

**MBA F741  
Introduction to FinTech  
Winter 2023 Course Outline**

**Finance and Business Economics Area  
DeGroot School of Business  
McMaster University**

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***COURSE OBJECTIVE***

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This course provides a broad introduction to Financial Technology (FinTech), introducing you to key players in the sector and establishing a knowledge base that will enable you to critically assess this rapidly growing and highly competitive industry. This course builds on your previous learning, synthesizing diverse aspects of business and technology in order to instil an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this nascent space. The course will leverage experiential and case-based learning to promote inquiry-driven discovery and greater financial literacy.

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***INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION***

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**Wed 11:30 – 14:20**  
Class location: RJC TBA

**Instructor: Dr. Katya Malinova**  
[malinovk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:malinovk@mcmaster.ca)  
Office: RJC TBA

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment  
Course website: Avenue to Learn

**Student TA: Sima Tafti**  
[fallahts@mcmaster.ca](mailto:fallahts@mcmaster.ca)

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***COURSE ELEMENTS***

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Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	No	IT skills:	No	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:	No	Final Exam:	Yes	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

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## ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

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Financial technology is at the forefront of global development and is paving the way for tectonic shifts in long established orders. It is giving rise to rapid changes in the way we make, manage, interact with, and even define, money. And while this can mean uncertainty and upheaval for incumbents, it presents a world of possibility for those able to innovate and adapt. The course will provide a broad overview of the FinTech industry and lay the groundwork for students to analyze and identify opportunities in this emerging sector.

This course is based around education through experiential learning, inquiry and case studies. It will also involve readings, lectures, class discussions and collaborative group work. We will engage with important actors in Canadian FinTech to learn from those who are actively involved in shaping the industry landscape. This will include entrepreneurs at all stages of development as well as senior leadership at established banks. The subject matter will provide you with an understanding of Financial Technology and provide you with insight to critically assess the trajectory of the industry and develop new innovations in Financial Technology.

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## ***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

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The course will provide students with an introduction to Financial Technology. Specifically, it will enable students to understand the following:

- How financial services have evolved; how the industry currently operates; key players and their roles; existing products.
- How FinTech has evolved; what is driving its growth; key players and their innovations.
- The competitive landscape of FinTech.
- The technologies that underpin FinTech innovations.
- Regulations governing the financial technology industry.
- How to identify and analyze future trends/opportunities of FinTech.
- Global perspectives on FinTech.
- Innovation strategies at large financial institutions.
- The role of entrepreneurship in the FinTech sector.

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS**

Avenue registration for course content, readings and case materials ➤ <a href="http://avenue.mcmaster.ca">http://avenue.mcmaster.ca</a>	\$ FREE
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**OPTIONAL COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS:**

Readings and reference materials for each topic will be posted on A2L as the course progresses.

**EVALUATION**

Learning in this course results primarily from in-class lectures, including the pre-recorded materials, and in-class discussion, as well as out-of-class analysis in preparing case report and developing an idea for an innovation project. The innovation project reports will be evaluated on the group basis. If the majority of the group feels that a member does not deserve 100% of the group's mark, it is the group's responsibility to inform the instructor and the member involved, in writing, specifying the reasons.

**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

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

### Components and Weights

<b>Weekly quizzes</b>	(individual)	20%
<b>A1: FinTech profile (report)</b>	(individual)	10%
<b>A2: Existing FinTech product pitch (video)</b>	(individual)	10%
<b>A3: Innovation FinTech product/firm proposal (report + in-person presentation)</b>	(group)	15%
<b>Class Participation</b> (incl. discussion boards and questions for guest speakers)	(individual)	10%
<b>Final Exam</b>	(individual)	35%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

NOTE: The use of a McMaster standard calculator is allowed during examinations in this course. See McMaster calculator policy at the following URL:

[www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UndergraduateExaminationsPolicy.pdf](http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/UndergraduateExaminationsPolicy.pdf)

### Course Deliverables

#### **Weekly Quizzes (20%)**

Following each lecture in weeks 2-12, a multiple-choice questions quiz will be assigned on the A2L portal of the course webpage. The details will be discussed in the class and will also be posted on A2L. Every student in each cohort will be required to take this quiz. Please note that NO make-up will be offered for any missed A2L quiz. The weight of any missed A2L quiz will be automatically re-allocated to that of Exam 2.. A sample/practice, non-graded quiz will be posted in week 1. The grade will be based on your best 10 (out of 11) graded quizzes.

***Assignment 1 (10%): FinTech profile***

This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade and will be marked individually. You will choose a FinTech company of interest (from a list provided to you) and provide a brief company profile. The profile will examine various facets of the business, such as the company's core offerings, industry, competition, advantages, target market, positioning, finances etc. The deliverable is a written report. Details will be posted on A2L. **Due Date: Friday, February 03.**

***Assignment 2 (10%): FinTech product pitch***

This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade and will be marked individually. You will be required to select an existing FinTech product and pitch it to an incumbent. The deliverable is a short video pre-recorded presentation. Details will be posted on A2L. **Due Date: Friday, March 03.**

***Assignment 3 (15%): Group FinTech innovation proposal.***

Your group will propose a new FinTech innovation. Innovations can be wholly novel products/services not yet available in the market or ventures positioned to compete with existing players. In either case, you will be graded upon the rationale and justification behind your innovation and your strategy to bring it to market. Two deliverables will be required for this assignment: a written report and a brief in-class pitch. **Due Date: reports are due on Friday April 08; pitches are to be presented in the last class.**

***Class Participation (10%)***

You are expected to attend all classes and to participate actively in several ways: in-person in-class, including interactions with guest speakers, online on the class discussion board, and by submitting advance questions for guest speakers. Participation grades will be based on an assessment of a variety of factors, including the quantity and the quality of your contributions. Name cards will be used to help me award participation credit; and all students must bring these to class.

***Final Exam (35%)***

Final exam (closed-book) is expected to assess students' understanding and application of course contents at an individual level and will be held in-person on a date and at a time scheduled by the MBA office. The final exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Additional details on content coverage and sample questions will be posted on the A2L. A student missing the final exam will be subject to the policies and procedures outlined in the MBA Academic Calendar for the missed academic work.

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## **COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK**

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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.degrootemcmaster.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.

Instructors are encouraged to conduct an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery. Instructors should provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week #8 in the term.

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## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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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

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## ***AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION***

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**Some courses may** use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software.

**All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

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## ***COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT***

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**Some courses may** use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, 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.

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## ***ON-LINE PROCTORING***

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**Some courses may** use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

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## ***CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS***

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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.

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## ***MISSED ACADEMIC WORK***

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### ***Missed Mid-Term Examinations / Tests / Class Participation***

Please do not use the online [McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#) as this is for Undergraduate students only. The MBA program will not accept an MSAF.

When students miss regularly scheduled term work which contributes 10% or more to the final grade, for legitimate reasons as determined by the Student Experience – Academic Office (SEAO), the activity necessary to compensate for the missed work will be determined by the course instructor. The compensatory activities assigned will vary with the nature of the course and the missed requirement. They include, but are not restricted to, an alternative assignment, a rescheduled midterm exam, or re-weighting the marks for the missed component to other mark components. Documentation explaining such missed work must be provided to the SEAO within five (5) working days of the scheduled date for completion of the work.

Acceptable reasons for missed work, along with the [Petition for Missed Term Work](#) and the [MBA Student McMaster University Student Health Certificate](#), can be found on the DeGroot MBA Student website ([mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca](http://mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca)). Please direct any questions about acceptable documentation to the MBA Academic Advisors ([askmba@mcmaster.ca](mailto:askmba@mcmaster.ca)).

University policy states that a student may submit a maximum of three (3) [Petition for Missed Term Work](#) per academic year, after which the student must meet with the Director of the program.



If term work is missed without an approved reason, students will receive a grade of zero (0) for that component.

#### **Missed Final Examinations**

Students must be available for the duration of the posted exam period regardless of their personal exam schedule. This is to ensure student availability throughout the entire exam period in the event that an exam must be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances (university closure, power outage, storm policy, etc.). A student who misses a final examination without valid reason will receive a mark of 0 on the examination.

Students who have missed a final exam for a valid reason can apply to the SEAO to write a deferred examination by submitting an [Application for Deferring a Final Exam](#) with supporting documentation. The application must be made within five days of the scheduled exam date or the application may be denied.

The [Application for Deferring a Final Exam](#) and the [MBA Student McMaster University Student Health Certificate](#) can be found on the DeGroot MBA Current Student website ([mbastudent.degroot.mcmaster.ca](http://mbastudent.degroot.mcmaster.ca))

Deferred examination privileges, if granted, are normally satisfied during the examination period at the end of the following semester. In select cases, the deferred examination may be written at a time facilitated by the SEAO and agreed to by the course instructor.

Requests for a second deferral or rescheduling of a deferred examination will not be considered.

Failure to write an approved deferred examination at the pre-scheduled time will result in a zero (0) mark for that examination, except in the case of exceptional circumstances where documentation has been provided and approved. Upon approval, no credit will be given for the course, and the notation N.C. (no credit) will be placed on the student's transcript.

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### ***ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES***

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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>

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

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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.

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## ***COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING***

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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.

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## ***POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE***

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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.

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***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES***

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Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of MBA F741 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.

**MBA F741: Introduction to FinTech**  
**Winter 2023 Course Schedule (very tentative topic order!)**  
Topic schedule to be adjusted as the guest speaker availability is confirmed  
Please visit A2L for full details

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Assessments**
1	Jan 11	Intro to FinTech	
2	Jan 18	Payments	
3	Jan 25	Innovation in Payments (including CBDCs, open banking)	
4	Feb 01	Introduction to Blockchain	A1: FinTech profile Due Friday Feb 03
5	Feb 08	Decentralized Finance	
6	Feb 15	Decentralized organizations, regulation, and risks	
7	March 01	Lending and Credit	A2: FinTech product pitch Due Friday Mar 03
8	March 08	FinTech in Wealth Management and Personal Finance	
9	March 15	AI and Machine Learning in FinTech	
10	March 22	FinTech and Regulation	
11	March 29	InsurTech	
12	April 05	Ethics, special topics	A3: Group FinTech innovation proposal (Written report) Due Fri April 07
13	April 12	Group presentations	A3: Group FinTech innovation: slides due before class; pitches are in-class.
Final exam (to be scheduled by the MBA office)			

**\*\*Please note that in addition to the listed assessments, the course also requires weekly quizzes (weeks 2-12). Details on A2L.\*\***

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*This is a tentative schedule of classes. The schedule will be adjusted once the guest speakers confirm their availability. The instructor will provide advance notice to the students when changes to the schedule are made.*