

MONEY MONEY MONEY!

Students learn the business — Trump-style

BY JESSICA KING
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"You're Fired" may not be a phrase often heard in classrooms, but television is becoming reality for a group of marketing students this fall.

The NIU marketing department is offering its first annual marketing apprentice class, in which teams of students compete for scholarships and continued "employment." Every week two students will face the humiliation of losing their spots on the teams, and their firings will be captured on film.

The fired students still have to attend class but no longer participate in the out-of-class tasks.

Based on the popular TV show starring Donald Trump, the MAC is being taped by media studies students under the supervision of Laura Vazquez, assistant professor in the Department of Communication.

The idea for the one-credit-hour class came to several students and faculty members in the marketing department after watching Trump's show, said Denise Schoenbachler, marketing department chair.

Four teams of four people will have to complete marketing tasks and face judgment from the three so-called NIU

"Trumps," Dean DeBiase, chairman and CEO of Start-Up-Partners, Joe Cullinane, chairman and CEO of Joe Cullinane, Inc., and Myron Siegel, a trustee on the NIU Board of Trustees and president of Myron E. Siegel & Associates, Ltd.

The videos created by the media students will help the judges determine the winners. The contestants' grades will depend on how long they can stay in the game.

Grades aren't the only incentive, as the winning team will garner a \$1,000 scholarship for each of its members, and the second-place team will receive four \$500 scholarships.

The first day of class, the students got to feel \$1,000 in dollar bills to get a sense of what they could win through hard work.

Even getting into the class was a challenge, as the students had to apply to get a spot on a team.

"We have high hopes for this class," Schoenbachler said. "The 16 students who came forward are top ones — very energetic."

Amy Koscielski, a senior marketing major and student-contestant, said she is not worried about being fired.

"I'm a hard worker," she said.

The first task for the MAC students is to create a question-



COURTESY PHOTO

Joe Cullinane, left, and Dean DeBiase show the marketing apprentice class what \$1,000 looks like. Class members can win a \$1,000 or \$500 scholarship.

naire that assesses student perceptions of cheating.

Anyone can watch the classes live from 6 to 8 p.m. Mondays in Barsema Hall, Room 140. Both Schoenbachler and Vazquez hope to show the taped classes on Channel 8 and on the local cable access channel.

"For the first shooting, we tried to capture the dynamics of the group," Vazquez said.

Two graduate students in the communication department, Kristie Woodin and Neal Cervone, are responsible for directing the other students and finishing the tapes for the MAC.

Schoenbachler said she requested permission to use the concept from "The Apprentice" but never heard back from the show's creators.

"We modeled the class after the show but made some changes too," she said. "For example, there is a winning team, not a winning individual. The class is competitive, like the show, and very entertaining."

Schoenbachler said she does not know of any other colleges are doing anything like the MAC.

The project runs Aug. 23 to Oct. 4.