Guidelines and Eligibility

Student Teams
The Graves Business Plan Competition is open to full-time undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. To compete in the Graves Business Plan Competition, students may form teams of up to five undergraduates. The lead team member must be a full-time undergraduate student at UT Knoxville. The following clarifying restrictions apply:

- **Prior Graves Business Plan Competition Winners:** Student teams who have competed and finished in the top three in a previous year’s Graves Business Plan Competition may not compete with the same plan in a subsequent year’s competition.
- **UT Knoxville Campuses:** The Graves Business Plan Competition is restricted to full-time undergraduate students attending UT Knoxville or the UT Institute of Agriculture.

Ownership of the Venture
Ventures must be owned by UT undergraduate students. A venture owned by a non-student, in which a student has been given equity for a business plan, is not eligible to compete.

Judging
Awarding of prizes is at the discretion of the judges.

Nature and Status of the Venture
The competition is for new, independent ventures in concept, seed, startup, or early growth stage. The following restrictions apply:

- **Professional Investment:** Any existing company or idea that has received angel or venture capital financing prior to the competition is ineligible for this competition. Funding from personal sources including “family and friends” is allowed for competition applicants.
- **Venture Type Exclusions:** The following ventures are generally excluded from the competition: buy-outs, expansions of existing companies, real estate syndications, tax shelters, franchises, licensing agreements for distribution in a different geographical area, and spin-outs from existing corporations.