

BusAdm K737

Cases in eBusiness, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Winter 2021 Course Outline

Information Systems (IS) Area

DeGroote School of Business

McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course offers MBA students an integrated learn-by-participation approach to draw insights from and share logical thinking about selective cases cutting across the domains of eBusiness, innovation, and entrepreneurship. It provides a capstone series of experiential learning to students via cases of varying length and complexity involving the applications of previously learned knowledge, frameworks, models and theories in leadership, the design of eBusiness processes, innovative strategies and beyond. Key issues underlying cases should be penetrated and fathomed along the critical dimensions of problem solving, managerial and policymaking, as well as evaluative judgments.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

K737
Dr. Joseph Tan (jt)
Instructor
tanjosep@mcmaster.ca
Office: RJC 256; By Arrangements
Office Hours: ½ Hr. before/after class
Tel: (905) 525-9140 x26166

TA for K737:
Leo Feng
fengl6@mcmaster.ca
Class in ZOOM
Zoom info to be posted on A2L
TUE 8:30-11:20 AM
January 12th – Apr 6th 2021

Guest Lecturers: May be scheduled from time to time but no more than two (2) separate class sessions; see Schedule and please consult Avenue weekly

COURSE ELEMENTS

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is taught chiefly via the case-method for MBAs. Unlike traditional classroom-based lectures, it is 100% online conducted both synchronously and asynchronously. In all sessions, students are expected to participate actively; however, participation grades are most heavily weighted in synchronous virtual discussions and presentations on a range of issues facing managers and entrepreneurs alike in managing eBusiness and innovation initiatives. A key goal here is to foster students with acute and essential skills critical for analyzing, critiquing, and presenting cases individually and collaboratively. Selected cases are carefully sequenced for ongoing class interactions, presentations, individual and collaborative reporting and debates. Although the course is focused on companies that are involved in eBusiness and new technology initiatives, the issues explored are not specific to IT/IS areas; in fact, the use of principles in strategic analysis, financial analysis, marketing, organizational structure and behaviors, managerial and financial accounting, and operations management in considering non-trivial and complex business situations to arrive at sound recommendations may be deployed. Finally, the course will also help prepare graduate students for case competitions.

Specific Topics covered include, but not limited to:

- Overview of eBusiness/eHealth & Strategy
- Frameworks for eBusiness/eHealth Strategy Analysis & Formulation
- Assessing online market opportunities for eBusiness/eHealth
- EBusiness/eHealth Innovation Models
- MCommerce/mHealth and Social Commerce Integration
- Venture Capital & Entrepreneurship
- Metrics & Evaluation
- B2B markets; and Implementation issues
- Privacy, Confidentiality, Security, Ethical & Legal Issues in eBusiness/eHealth;
- Innovative eBusiness/eHealth Systems
- Project management & case analysis concepts
- Future of eBusiness/eHealth

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to gain knowledge on the following areas:

- A. Assume the role of the decision maker/s or consultant to the decision maker/s in various organizational situations, and perform the following:
 1. Assess business models and strategies of eBusinesses and other commercial ventures in various stages of maturity;
 2. Assess situations facing organizations to identify critical issues, and prioritize these issues in terms of urgency and importance;
 3. Assess the health of a given industry using a variety of frameworks and metrics (e.g. PEST, Porter's five forces, SWOT) in addition to managerial accounting and finance and HR principles;
 4. Leverage entrepreneurship and innovation principles to generate alternatives which address the identified issues in various situations and contexts;
 5. Identify valid criteria for comparing the generated alternatives to select ones that are most suited for the situation at hand;
 6. Draw a realistic action plan to implement the selected alternatives;
 7. Draw a contingency plan to address any potential risks during the execution of the action plan;
 8. Professionally present the above analysis and action plan.

- B. Work effectively within teams to research, analyze and present cases;
- C. Develop critical evaluation and critiquing skills to professionally present the above analysis and action plan in competitive situations.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS & READINGS

1. **Texts: *Harvard Business Review*** – course pack, comprising a variety of selected cases. (Required: individual cases may be purchased separately **without** the “optional” cases); Access for purchase via <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/771564>
2. **Learning with Cases** - Mauffette-Leenders, et al., 1997, Richard Ivey School of Business (Optional);
3. All readings referenced may be made available to students via Avenue-to-Learn or via instructor’s direct emails/postings. Students are expected to read the assigned readings (as per schedule) prior to class-time.

COURSE FORMAT AND DELIVERY

In order to achieve maximum learning in a simulated hands-on environment, this course is conducted in three (3) stages/phases.

Phase-1 (5-6 weeks: Jan12-Feb23) focuses on less complex cases, emphasizing eBusiness, entrepreneurship, and innovation concepts as well as written case answers/critiquing (due prior to class – must not discuss individual case answers with others prior to synchronous discussions) v. in-person role play (slides due prior to class – all assigned questions should be addressed). The instructor guides all case sessions with active student participation. All of the assigned case readings must be completed **prior to Zoomed case discussions**. Questions relating to the cases will be posed for debates. Students who are submitting written responses to the assigned case questions must do so independently while formulating their **own** evaluations and recommendations. The Instructor will track weekly attendance to assign participation grades with *zero toleration for plagiarists (copycats)*.

Phase-2, following mid-term (Mar2-Mar23), emphasizes more complex cases requiring in-depth group thinking, debating and detailed reporting. Group case reports must provide a rationalized view of the opportunities, challenges, and risks within eBusiness, entrepreneurship, and innovation and prioritize key issues linked to well-articulated criteria alongside their envisioned recommended solution among alternatives and contingency plan(s). Students work in groups of 4-6 to analyze the assigned case and formulate their evaluations and strategic plans, resulting in a full group report to be graded by the TA. Case presentations should be accompanied with slides and a full 90-minute session has been assigned to each such presentation and discussion session separately!

Running in parallel to earlier phases of the course (Feb9-Apr6), **Phase-3** comprises developmental work for a specific real-world based case as part of a case competition, contributing to analytical insights while leveraging learning throughout the entirety of the course. Group final projects must be approved by the Instruction and will be peer-reviewed, as well as commented by the TA, resulting in a final report and a case guidance piece (of publishable quality) to be graded by the TA (oversee by the Instructor).

EVALUATION

Learning in this course will occur largely through case analysis and debates, with independent (individualized) v. group participation and/or reporting. Whenever possible, feedback and exchanges on cases of varying length and projects within the assigned topical domains will serve to evaluate performance of participating students. Additionally, a mid-term take home case will complement the case exercises. The components of each student’s grade will be as follows, adjusted for peer evaluation:

Components & Weights

<i>Component</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Grading Procedure</i>
In-class & online participation (Outstanding >18%; Good 14-17%; Pass 10-13%; Fail < 9% – Individual-Based) Pre-Mid-Term (Phase-1) Cases	25% (18% + 7%)	Observed Participation/Tracked Attendance, Tardiness & Regular v. Targeted In-Class contributions Overall participation graded @ 18% Phase-1 cases: Individual presentations/responses (not full case report) will be graded based on perceived quality of answers/analysis for the assigned case(s) as presented – these presentation grades total 7% will also form part of the overall individual participation grade of 25%. Individual written case answers must be submitted prior to respective case session(s) – TA
Post-Mid-Term (Phase-2) Cases	20%	Phase-2 group cases: Instructor will grade verbal component based on feedback from audience and interactions whereas the TA will grade the submitted group case reports (alongside the slides submitted). Verbal component (10%) can vary among presenters but the written component (10%) will be SAME for all group members.
Mid-Term Examination (72-hour take home exam – no invigilation but absolutely no discussions with any others – zero tolerance for plagiarism)	20%	TA graded & feedback will be provided on a separate class, the week following the examination.
Final Project – Case Competition (Presentation: 15%; Written Submission: 20%)	35% (15% +20%)	Instructor's evaluation adjusted for peer ratings for final project presentations; based on presentation skills & quality of analysis and recommendations. TA will grade final written submissions.

Conversion

Your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme. **Note that the minimum passing grade for MBA students is B-.**

LETTER GRADE (POINT)	PERCENT	LETTER GRADE (POINT)	PERCENT
A+ (9)	90 - 100	C+ (3)	67 - 69
A (8)	85 - 89	C (2)	63 - 66
A- (7)	80 - 84	C- (1)	60 - 62
B+ (6)	77 - 79	F (0)	0 - 59
B (5)	73 - 76		
B- (4)	70 - 72		

CLASS ATTENDANCE: MANDATORY with no exceptions unless arrangements have been previously made with and approved by instructor due to special circumstances such as being a remotely located part-time student. However, actual attendance is counted towards class participation grade and is required to enhance team performance. Tardiness will be seriously observed and will affect class participation grades.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students involved in academic dishonesty will receive a **ZERO** grade on the particular component in which the infraction occurred and a notation of academic dishonesty in the Dean's office. Students may also receive a **ZERO** grade on the course, a notation of academic dishonesty on their transcripts, and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. The University Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty states:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may take any number of forms such as copying or use of unauthorized aids in tests, assignments, examinations, lab reports, term papers, or cases; plagiarism; talking during in-class examinations; submission of work that is not your own without citation; submission of work generated for another course without prior clearance by the instructor of both courses; submission of work generated by another person; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; and giving false information for the purpose of gaining admission or credits; and forging or falsifying McMaster University documents. No excuses for violation of this policy, including ignorance of the policy, are accepted.

For more detailed information: http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/ac_ethics.htm

It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please be careful when handing in assignments, reports, essays and/or cases that are based on individual work. TAs have been instructed to **NOT** grade any paper that is deemed to have similar content with another person's work. In instances when work is suspected to be copied and/or plagiarized, the student(s) involved will be notified and the case will be reviewed by the Dean's office. For more detailed information: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/cis/omr/answersimck.html>

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MISSED TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The Faculty of Business has approved the following policy:

Where students miss a regularly scheduled midterm or one of the term tests for legitimate reasons as adjudicated by the **Academic Programs Office (APO)**, the weight for that test will be redistributed across other evaluative components of the course at the discretion of the instructor.

Documentation explaining such an absence must be provided to the APO within **five (5) working days** upon returning to school. The approved McMaster University Medical Form must be used. There will be no makeup for missed examinations. If an examination is missed without a valid, documented excuse, students will receive a grade of **ZERO** for that component.

Students must notify their instructor at least **ten (10) days** before a midterm examination in the case of a scheduled conflict because of a valid reason. Please contact the academic advisor in the APO well in advance of the 10-day deadline in order to confirm the validity of the conflict. Special examination arrangements may be made due to: a conflict with a religious holiday, and/or a conflict between two overlapping scheduled midterm examinations. Failure to meet the stated deadline may result in the denial of special arrangements. Varsity athletes must contact the APO within **five (5) working days** in order to make special arrangements for the Athletics & Recreation Department to administer a midterm examination due to a scheduled conflict with an athletic event.

In the case of final examinations, students should contact the Examinations Office in Gilmour Hall #114 at least **ten (10) days** in advance of a scheduled period of three (3) final examinations in one calendar day or three (3) consecutive examinations. Academic regulations pertaining to final examinations can be found in the calendar. Once a student sits for (and completes) a final examination, no special consideration will be granted. If a student is unable to complete an examination due to a compelling medical reason, a Petition for Special Consideration requesting a deferral must be filed within **one (1) week** to the APO with signed medical documentation.

Examinations are not rescheduled for purposes of travel. Students must arrange to be available for the entire range of examination dates. For any other issues pertaining to missed assignments or examinations, please refer to the student calendar or contact the APO office.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are required to inform the Centre for Student Development (CSD) of accommodation needs for examinations on or before the last date for withdrawal from a course without failure (please refer to official university sessional dates). Students must forward a copy of such CSD accommodation to the instructor immediately upon receipt. If a disabled student chooses NOT to take advantage of a CSD accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete.

RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental moral commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge and understanding. As a research-intensive institution, McMaster University shares this commitment in its promotion of responsible research. The fundamental imperative of research involving human participation is respect for human dignity and well-being. To this end, the University endorses the ethical principles cited in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/policystatement/policystatement.cfm>

McMaster University has mandated its Research Ethics Boards to ensure that all research investigations involving human participants are in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement. The University is committed, through its Research Ethics Boards, to assisting the research community in identifying and addressing ethical issues inherent in research, recognizing that all members of the University share a commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards in research involving humans.

If you are conducting original research, it is vital that you behave in an ethical manner. For example, everyone you speak to must be made aware of your reasons for eliciting their responses and consent to providing information. Furthermore, you must ensure everyone understands that participation is entirely

voluntary. Please refer to the following website for more information about McMaster University's research ethics guidelines: http://www.mcmaster.ca/ors/ethics/students_intro.htm

Organizations that you are working with are likely to prefer that some information be treated as confidential. Ensure that you clarify the status of all information that you receive from your client. You **MUST** respect this request and cannot present this information in class or communicate it in any form, nor can you discuss it outside your group. Furthermore, you must continue to respect this confidentiality even after the course is over.

Each student in this course will receive a document that spells out in considerable detail the required approach to collect data from human subjects. You must consult your instructor before undertaking any such study.

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.

Business K737
Cases in eBusiness, Innovation &
Entrepreneurship Course Schedule Winter 2021

Week	Date	Topic	Case Presentations	Deliverables
1	12-Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview • eBusiness Strategy • A framework for Case Learning; Komatsu Case 	None – Course Outline Komatsu Case	Form four (4) groups & cases assigned – each group having 4-6 members in total.
2	Async	How Cases are Read, Analyzed & Reported – Writing a Case Answer v. Developing your case report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship • Assessing online market opportunities • eBusiness platforms 	The Entrepreneur's Dilemma (2015)	ALL – For Class Illustration only
3	19-Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding • Venturing Group Verbal v. (Ind. Written*) Case Presentations	The Crazy Asian - SMU FLIPZ-SMU	Group 1 (4*) Present Group 3 (2*) Present
4	26-Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese Innovations 	MSFT AMZN	Group 2 (1*) Present Group 4 (3*) Present
5	2-Feb	Mid-Term Evaluation – STOP n' GO Growth Dilemma Guest Speaker (TBA) Entrepreneurship, Growth & Transformation	MANDATORY CLASS	ATTENDANCE TRACKED
6	9-Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review for Mid-Term & Case Projects (online) 	Online Q & A	Skype with all groups: 1 -4
7	16-Feb	Reading Week (No Class)		Submit plans for Case Projects to be approved
8	23-Feb	Mid-term Exam	Exam Case released@8:30 am Feb. 20 th	Mid-Term Due @ 8:30 am (72-hour take-home from Exam Case Release)
9	2-Mar	Various other issues in eBusiness; TA to go over mid-term after Grp 1 presentation break	Huawei	Group 1* Present/Report (8:30 am – 10 am) Break (10 am – 10:15 am) TA to provide feedback on Mid-Term

10	9-Mar	• B2C v. B2B markets & issues; Innovation Strategy & other issues in eBusiness	INDIA: Amazon v. Alibaba Rural TaoBao	Group 3* Present/Report (8:20 am – 9:50 am) Break (9:50 am – 10:00 am) Group 2* Present/Report (10:00 am – 11:30 am)
11	16-Mar	• New Ventures; Ethical Dimensions	Theranos Guest Speaker (TBA)	Group 4* Present/Report (8:30 am – 10 am) Break (9:50 am – 10:00 am) Guest Speaker to be online after Break (10:15 am)
12	23-Mar	• Last Minutes Consults	Virtual Sessions On REQUESTS	Groups with Instructor/TA (Sessions On Requests only)
13	30-Mar	• Case Competition (CC) Groups 1-2 presentations	Unannounced Cases	TA will be present to attend these final case project presentations
14	6-Apr	• Course evaluation Groups 3-4 presentations • CC Reports	Unannounced Cases	Case Competition reports due in 10 working days.

**TA will access these assignments to be posted to A2L for grading.*

Broad Agenda for Phase I: Jan 12 – Feb 23; & Phase 2: Mar2-23

In **Phase-1**; members of assigned group case must submit individual case answers used for online interactions with those performing the verbal case answers/presentations followed by rest of the class. All students, however, must have read the assigned case and participate as appropriate – active & higher quality participation will be graded higher than those who are less active and showing poorer quality responses per the Instructor's MODERATION.

For **Phase-2**, separate virtual sessions set aside for each case assigned. Presenting group members **MUST** meet at least **5 minutes** with the Instructor/TA **prior to** class (no later than 8:25 am except for Mar-9 to be 8:15 am) with all slides set up to go and at least **10-15 minutes** after session ends to be provided with detailed feedback on their performance as a group, noting that individuals can vary +/-1 level of the average assigned group grade (A, B and/or C). Rest of class is expected to be online by 8:30 am except for Mar-9 to be 8:20 am, as per schedule. Attendance will be graded. As all interactions allowed will be monitored by the TA/Instructor with members of the presenting group for no more than 90 minutes. Also, non-presenters may be “dismissed” earlier depending on how the case session goes – only **ONE** intermittent break is scheduled online as the entire case must be fully presented and discussed prior to break - in this intermittent break after the case presentation and prior to any Q & A from the rest of class, *all non-presenting students will offer a letter grade with one sentence comment/critique to justify their assigned grade for each presenter(s) while these presenters will get their break.* Each presenter will get 10-15 minutes individually; hence, a 4-student group will be permitted to present for 40-60 minutes (penalties apply if time used exceeds or is below that being assigned) while a 6-student group has 60 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes. Following the presentation, all non-presenting groups will be asked to interact with the presenting group actively, including asking of in-depth Q & A, and such participation will be observed/graded. 10-15 minutes will be set aside for gathering class feedback during intermittent break.

For **Phase-3** case project, assigned group members must participate and interact actively with each other, submitting written peer evaluations (and justification) at the end of the project privately to the instructor/TA.

Enjoy K737,
Professor J Tan