

Andy Bargerstock guides his

# MBA STUDENTS

to success in international competition



Andy Bargerstock has a simple goal: he wants to turn accountants into managers. And by objective measures, he's succeeding. In an international management competition among students from universities around the country, teams of students from the MBA program that he heads have consistently finished among the top 10%, including a first-place finish last year. And this year, all four teams that entered the competition finished among the top 10%.

### Learning to be decision-makers

"Our students learn how to think like an executive," Andy says. "They see how the parts fit together in a whole, giving a comprehensive view. This results in a better ability to make decisions."

He says higher education in the U.S. has the reputation of producing very good technical accountants who are not so competent as decision-makers. This problem can be traced to traditional teaching methodologies that require students to solve problems with definite answers. "In the real world, decision-makers face a complex world of uncertainties," he says.

His students in the accounting MBA receive a solid grounding in accounting, as well as coursework in important management skills such as human resource management, marketing, and finance.

### Putting their skills on the line

But then he takes things a step further,

having them team up and participate in a computer-based simulation created by CAPSIM, the leading business game provider. The students were evaluated on the growth of their company based on financial results, customer perspectives, internal business development, and learning and growth initiatives.

For six weeks the students guide a fictitious company through four practice rounds of decision-making and then eight rounds of decision-making, with each round representing a year of business activity. The students analyze and assess a variety of reports about the industry, competitors, and the company's own past performance results.

The scope is daunting: They have to decide on research and development strategies, marketing tactics, sales and production forecasts, financing requirements, human resource management tactics, and total quality management initiatives — all the while being alert to balancing a set of key performance metrics for both short-term and long-term growth.

### Topping most other MBA schools

And the students have performed brilliantly. For three consecutive years they've placed in the top 10, competing with 100 or more teams from schools such as Villanova University, the University of Maryland, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Texas at Dallas, and Drexel University.

In addition to last year's first-place finish, this year's impressive results had teams scoring in the 97th, 95th, 93rd, and 90th percentiles among university teams participating in the CAPSIM Foundation simulation for the six-month period ending July 1, 2012.

"When our students perform so well against some of the best business schools in North America, it validates the quality of our students' skills in integrated decision-making," Andy says.

### What's his secret?

What in their MUM education gives these students an extra edge?

Andy says MUM's block system enables students to get to know one another because they have more contact time with both professors and fellow classmates. Also, the interactive teaching style encourages students to question and debate ideas.

In addition, during the MBA, students participate in various business simulations that require teamwork in which they have the opportunity to practice communication, negotiation, and consensus-building.

And Andy says that the students' practice of the Transcendental Meditation technique is key. "It helps the students to maintain a broad comprehension. They say the practice helps give an expanded awareness and sharper focus — qualities essential in the competition and in successful management." ■



Scoring in the 97th percentile in the CAPSIM simulation were team members Enkhbat Byambaakhuu (Mongolia), Laxman Bhandari (Nepal), Visakha Ly (Cambodia), Phirada Khuon (Cambodia), and Nan Cao (China).



Andy Bargerstock may be the ideal person to groom accountants to be managers. He earned an MBA with an emphasis in accounting at the University of Pittsburgh, and is a Certified Public Accountant. In addition to earning a PhD in management at MUM, he also has more than 20 years of hands-on experience as an entrepreneur, national human resource management business consultant, and a sales executive with a Fortune 500 subsidiary.