The staff of The Bank of Tampa enjoyed working with the graduate students in the Strategic Analysis Program and were impressed with the depth and breadth of their knowledge…and with their creative thinking.

— A. G. Divers, President, The Bank of Tampa

At College Hunks Hauling Junk, we were overwhelmed with good ideas when our company was the focus of the Case Study Competition. The student teams examined every inch of the company and challenged us with some great questions and great suggestions. We look forward to participating again in the future.

— Nick Friedman, President and co-founder, College Hunks Hauling Junk

I found the Strategic Analysis Program provided by The University of Tampa to be a valuable experience for our company. The information that was provided by the MBA students opened our eyes to a new direction for our member retention initiatives. We found the project team to be professional, courteous, and at all times respectful of the value of time and resources.

— Geoff Dyer, President/CEO, Lifestyle Family Fitness

In 1999, Vincent Naimoli, Chairman Emeritus of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, created The Naimoli Institute for Business Strategy at The University of Tampa. He intended to provide students, as well as the greater Tampa Bay business community, with a unique learning opportunity known as the Strategic Analysis Program. The Naimoli Institute’s mission is to provide opportunities for innovative learning about strategy to students and organizations throughout the Tampa Bay region.

Every semester at least 200 students in the John H. Sykes College of Business are formed into cross-functional teams charged with evaluating the strategy of a Tampa Bay organization. Each team collects primary and secondary data before making a comprehensive assessment about the effectiveness of the organization. Under the direct supervision of a professor, each team is expected to demonstrate expertise in management, finance, marketing, accounting and IT. The project concludes with the team making recommendations on how the organization can improve its strategy. Feedback from past clients has been universally positive. The Strategic Analysis Program has provided innovative, thought-provoking and helpful business ideas to hundreds of companies in the Tampa Bay region.
MBA TEAMS
Each team of MBA students is assigned to one organization or company for the semester. The team will work with its client to define a scope of work and a set of deliverables. Some clients prefer the team focus on a narrow set of strategic issues. For example, a client might want to know whether it should diversify into a new product line. Other clients prefer to give less direction, asking the team to identify strategic issues and solutions from a blank slate. In either case, each team will spend hundreds of hours on its project. At the end of the semester, the team will produce a written report in excess of 100 pages and an oral presentation given to the company owners. Companies pay a fee of $300 to participate with an MBA team, but the fee is waived for all nonprofit organizations.

UNDERGRADUATE TEAMS
Each semester all the undergraduate teams in the Strategic Analysis Program participate in the Case Study Competition. One local company is selected to be the focus of the competition. The director of the Naimoli Institute writes a brief case study about the company and distributes it to all students in the course. During the semester, the company is expected to host an on-site tour for all the students to visit the facility. Then, each team must be given one or two opportunities to meet face-to-face with company managers for a question and answer session. Near the end of the semester, professors will select four or five teams as the finalists for the competition. Each finalist team will make a presentation to a panel of judges, composed of owners and managers from the case study company. After hearing all the presentations, the judging panel will select the 1st and 2nd place winners of the Case Study Competition. The company is expected to award prize money of at least $3,000.

ELIGIBILITY
To participate in the Strategic Analysis Program, organizations must meet only a few criteria. First, the organization must be past its start-up phase. Typically we prefer organizations that are at least four years old, have at least five full-time employees and are generating total revenue of more than $500,000 annually. Second, the organization must have its headquarters (or a major division) located in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, or Manatee county. Third, the organization must be willing to disclose information about its financial performance, strategy, customers and goals. All students and their professors will sign non-disclosure agreements. Providing this information to the student teams implies that the organization will make time to meet with students and provide helpful answers to questions they ask.

HOW TO SIGN UP
The number of organizations admitted to the Strategic Analysis Program is determined by student enrollment. Approximately 50 organizations participate in the program during a typical calendar year. Organizations can start the program in late August for the fall semester or late January for the spring semester. For more information about the program or to fill out an application, visit www.ut.edu/naimoli.

Companies who have participated in the Strategic Analysis Program include:
- First Citrus Bank
- The Florida Aquarium
- The Outdoor Kitchen Store
- Kalupa’s Bakery
- Modular Mailing Systems, Inc.
- Pebble Creek Golf Club
- Columbia Restaurant Group

The director of the Naimoli Institute is Dr. Jody Tompson. He can be reached at (813) 258-7441 or jtompson@ut.edu

The Naimoli Institute for Business Strategy