

**MBA D700**  
**Case Analyses and Presentations**  
**Fall 2017 Course Outline**  
**Deans' Office Course**  
**DeGroote School of Business**  
**McMaster University**

**COURSE OBJECTIVE**

Through the case method, students place themselves in the role of the decision maker. As the decision maker within a specified context, they must define the problem, gather and organize relevant information, perform necessary analyses, develop feasible alternative courses of action, evaluate alternative choices and recommend and defend the best course of action with detailed implementation and contingency plans. Appropriate experts will provide diagnostic and analytical foundations and students will receive detailed feedback throughout the course to further develop their analytical and presentation skills. MBA students wishing to represent the DeGroote School of Business at national/international case competitions must take this course or audit a specified subset of this course.

**INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

<p><b>Dr. Milena Head</b> Instructor headm@mcmaster.ca Office: RJC 432 Tel: (905) 525-9140 x20567 Office Hours: by appointment</p>	<p><b>Esraa Abdelhalim</b> TA abdelhae@mcmaster.ca Office: DSB A211 Tel: (905) 525-9140 x26396 Office Hours: by appointment</p>
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**Course Website:** <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

**COURSE ELEMENTS**

Avenue:	Yes	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	Yes	Global view:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	Yes	Written skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	Yes	Oral skills:	Yes
Experiential:	Yes	Guest speaker(s):	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Credit Value:	3

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The case method is an experiential learning method that brings realism to problem solving. Numerous scholars credit case analysis with developing effective decision-making and critical thinking skills. Cases allow students to directly apply and integrate theories from various business disciplines to real-world situations/problems. Students will be working in teams and will have the opportunity to present their analysis and recommendations to a panel of academic and industry experts. As such, they will also develop effective presentation, team management and communication skills.

During the first few weeks of the course, students will be provided with a strong foundation of analysis tools and techniques, problem solving methodologies and effective presentation and communication approaches through lectures and in-class simulations. The remainder of the course will allow student teams to practice and continuously refine their case analysis and presentation skills. A variety of formats will be utilized to simulate and prepare students for various case competition settings (i.e. 3-hour case; 24-hour case; one-week case)

In alignment with the DeGroote School of Business' Statement of Purpose, this course emphasizes an effective experiential learning approach to prepare students for market-ready success. The instructor will draw from faculty and industry experts across business disciplines to provide foundation and feedback for student development. Cases will be carefully selected to represent various industries and disciplines. As such, this course is being offered through the Associate Dean's office as a Faculty-wide course.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to complete the following key tasks:

- Identify important and relevant information for making business decisions.
- Identify key issues for an organizational situation, based on urgency and importance dimensions.
- Utilize appropriate analysis techniques to assess industry and organizational contexts.
- Generate realistic alternatives for various organizational situations, from which a well reasoned course of action is determined.
- Apply and integrate theories from various business disciplines to real-world situations.
- Build, foster and manage effective teams.
- Demonstrate effective presentation skills.
- Handle challenging questions directly following a presentation.
- Demonstrate critical evaluation and critiquing skills.

## REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

<b>Lecture Notes, Assignments and other course content</b>	\$ FREE
Download from the D700 website <a href="http://avenue.mcmaster.ca">http://avenue.mcmaster.ca</a>	
<b>Business D700 Cases Course Pack, Fall 2017, Editor: M. Head</b>	\$ 75.95

## EVALUATION

The components of the course grade will be weighted as follows, tentatively. The instructor reserves the right to modify the weightings to adjust for more or less material covered during the term.

### *Components and Weights*

<b>Case Presentations</b> (Team)	Multiple formats (best 6 out of 7)	60%
<b>Presentation Skills</b> (individual)	Best 5 out of 7	15%
<b>Critiques</b> (individual)	Presenter's Podium	10%
	Written critiques of other teams	10%
	Presentation self-critique	5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## GRADE CONVERSION

At the end of the course your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme:

Letter Grade	Percent	Points
A+	90-100	12
A	85-89	11
A-	80-84	10
B+	75-79	9
B	70-74	8
B-	60-69	7
F	00-59	0

## COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

Students who are uncomfortable directly approaching an instructor regarding a course concern may choose to send a confidential and anonymous e-mail to the Area Chair for Information Systems (Dr. Brian Detlor [detlorb@mcmaster.ca](mailto:detlorb@mcmaster.ca)) or the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research (Dr. Khaled Hassanein [hassank@mcmaster.ca](mailto:hassank@mcmaster.ca)):

<http://mbastudent.degrootemcmaster.ca/contact/anonymous>

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TA's directly via e-mail must send messages that **originate from their official McMaster University e-mail account**. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. **E-mails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to an Administrative Assistant.**

## **TEAM CASE PRESENTATIONS**

Team case presentations is worth 60% of your final grade. There are seven team case presentations throughout the term. The best six of these seven will be used to determine this portion of your evaluation. Teams of 4 to 5 students will conduct case analyses and present them in class. Cases will follow various formats to best match the formats of the case competitions that students will participate in. Cases will be distributed appropriately according to the case format (i.e. one week in advance of presentation; 24 hours in advance of presentation; 3 hours in advance of presentation; 1.5 hours in advance of presentation). **Students must purchase the D700 course pack**, which will cover the cost of case licences as well as the use of Presenter's Podium.

The length of presentations and questions & answer period will depend on the format of the case (in alignment with case competition formats). Students are expected to make effective use of material discussed in class as well as other resources available from the Web or specialized relevant references. The mark of the team presentation will be based on how professional and comprehensive the presentation is, and how well the Q&A period was handled by the team.

## **PRESENTATION SKILLS WITHIN GROUPS**

Each student will be assessed individually on her/his contribution to the group presentations described above. This evaluation will reflect the student's abilities to deliver a professional and convincing section of each group presentation. The evaluation will also depend on the student's abilities in fielding questions following the presentations of her/his group. Individual presentation marks will be given for each presentation. The top five presentation marks for a particular student will constitute the grade on this component (3% for each of the top five presentation marks).

## **CRITIQUES**

Students are required to assess the performance of other groups who are presenting each week. Constructive and detailed feedback is expected on the content as well as the presentation skills of the presenting groups. A standard evaluation form will be used for the case critiques, which **must be submitted via Avenue by the Tuesday (noon) following the presentation**. These critiques will help to further develop the critical assessment skills of evaluators as well as provide further quality feedback to presenters.

Additionally, students will have their first case presentation video recorded so that they can self-assess their presentation skills. A written report on their presentation skills will be due one week after the presentation. The written report will focus on students' self-assessment of what they did well in their presentation and identification of opportunities for improvement.

## **PRESENTER'S PODIUM**

For 5 consecutive weeks (Sept 25 – Oct 29) you will have an opportunity to practice your presentation and evaluation skills through an online application called Presenter's Podium. During these 5 weeks you will video record a weekly presentation that will be 2 or 3 minutes in length on a pre-determined topic. You will then be given the opportunity to grade your own video submission and the submissions of three or four randomly selected classmates.

Discussion topics for each week will be made available on Monday mornings. **Oral submissions are due each week by Wednesday at 10:00 pm. Evaluations must be posted by Friday at 10:00 pm. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

Half of your Presenter's Podium mark is based on your presentation (average of your self evaluation and peer evaluation of your presentation), which is due Wednesday at 10 pm. The second half of your Presenter's Podium mark is based on your evaluations (of your weekly group member presentations), which is due Fridays by 10 pm.

### **Instructions to setup your Presenter's Podium account:**

1. Go to [www.presenterspodium.com](http://www.presenterspodium.com) and select "create an account".
2. Create your account and confirm your registration in your email. Please make sure to check both your spam and junk mail for the confirmation email.
3. Sign in.
4. Go to courses and select "enroll for a course".
5. Once you are in "enroll for a course" select your institution, select your course: Case Analyses and Presentations - D700 and enter your product code. Your product code is: **4dfac006**
6. Week 1 will begin on September 25th.

### **Please note the following important points about Presenter's Podium:**

1. Cameras on your laptop/monitor/tablet/phone may be used to video record your presentation.
2. Once you enter into "record my presentation" you are unable to restart or leave that page. Please practice as much as you would like before entering.

3. Submitting a presentation alone does not give you points. Someone must evaluate you. Therefore, provide "yourself" a grade. This will give you points for presentation and evaluation regardless if anyone else evaluates you.
4. You must review your submission in your history once completed. It will show up immediately or you will see a gear icon indicating that it is being uploaded. If an issue has occurred, you will see an anchor and you need to contact Presenter's Podium at 1.888.673.9141 or [contact@presenterspodium.com](mailto:contact@presenterspodium.com).

### **IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Students are encouraged to engage actively in class discussions related to the material being presented by the instructor or guest experts, including the discussion of the sample case (Lego). Debate and challenge are important activities that help in the learning process and the willingness of individuals to engage in such activities with their classmates is appreciated.

### **TEAM WORK GUIDELINES**

A large component of the evaluation of this class will be based on team work. In order to achieve the full benefits expected from working in a team and to be fair to all team members, all members are expected to contribute equally to team work and to be fully informed of all aspects of their team assignments.

One negative aspect of working in teams is that conflict may arise among team members. Such conflict could negatively impact the progress of the team towards achieving its objectives. Hence, every effort should be made, by all team members to be reasonable and to avoid conflicts.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

[www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

### **MISSED ACADEMIC WORK**

Where students miss a regularly scheduled mid-term or class participation for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office, the weight for that test/participation will be distributed across other evaluative components of the course at the discretion of the instructor. Documentation explaining such an absence must be provided to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office within five (5) working days upon returning to school.

To document absences for health related reasons, please provide to Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and the McMaster University Student Health Certificate which can be found on the DeGroot website at <http://mbastudent.degroot.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-applications/>. Please do not use the online McMaster Student Absence Form as this is for Undergraduate students only. University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) medical certificates per year after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.

To document absences for reasons other than health related, please provide Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office the Petition for Relief for MBA Missed Term Work and documentation supporting the reason for the absence.

Students unable to write a mid-term at the posted exam time due to the following reasons: religious; work-related (for part-time students only); representing university at an academic or varsity athletic event; conflicts between two overlapping scheduled mid-term exams; or other extenuating circumstances, have the option of applying for special exam arrangements. Such requests must be made to the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office at least ten (10) working days before the scheduled exam along with acceptable documentation. Instructors cannot themselves allow students to unofficially write make-up exams/tests. Adjudication of the request must be handled by Student Experience – Academic (MBA).

If a mid-term exam is missed without a valid reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

## **STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

## **POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES**

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on AVENUE, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of MBA D700 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on AVENUE. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.



<b>COURSE SCHEDULE – FALL 2017</b>
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<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE/ TIMES</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
1	Sept 14 4:30 am - 6:30 pm	<b>Lecture:</b> Course overview and discussion of case competitions <b>Due:</b> E-mail Esraa ( <a href="mailto:abdelhae@mcmaster.ca">abdelhae@mcmaster.ca</a> ) by Monday Sept. 18 <sup>th</sup> , 12:00 noon completed Student Information Sheet and 6-Hats Spreadsheet (available on Avenue).
2	Sept 21 11:30 am - 4:30 pm	<b>Lecture:</b> Presentation and PowerPoint Skills <b>Due:</b> 5-minute 2 or 3 person team presentations (with PowerPoint)
3	Sept 28 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	<b>Lecture:</b> Finding relevant information <b>Lecture:</b> Case Competition Strategies (plus strategic analysis tools) <b>Due:</b> Read & prepare Lego case to discuss information needs <b>Due:</b> Presenter's Podium Week 1 (2 minute presentation)
4	Oct 5 11:30 am - 2:30 pm	<b>Lecture:</b> Financial Analysis Tools <b>Lecture:</b> Sustainability Tools <b>Due:</b> Prepare to discuss Lego case from Financial & Sustainability perspectives <b>Due:</b> Presenter's Podium Week 2 (2 minute presentation)
5	Oct 12 11:30 am - 3:00 pm	<b>CASE 1 – Strategy (numbers) - videotaped</b> - 1 week prep 20 minute presentation; 10 minute Q&A Presentations start at 11:30 am <b>Due:</b> Presenter's Podium Week 3 (3 minute presentation)
6	Oct 19 11:30 pm - 6:30 pm	<b>CASE 2 - Sustainability</b> - 3 hour prep 16 minute presentation; 10 minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:00 pm <b>Due:</b> Presenter's Podium Week 4 (3 minute presentation) <b>Due:</b> Self-critique and team assessment by 11:00 am <b>Expert Guests:</b> past case competitors (class goes until 6:30 pm)
7	Oct 26 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	<b>Ethics-in-Action Team presents and travel</b> <b>Due:</b> Presenter's Podium Week 5 (2 minute presentation)
8	Nov 2 11:30 am - 5:30 pm	<b>CASE 3 – Strategy (digital) – 3 hour prep</b> 16 minute presentation; 10 minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:30 pm
9	Nov 9 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	<b>Lecture:</b> Crisis Management Tools <b>Lecture:</b> Marketing Tools <b>Due:</b> Prepare to discuss Lego case from Crisis and Marketing perspectives

10	Nov 16 11:30 am - 5:30 pm	<b>CASE 4 – Marketing</b> - 3 hour prep 16 minute presentation; 10 minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:30 pm
11	Nov 23 12:30 pm - 5:00 pm	<b>CASE 5 – Crisis</b> – 1.5 hour prep 12 minute presentation; 8 minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:00 pm
12	Nov 30 12:30 pm - 6:00 pm	<b>CASE 6 – Live Case</b> 15 minute presentation; 8 minute Q&A Case distributed at 12:30 am; Q&A Session with company at 1:00 pm; draw for presentation spots that start at 3:00 pm
13	SAT Dec 3 SUN Dec 4*	<b>CASE 7 – The D700 Cup!</b> <b>24-Hour Case Competition</b>

\* during the first class we will determine if the D700 Cup will be held on Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup> or Sunday December 4<sup>th</sup> (depending on the impact of the CFA exam being on December 3<sup>rd</sup>).

**Please note that additional cases will be added to train teams for specific case competitions outside of the specified class times.**