

Haskayne students compete for \$100,000 in startup cash

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How far would you go for a chance to win \$100,000 to start your own business? Brave the stage for a Dragon's Den audition? Apply to programs, accelerators, or attend events trying to catch the attention of potential investors?

Second-year Haskayne students need look no further than the RBC Fast Pitch Competition — the flagship culmination of a newly launched, first-of-its-kind in Canada course in entrepreneurial thinking: ENTI 317.

ENTI 317 instructor Houston Peschl predicts the competition is going to be a tight race. “I think the competition is going to be very strong as teams in both terms produced some very innovative and feasible business models. I am very impressed with all of the groups’ commitment, hard work and dedication to this innovative course project.”

ENTI 317 is designed as a hands-on course focused on the active learning of core principles and class concepts through interaction, debate, multimedia and collaboration. Student teams apply key learnings by creating their own new venture concept as part of the RBC Fast Pitch Competition. Teams develop a business plan and receive guidance and mentorship throughout the semester as they prepare to pitch their business to a panel of experts.

This intensive, experiential course saw 450 students from the fall and winter semesters collectively put in 782 hours of in-depth consultations with industry experts, 208 hours of rigorous problem-solving, and were supported by 90 business advisers, 52 industry consultants, and 50 judges. Ninety student teams competed to be one of 12 finalists to pitch their idea in front of a panel of esteemed judges on April 17.

“The caliber of judges that the Hunter Centre has arranged is staggering in depth of experience, and really look forward to the questions from them,” says Peschl.

During each semester, student teams had the opportunity to engage directly with entrepreneurs and business professionals who graciously volunteered their time. These engagement points are designed to support teams as they evaluate different opportunities, refine the scope of their business concept and seek answers to specific questions.

These experts helped the teams focus on viable business ideas and gave them suggestions on next steps to ensure that the business plans would be sustainable. Each student team submitted a video pitch to be evaluated in the



The RBC Fast Pitch Competition is the culmination of ENTI 317, a groundbreaking new course in entrepreneurial thinking offered by the Haskayne School of Business.

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first round of the competition. The top ten teams from each lecture (30 in total per semester) advanced to the semi-final round, which included an in-class live pitch to a panel of expert judges. The RBC Fast Pitch Competition finals will feature 12 student teams pitching for more than \$100,000 in cash and in-kind prizes to help turn their business idea into reality.

Learn more about the RBC Fast Pitch Competition.

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