

Students advance in national accounting competition

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For the first time, a Tulane University team is advancing to the national level in the accounting division of [Challenge](#), a competition held by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) through the A. B. Freeman School of Business.

The competition, held each fall, challenges undergraduate students to act as PwC consultants for a hypothetical company. Students work in teams of four or five to pitch a business strategy to a judging panel of three PwC partners.

This year's winning team is made up of sophomores Neil Barot, Sara Scott, Sarah Lawhorne, Andrew Landsiedel and Michael Kreisman. The team ranked first out of 14 other teams at Tulane, and emerged in the top five out of more than 750 teams nationally.

The team attributes much of its success to the academic diversity of the group. This is the first year that PwC opened the competition to students of all majors.

“Having five people who are all accounting or finance majors is functionally the same as having one or two people on the entire team,” said Landsiedel, an [Altman scholar](#) double-majoring in economics and finance. “Having different people fill different areas of expertise makes the group a lot stronger.”

The team's wide range of knowledge, however, also posed a challenge.

“I think the only challenge with our presentation was that we had too much material and too many ideas,” said Barot, a computer science and business major. “We really had to do some pruning to make the most concise and most useful 10-minute presentation.”

The group will focus on perfecting the timing as the students prepare for the upcoming national competition, which will be held this January in Washington, D.C.

“I think they have a great shot,” said Christine Smith, faculty mentor for the competition. “The partners were just totally blown away by their breadth of knowledge. I'm super proud of them and so thankful to PwC for the opportunity.”

Samah Ahmed is a sophomore majoring in public health and political science at Tulane University.