



Dean's Club Strategic Business Case Competition

Rules and Guidelines

- Each competing team will consist of two to four team members.
- To be eligible for the undergraduate case competition, each team member must be a declared Walker College of Business major and enrolled in at least one WCOB class in Spring 2026.
- To be eligible for the graduate case competition, each team member must be a graduate student in the MBA, MSADA, MSA or IOHRM program and enrolled in at least one graduate class in Spring 2026.
- Accelerated Master's students who have not completed their bachelor's degree are eligible to participate in the undergraduate case competition.
- No individual may compete on more than one team and teams should NOT work together in their preparation.
- The case will be released on March 16th. There will be two opportunities for teams to ask questions of the client described in the case. The first "Issuing" call will be held on Friday, March 20. We will review the data as presented and allow teams to ask any initial questions. An additional "Follow-up" call with the client will be held on Wednesday, April 1, to respond to any verbal questions as well as to answer any written questions submitted prior to the call. The Zoom recording and transcript will then be posted in a shared Google Drive folder available only to registered team members, team advisors, the client, and case competition staff.
- No participant is permitted to contact the client and/or their customers, vendors, etc. outside of the scheduled conference calls.
- Depending on the needs of the client and case, participants may be required to sign a nondisclosure agreement.

- Each team will be granted 10 minutes to present their analysis and recommendations. A brief introduction of team members will not count against the time limit. Each team member is expected to participate during the 10-minute oral presentation.
- Video submissions of oral presentations and electronic versions of accompanying presentations will be due no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, April 10, 2026. Any submissions received after this time will not be considered for judging.
- Live Question & Answer (Q&A) sessions will be held on Friday, April 17, 2026 at the Appalachian Regional Business Symposium on the Boone Campus. Finalist teams will be notified and assigned a 10-minute time slot during the week of April 13, 2026. Online students are encouraged to attend in person but may join via Zoom at their team's appointed time.
- Teams will be scored based on their video presentation and accompanying files (i.e. PowerPoint or similar presentation platforms). Teams are also welcome to use additional materials to support the presentation of their recommendations.
- Teams must be sure to document ALL sources of information to guard against plagiarism. The list of sources, including disclosed use of approved-AI tools, does not need to be part of the verbal presentation, but it should be included with the submitted files.
- Teams may use note cards or cue cards to aid them during the presentation.
- Links to all presentations will be made available via a shared Google Drive folder following the competition. Presentations should not be shared outside of the presenting institution.

Judging Criteria

The judges will base their decision on both the quality of content and the quality of presentation skills. Keep in mind that a Case Competition is designed to refine key business skills such as research, analysis, presentation, creativity, and teamwork. Above all, teams should remember that this is a live case competition and the solutions presented should be viable for real-world implementation. Judges may be industry professionals, professors, or other business leaders with knowledge of the factors influencing the case problem.

During the question and answer portion of the competition, finalist teams will be asked questions related to the information they presented. There may not be right or wrong answers, but these questions give the team an opportunity to demonstrate the depth of their analysis and reasoning behind their recommendations. Part of a team's score will be based on the ability to concisely articulate well-reasoned responses to judges' questions. Other scoring factors will include understanding of case background, real-world viability of the proposed strategy, professionalism of the team members, and logical flow of the presentation.

FAILURE TO ABIDE BY ALL OF THESE RULES MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION.

ALL DECISIONS BY JUDGES AND WCOB CASE COMPETITION OFFICIALS ARE FINAL.