbs  
Lauren Hofmann  
Adam Homan  
Joshua Horton  
Alyssa Huus\*  
Wenlan Jiang  
Nathan Johnson  
Cori Kamerzell\*  
Bryan Katafiasz  
Sylver Kaufman  
Sam Khalil  
Taylor Kierscht  
Vanessa Klein  
Nate Kloewer  
Dalton Knight  
Michael Knudsen  
Paige Korten  
Stanton Krause

Erick Laitner  
Pauline Laughlin  
Crystal Leutzinger\*  
Allen Lewis  
Clayton Lidgett  
Erica Lopez  
Grace Manthey  
Gabriel Martinez  
Lopez\*  
Ben Maskus  
Alex Masters  
Christopher  
Mathiesen  
Kyle McKay\*  
Chris McWilliams  
Katelyn Meisinger  
Lupe Mejia Barrios  
Eddie Merrill  
Britney Meyer  
Trevor Miller  
Amina Mir  
Padam Mizar  
Leaston Moo  
Walker Moore  
Hilda Morales  
Dylan Morris  
Joselyn Mosby  
Andrea Moss

Danielle Nelson  
Eduardo Neri  
Huong Nguyen  
Thuy Nguyen  
Simone Ngwej  
Bri Nielsen  
Molly Niemerg  
Nathaniel Novak  
Thomas Nunez  
Brad Olsen  
Alli Orth  
James Otero  
Thomas Otero  
Cheyenne Paseka  
Devynn Patocka\*  
Alyssa Payton  
Vaughn Perez  
Sara Pinkelman  
Ellen Powell  
Ranjina Rai  
Audrie Ramirez\*  
Vernes Rasidkadic  
Haylie Rawlings  
Max Rennels  
Erin Rhoten  
Rachel Rice  
Samantha Roebuck  
Cameron Rose

Logan Sanders  
Jessica Schaaaf  
Ryan Shaneyfelt  
Matt Shepherd  
Liz Sherman  
Rachel Skolaski  
Andrew Smutzer  
Tanner Snow  
Nick Sorch  
Lexie Stephenson  
Thomas Stoller  
Austin Torneten  
Zaida Torres-  
Arredondo  
Zack Triggs  
Joe Vencil  
Jason Waltman  
Jingbiao Wang  
Colin Wattonville\*  
Matt Wesemann  
Tommy West  
Emily Wing  
Keegan Wingender  
Xuelian Wu  
Trevor Wulf  
Jialing Xie  
Catherine Yost  
Jessica Young\*





Connor Yourston  
Yunxi Yu  
Ben Zahm  
Terry Zenon

## SPRING 2018

Elise Adams\*  
Raul Aguilera  
Omar Almanza  
\*Ali Alsaadi  
Batoul Alshamas  
Colleen Anderson  
Emily Barber  
Allie Barnhart  
Martha Barragan  
Amy Bautista  
Chad Beck\*  
Christian Bertagni  
Shannon Betts  
Aly Bloemendaal  
Judy Bodewitz  
Kashya Burrell  
Marissa Calabro  
Brandon Cernik  
Tianye Chen  
Taylor Cobb  
Elizabeth Contreras

Davis Cope-  
Chleborad  
Nicholas Courcier  
Jonathan Cumbee  
Erin Dabbs\*  
Alexis d'Amato  
Sadie Denker  
Junchen Dong  
\*Carlo Eby  
Brandon Ellis  
Tyler English  
Jen Fallon\*  
Courtney Fannon  
Mikayla Gasper  
Nick Grage  
Alex Guerra  
Trevor Hagedorn  
Lauren Harding  
David Hatfield  
Jed Heeren  
Johnathan Heinz  
Kaylen Hering  
Janet Hernandez  
Jacob Herr  
Allie Hodge  
Theresa Holly  
Alec Irlbeck  
Eric Jensen

Jennifer Johnson  
Shane Kalin  
Jodi Kalvelage  
Kyle Kautzman  
Skyler Kilzer\*  
Rachel Lajba  
Tristan Lampe  
Parker Leinbaugh  
Alex Liss  
Alex Marino  
Shelby McBride  
Cody McDaniel  
Matthew Meiners  
Addison Meyers  
James Mitnik Jr.  
Jessica Moore  
Casey Morris\*  
Rachel Moudy  
Hannah Mumm  
Rikker Nguyen  
Gabrielle Paczosa  
Jake Page\*  
Emily Palestino  
Kyle Pane\*  
Nicholas Payne  
Jim Pelster  
Jake Pfeiffer  
Jonathan Plance

Nick Polodna  
Nigeena Rahmazai  
Michele Ramirez  
Conner Reveling  
Cole Richter  
Chris Riedmann\*  
Taylor Robb  
Maria Roman  
Katie Salerno\*  
Mitch Scanlan  
Carlee Schardt  
Brandon Sieg  
Kennedy Sloan\*  
Brandon Smith  
Trey Smith  
Tyler Stansberry\*  
Samantha Suponchick  
Shannon Suver  
Zheng Tantai  
Jared Taute  
Christian Theisen  
Caitlyn Thierstein\*  
Sidi Toure  
Drew Turner  
Rachel Van Arsdall  
John Van Haute\*

“

The Capstone Cup enabled me to take what I had learned in the classroom over the past four years and apply it to real world problems. Participating in the Capstone Cup challenged me to look for unique, yet realistic, solutions to complex issues. I really enjoyed working with people with different backgrounds and majors. Having a lot of different perspectives and ideas around one table ultimately made us stronger as a team."

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CARLO EBY, SPRING 2018

\*Finalists



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The UNO Capstone Cup program gives students real world/industry problems to work with, and it is exciting to see how the students strategically process, brainstorm and plan a solution format. I have seen firsthand the benefits of hiring a student who has been through the Capstone Cup experience. Their leadership, presentation and business problem-solving skills are advanced through the program, plus the students have the opportunity to make valuable connections with professionals local to the area. I am honored to have judged two previous Capstone Cup groups and look forward to judging many more to come!

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DANELLE SVARE, CORPORATE RECRUITER, GREEN PLAINS INC.

