

MBA D700
Case Analyses and Presentations
Fall 2021 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 should take this course or audit a specified subset of this course.

INSTRUCTOR AND TA INFORMATION

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| <p>Dr. Milena Head Instructor Professor of Info. Systems Wayne C. Fox Chair in Business Innovation headm@mcmaster.ca Office hours by appointment: RJC 432 https://mcmaster.zoom.us/my/milenahead</p> | <p>Spencer Early TA PhD student in Info. Systems earlys@mcmaster.ca Office hours by appointment</p> |
| <p>Course Website: http://avenue.mcmaster.ca Zoom Classes: https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/99015328430</p> | |

COURSE ELEMENTS

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|-----------------|---|---------------|---|-------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Credit Value: | 3 | Leadership: | Y | IT skills: | Y | Global view: | Y |
| Avenue: | Y | Ethics: | Y | Numeracy: | Y | Written skills: | Y |
| Participation: | Y | Innovation: | Y | Group work: | Y | Oral skills: | Y |
| Evidence-based: | Y | Experiential: | Y | Final Exam: | N | Guest speaker(s): | Y |

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

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|--|----------|
| Lecture notes and other course content | \$ FREE |
| Download from the D700 website http://avenue.mcmaster.ca | |
| Business D700 Cases Course Pack, Fall 2021, Editor: M. Head | \$ 41.95 |
| GoReact Presentation Practice Licence | \$ 38.50 |

EVALUATION

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|---|---|------------------|
| Case Presentations (Team) | Multiple formats (best 6 out of 7) | 60% |
| Presentation Skills (individual) | Best 5 out of 7 | 15% |
| Critiques (individual) | GoReact Written critiques of other teams Presentation self-critique | 12% 10% 3% |
| Total | | 100% |

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 that are uncomfortable in directly approaching an instructor regarding a course concern may send a confidential and anonymous email to the respective Area Chair or Associate Dean:

<http://mbastudent.degrote.mcmaster.ca/contact/anonymous/>

Students who wish to correspond with instructors or TAs directly via email must send messages that originate from their official McMaster University email account. This protects the confidentiality and sensitivity of information as well as confirms the identity of the student. Emails regarding course issues should NOT be sent to the 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 members 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 digital courseware**, which will cover the cost of all case licences use in the course.

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. Students will also assess their team's performance for this report.

GoReact

For 6 consecutive weeks (September 26 – November 6) you will have an opportunity to practice your presentation and evaluation skills through an online application called GoReact. During these 6 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 3 or 4 randomly selected classmates.

You must purchase a digital access code (via the McMaster Campus Store) to use the GoReact platform. This platform is available for your use until January 2022.

Each GoReact week has the following structure:

1. **Sunday 12:00 am:** Video assignment topic is released and access to recording begins.
2. **Wednesday 11:59 pm:** Deadline to submit your weekly video assignment.
3. **Thursday 12:00 am:** Access to evaluations begins.
4. **Saturday 11:59 pm:** Deadline to submit your evaluations (for yourself and the 3 or 4 other students assigned to you that week). The schedule for peer evaluations is provided on A2L. If one of the students that you have been assigned to evaluate does not complete their video assignment that week, you will not be penalized for completing fewer evaluations.

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 teamwork. 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 teamwork 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 INTEGRITY

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

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

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

This course uses on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), Zoom, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course.

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Where students miss a regularly scheduled deliverable or class participation for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic (MBA) office, the weight for that deliverable/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 DeGroote website at <http://mbastudent.degrote.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/participate in a deliverable 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 deliverable is missed without a valid reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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 A2L, 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 A2L. **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.

COURSE SCHEDULE – FALL 2021

| WEEK | DATE/ TIMES | ASSIGNMENT |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 RJC | Sept 16 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Lecture: Course overview and discussion of case competitions Due: E-mail Spencer (earlys@mcmaster.ca) by Monday Sept. 20 th , 12:00 noon completed Student Information Sheet and 6-Hats Spreadsheet (available on A2L). |
| 2 ZOOM | Sept 23 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm | Lecture: Finding relevant information Lecture: Art of Communication Due: Read and prepare Lego case to discuss information needs |
| 3 RJC | Sept 30 12:30 pm - 5:00 pm | Lecture: Presentation and PowerPoint Skills Due: 5-minute 3-person team presentations (with PowerPoint) Due: GoReact Assignment 1 (2-minute presentation) |
| 4 RJC | Oct 7 1:00 am - 4:30 pm | Lecture: Financial Analysis Tools Lecture: Case and Case Competition Strategies Lecture (Asynchronous): Marketing Tools (watch recording on A2L) Due: Prepare to discuss Lego case from a Finance perspective Due: GoReact Assignment 2 (2-minute presentation) |
| 5 RJC | Oct 14 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm | CASE 1 – Strategy with numbers (videotaped) - 1 week prep 20-minute presentation; 10-minute Q&A Due: GoReact Assignment 3 (3-minute presentation) |
| 6 ZOOM | Oct 21 11:30 am - 5:30 pm | CASE 2 - Marketing – 3-hour prep 15-minute presentation; 10-minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:30 pm Due: Self-critique and team assessment by 11:00 am Due: GoReact Assignment 4 (3-minute presentation) |
| 7 RJC | Oct 28 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm | Lecture: Sustainability Tools Lecture: Crisis Management Tools Due: Prepare to discuss Lego case from a Sustainability and Crisis perspective Due: GoReact Assignment 5 (2-minute presentation) |
| 8 RJC | Nov 4 11:30 am - 5:30 pm | CASE 3 – Sustainability – 3-hour prep 15-minute presentation; 10-minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:30 pm Due: GoReact Assignment 6 (2-minute presentation) |
| 9 ZOOM /RJC? | Nov 11 11:30 am - 5:30 pm | CASE 4 – Strategy – 3-hour prep 13-minute presentation; 7-minute Q&A Presentations start at 2:30 pm |

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| 10 RJC | Nov 18 11:30 am - 4:00 pm | CASE 5 – Crisis – 1.5-hour prep 12-minute presentation; 8-minute Q&A Presentations start at 1:00 pm |
| 11 RJC | Nov 25 11:30 am – 5:30 pm | CASE 6 – Live Case 15-minute presentation; 10-minute Q&A Case distributed at 11:30 am; Q&A Session with company at 12:00 pm; draw for presentation spots that start at 2:00 pm |
| 12 RJC | SAT Nov 27 Or SAT Dec 4 | CASE 7 – The D700 Cup! 24-Hour Case Competition |

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