



BUSADMIN D610
Essential Business Skills: Effective Decision Making,
Communication and Team Success
Fall 2026 Course Outline

Deans' Office Course
McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course will help you develop essential business skills and competencies to facilitate success in your academic and career goals. These competencies will include critical thinking, communication skills, time management, dealing with ambiguity, leadership skills, collaboration and teamwork. The case analysis approach will be used to develop these competencies and integrate theories and approaches from various business disciplines to real-world situations/problems.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor

Dr. Karleen Dudeck
Assistant Professor, Strategic Management
dudeckkj@mcmaster.ca
Office hours by appointment

Teaching Assistants

Amenah El Werfalli
elwerfaa@mcmaster.ca

Jashan Choong
choonj3@mcmaster.ca

Class Location: See Avenue to Learn
Course Website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	1.5	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	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

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 develop effective presentation, team management and communication skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

Effective Decision Making

1. Analyze complex business problems by identifying root causes, key assumptions, and relevant data through case analyses and project-based assignments.
2. Evaluate alternative courses of action in ambiguous or uncertain contexts using appropriate analytical tools through open-ended case problems and in-class experiential exercises.
3. Develop integrated business recommendations that align analysis with strategic objectives through individual and group deliverables.

Communication

4. Contribute to class discussions to develop and demonstrate professional judgment in selecting and justifying business decisions through applied assignments and case-based analyses.

5. Communicate business insights clearly and persuasively to diverse audiences and engage in constructive peer feedback through in-class activities, presentations, and written reports.

Team Success

6. Collaborate effectively in teams by contributing to shared goals and coordinating tasks through group-based project work.
7. Manage team dynamics and resolve conflicts constructively by participating in team-based activities and peer evaluations.
8. Reflect on personal strengths and areas for development to improve performance by completing reflective assignments or self-assessments.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Avenue registration for course content, materials and announcements ➤ http://avenue.mcmaster.ca	\$ FREE
BUSADMIN D610 Cases Course Pack, Fall 2026, Editor: K.J. Dudeck ➤ Link to download course pack on Avenue http://avenue.mcmaster.ca	\$ FREE
Lectura Mobile Application	TBD

EVALUATION

Learning in this course results primarily from in-class discussion and participation of business case analysis. For group work components, it is expected that each Learning Group (LG) member contributes fully and equally to the group assignment. LG members will share the same grade. **Late assignments will be penalized 20% for each day they are late.** Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Assignment	Weight	Due Date – All submissions on Avenue unless noted
Class Engagement (Individual)	28%	Throughout the term – In-Person: Weeks 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
Presentation Skills Development Activities & Reflections (Individual)	15%	Throughout the term; submitted via online form – Due Thursdays @ 5:00 PM Weeks 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13
Stakeholder Briefing Notes (Group)	15%	Nov 6 @ 5:00 PM
Team Check-in (Group)	5%	Nov 6 @ 5:00 PM Attendance required in Week 9
Live Case: Analysis & Recommendations Briefing Note (Group)*	15%	Dec 1 @ 5:00 PM
Live Case: Presentation (Group)*	15%	Slides due Dec 3 @ 5:00 PM Attendance required in Weeks 11, 12 & 13 Presentation Week 13 during class See Avenue for schedule.
Professional Development Reflection (Individual)	7%	Dec 7 @ 5:00 PM
TOTAL	100%	

* All students are required to submit two confidential Team Performance Evaluations (individually) during the term. The group-level grades on the Live Case deliverables may be adjusted at the instructor's discretion based on Team Performance Evaluation results in cases where those results indicate consistent uneven contribution across teammates.

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

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+	77-79	9
B	73-76	8
B-	70-72	7
F	00-69	0

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Class Engagement

In-person attendance is expected for each class in Weeks 1 – 8. Students are expected to arrive on time, come prepared, and be ready to contribute. Instructors and TAs may cold-call on any student at any point, so thorough preparation for each week's readings, activities, and project milestones is essential. Contributions are evaluated on quality and impact rather than frequency (before speaking, ask yourself the "so-what?" question so that your comments move the discussion forward through analysis, evidence, connection to prior material, or a clearly articulated alternative view). Debate and constructive challenge are important activities in the learning process, and the willingness to engage substantively with your classmates is appreciated. Attendance alone does not constitute participation. Assess Learning Outcomes 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Students are expected to:

- Actively engage in verbal contribution to in-class discussion and participate in in-class activities including but not limited to: impromptu speaking and mini presentations, discussion during Workshop classes, mini presentations, mock interviews and role play activities, and additional in-class assignments at the instructor's discretion.
- Complete all required in class activities, including Top Hat Activities and assigned preparation and homework (e.g., Case Analysis Snapshot).

Name cards and class pictures are used to help give credit for your participation. You must have a name card with your **full first and last name** clearly written and displayed in front of you for every class.



Presentation Skills Development Activities & Reflections

Students will complete presentation skills development activities and receive feedback from advanced digital technological tools, peers and TAs. Students will submit reflections on the feedback they receive and their progress towards personal presentation skills development goals, via an online form. Presentation skills development activities will include both in-person mini presentations during GRIT Week and self-paced presentation skills activities using the Lectura app. Completion of app-based activities in Lectura is required prior to submitting reflections. Assesses Learning Outcomes 5 and 8.

Stakeholder Briefing Notes

Working as a group, students will communicate a business recommendation to three different stakeholder audiences by adapting message, tone, evidence, and action requests. The assignment should demonstrate clear stakeholder analysis, concise business writing, and audience-appropriate communication. Assesses Learning Outcomes 1, 2 3, 5, 6 and 7.

Team Check-in

As a group, students will do a check-in to assess how their groups are working together prior to completing GRIT Week and the D610 live case. The goal is to demonstrate how the group can assess its own dynamics and challenges, and agree on practical changes that will implement to improve performance. Attendance for the TA check-in meeting is a required component of this deliverable. Groups should submit the completed Team Check-in document prior to their TA check-in meeting. Assesses Learning Outcomes 6 and 7.

Professional Development Reflection

Students will reflect on their professional development across different dimensions including presentation skills, teamwork and collaboration, and leadership development to assess how they are developing as an MBA student and emerging business professional. This is a structured reflection on what students learned about their professional capabilities, how they responded to feedback and challenges, and what they will intentionally practice next. Assesses Learning Outcome 8.



Live Case

There are two components to this deliverable:

1. Strategic Analysis & Recommendations Briefing Note
2. Final Presentation

As a group, students will work with a real company to analyze a live case and deliver a Final Presentation to the company. Groups will prepare the Strategic Analysis & Recommendations Briefing Note that summarizes the group's analysis and recommendations; the briefing note will be provided to the company in advance of the final presentations. Analysis should demonstrate application of the critical thinking skills and case method presented during the course. Presentations should be authentic, compelling and persuasive, demonstrating application of presentation methods discussed.

As part of the Live Case deliverables, all students are required to submit two confidential Team Performance Evaluations (individually) during the term. The group-level grades on the Live Case deliverables may be adjusted at the instructor's discretion based on Team Performance Evaluation results in cases where those results indicate consistent uneven contribution across teammates.

Groups must submit their PowerPoint presentation slides via Avenue to Learn by 5:00 PM the day before the final presentation. One person will submit the PowerPoint presentation on behalf of the Learning Group.

Presentations will be limited to 10 minutes per team, followed by a 3-minute Q&A period. Each team member must deliver part of the oral presentation. Time management is important as teams will be cut off when they reach their time limit. Please note that while it is not required that all team members answer a question in the Q&A, it is highly encouraged that questions are shared across the team. Assess Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7.

USE OF LECTAURA IN D610

Lectura is a presentation coaching application used to provide personalized feedback on communication and presentation skills. Over an eight-week learning cycle, students will complete approximately six short, recorded presentations and receive feedback on areas such as content, structure, pacing, vocal delivery, eye contact, and body language. Students will also participate in one in-person communication session with their learning group at the McMaster Digital Transformation Research Centre (MDTRC).

Completion of the communication-development activities is a required course component. Evaluation within the course will be based on completing sessions, reviewing feedback, and providing feedback to peers. The platform will be provided to students at no additional cost and is available on both iOS and Android.

Privacy and Artificial Intelligence

Students will sign up using their McMaster email addresses. Upon signing up, students will be asked to agree to Lectura's privacy policy and terms of service (approved and vetted by Apple and Google). The initial onboarding flow will provide students the option to opt in or out of AI-supported processing.

Lectura collects students' video and audio recordings, basic account and usage information, and presentation-related measures generated from the recordings. During the MDTRC session, audience-engagement and response indicators may also be collected to provide developmental feedback.

Lectura uses an OpenAI service to support content analysis and feedback generation. Only the text transcript of a presentation is provided to OpenAI. Original video, audio, eye-tracking, and physiological information are not provided to OpenAI. AI-generated feedback may contain errors or incomplete interpretations and should be treated as a coaching resource rather than definitive. Students can access their own recordings, results, and feedback. Instructors and teaching assistants can access information students choose to share and basic participation or completion information, but not students' full recording libraries. Authorized Lectura and MDTRC personnel may access information where needed to operate the activities, provide technical support, or prepare developmental feedback.

Lectura is a third-party platform hosted on Amazon Web Services. Although privacy and security safeguards are in place, no digital platform can guarantee complete protection against unauthorized access or a data breach.

Lectura account information and associated course data will be retained for up to one year after the course ends. Students may request permanent deletion of their Lectura account and associated information. Student information will not be used for AI training, product improvement, research, or other secondary purposes without any required authorization, institutional review, and consent. Students should avoid including unnecessary personal, confidential, sensitive, or third-party information in their presentations.

The use of Lectura has been reviewed by the McMaster University Privacy Office and has completed a Privacy Impact Assessment to identify and mitigate risks to student privacy.

Access and Privacy Options

Students who lack a compatible device, suitable recording space, or do not wish to download Lectura to their device may arrange access to a device or an on-campus recording space through the MDTRC. Students who do not wish to have their presentations processed through AI services can opt out within the app. By opting out, students will receive assessment of core verbal and nonverbal communication cues but will not be provided recommendations or personalized feedback. Students do not need to provide a reason for opting out or requesting usage through the MDTRC.



To complete the exercise within the MDTRC, contact the course instructor.

Questions and Support

Course activities: Karleen Dudeck, dudeckkj@mcmaster.ca

Technical or access support: spencer@lectaura.com

Privacy questions: McMaster University Privacy Office, privacy@mcmaster.ca

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.degroote.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.

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.

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



Students are responsible for being aware of and demonstrating behaviour that is honest and ethical in their academic work. Such behaviour includes:

- following the expectations articulated by instructors for referencing sources of information and for group work;
- asking for clarification of expectations as necessary;
- identifying testing situations that may allow copying;
- preventing their work from being used by others (e.g., protecting access to computer files); and
- adhering to the principles of academic integrity when conducting and reporting research.

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

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.

COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

All courses use some online 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.

Students may be required to use the Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor. The Respondus LockDown Browser is a downloadable program that allows a student to take an Avenue to Learn quiz in a secure environment. Quizzes can be set to use LockDown Browser or LockDown Browser.



For more details about McMaster's use of Respondus Lockdown Browser please go to <https://avenuehelp.mcmaster.ca/exec/respondus-lockdown-browser-and-respondus-monitor/>

The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online 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.

ONLINE PROCTORING

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.

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, Teams, 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.

ATTENDANCE

Arriving late or missing class disrupts the learning experience for both you and your peers. Punctuality and attendance are crucial to maintaining a respectful, professional and productive environment for everyone, including our faculty.

Instructors may use Top Hat in their course in a variety of ways, including to capture attendance in their classes. Attendance is recorded by submitting a unique 4-digit code displayed in your physical classroom using your personal device.

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

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 [DSB Student Services – Academic Office](#) (DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office)), 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 DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) 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 DeGroote MBA Student website (mbastudent.degroote.mcmaster.ca). Please direct any questions about acceptable documentation to the MBA Academic Advisors (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 DSSAO ([DSB Student Services Academic Office](#)) 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.

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

Deferred examination privileges, if granted, are normally satisfied during the deferred examination period as set by the [Office of the Registrar](#). Requests for a second deferral or rescheduling of a deferred examination will not be considered.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students must activate their accommodation(s) (e.g., extra-time, alone room, etc.) via [mySAS](#) portal at the beginning of each term, normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes. 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>

Use of Test Accommodations at McMaster University Burlington Campus Ron Joyce Centre

Whereas Student Accessibility Services (SAS), on Main Campus, determines all MBA student accommodations, the MBA Faculty Office manages the coordination of accommodations for tests, midterms, and exams at the Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington.

Process for Students

- Student Accessibility Services (SAS) now uses the online [mySAS](#) Portal for graduate students to share accommodation letters with their instructors and Faculty/Program. Students are responsible for activating their accommodations each term through the [mySAS](#) Portal. Once

activated, an approved accommodation letter will be automatically sent to the instructors associated with the student's enrolled courses for that term.

- Students must engage the DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) to implement their accommodation(s) (e.g., extra-time, alone room, etc.) for each upcoming test, midterm, or exam, at **least two weeks in advance**. Students can do this by emailing DeGroote MBA SAS scheduling office at DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca or completing the [Accommodation Implementation form](#). If a student cannot meet this deadline, they should contact DSBSAS@mcmaster.ca to discuss alternative arrangements. The program is committed to exploring flexibilities where possible to support students.
- All tests, midterms, and exams are booked synchronously with the class's start time. Any deviations from the start time (e.g. start earlier than the class to enable completion at the same end time) requires a discussion with their instructor on protocol at the time of accommodation activation.
- Students will leverage the accommodation (e.g., extra-time, alone room, etc.), in a designated testing room. Rooms will be booked according to the student's SAS accommodation. Unless the accommodation states otherwise, students should expect that they will be writing in a room with other students. One or more invigilators will always be in the room.
- Following the request to implement the accommodation(s), dsbsas@mcmaster.ca will reach out to the student with their test, midterm, or exam details, including the date, time, and room number. As there may be other students writing tests in the room, we ask that students enter the room quietly and leave all personal items at the front of the room.

All policies and procedures, including restroom access, how extra-time is allocated for assessments under Universal Design, and the submission of memory aids in advance, are consistent with those of SAS on Main Campus. The only variance in procedure is communication around, and physical location of, assessment. There is not a dedicated testing space at RJC. Existing classrooms and lecture halls will be used for most testing. All SAS-approved accommodations will be honoured by our staff; however, core testing elements are not eliminated in alternative testing formats. Students should expect and plan for invigilation, incidental noise, and other potential distractions.

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 the

DSSAO (DSB Student Services Academic Office) **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. 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 MODIFICATION 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 D610 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.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI Policy for Course Submissions

Purpose:

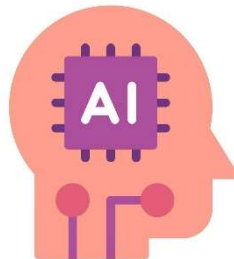
The purpose of this policy is to ensure the responsible and ethical use of AI tools in academic work submitted for this course. While AI tools can be valuable for certain aspects of the writing and research process, it is crucial to maintain academic integrity and ensure that all content reflects the student's original work.

Use of generative AI should be referenced and cited following citation instructions stated in the Assignment Guidelines each assignment.

Use of generative AI outside assessment guidelines or without citation will constitute academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately. See section "Citations and References".

1. Levels of AI Usage:

Each assignment or deliverable in this course will be clearly marked with the level of AI usage permitted.

Level of AI Usage	Description	Symbol on Assignments
Level 1: Full AI Use Permitted	All forms of AI are allowed for use, including content creation, idea generation, editing, and grammar checks. Requirement: Students must include an AI Acknowledgement statement specifying where and how AI tools were used in their work.	
Level 2: Limited AI Use	AI tools may only be used for editing and grammar checks. Requirement: An AI Acknowledgement statement is required, indicating that AI was used solely for editing and grammar improvements.	



Level of AI Usage	Description	Symbol on Assignments
Level 3: No AI Use	No AI tools are allowed. All content and responses must be entirely human-generated. Requirement: An AI Acknowledgement statement confirming that no AI tools were used in the creation of the submission.	

2. AI Acknowledgement Requirement:

All submissions must include an AI Acknowledgement statement, regardless of the level of AI usage permitted. The statement should be placed at the end of the document and should specify the tools used and the nature of their use.

Examples include:

- *Level 1:* "AI Acknowledgement: I used ChatGPT to generate ideas and improve readability in this document."
- *Level 2:* "AI Acknowledgement: I used ChatGPT to assist with grammar and readability improvements in this document. No AI tools were used for content creation."
- *Level 3:* "AI Acknowledgement: I confirm that no AI tools were used in the creation of this submission."

3. Citing Generative AI Content:

If any generative AI content is included in a submission (e.g., images created with DALL-E or text generated by ChatGPT), it must be properly cited using the APA style format. The citation should include the name of the AI tool, the version (if applicable), and the date of generation.

For example:

- **Text Generated by AI:**
OpenAI. (2026). Response generated by ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) on August 26, 2026. Retrieved from [OpenAI ChatGPT].
- **Image Generated by AI:**
OpenAI. (2026). Image generated by DALL-E on August 26, 2026. Retrieved from [OpenAI DALL-E].

4. Compliance:

Failure to adhere to this AI Policy, including the specific level of AI usage allowed for each assignment, may result in penalties, including but not limited to grade deductions, resubmission requirements, or other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

CITATIONS AND REFERENCES

Students should use APA style when referencing external sources, including using Generative AI. Information about APA style can be found through the McMaster Library website:

- <https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/APA>
- <https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/businesscitation>
- <https://libguides.mcmaster.ca/cite-gen-ai/apa>

COURSE SCHEDULE

MBA D610 Fall 2026 Course Schedule

Notes about Activities and Assignments:

- **Prepare:** Case readings and/or preparation activities to do before class
- **In-Class Activities:** Submit to Top Hat by the end of the class
- **Assignment:** Submit to Avenue by the due date indicated in course outline

Week	Topic / Time	Learning Outcomes	Activities / Assignments
Week 1 Sep 7 – 13 Friday, Sep 11	Case Method Introduction Workshop Case: Tupperware	• Identify a decision maker and decision point • Write a concise problem/opportunity statement • Distinguish symptoms from root causes • Use the 5 Whys technique to identify issues • Prioritize issues using an Importance/Urgency Matrix • Conduct a basic SWOT analysis • Identify key takeaways	Prepare: • Read case In-Class Activities: • Collaborative Contribution Profile • Case Analysis Snapshot (submit to Top Hat before end of class)
Week 2 Sep 14 – 20 Friday, Sep 18	Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis Workshop Case: Vyba: Is the Price Right?	• Apply Porters Five Forces • Conduct basic quantitative analysis • Synthesize multiple analyses into managerial insights • Use analysis to support a recommendation	Prepare: • Case Analysis Snapshot (submit to Top Hat before start of class) • Quantitative analysis prep: review financial details in the case In-Class Activities: • Porters Five Forces & Key Takeaways • Quantitative Analysis & Key Takeaways

Week	Topic / Time	Learning Outcomes	Activities / Assignments
Week 3 Sep 21 – 27 Friday, Sep 25	Alternatives & Decision-Making Workshop Case: Stack Brewing	• Generate strategic alternatives • Develop evaluation criteria • Use a simple decision matrix • Select and justify a recommendation	Prepare: • Case Analysis Snapshot (submit to Top Hat before start of class) • Quantitative analysis prep: review financial details in the case In-Class Activities: • Alternatives and Decision Matrix (submit to Top Hat before end of class)
Week 4 Sep 28 – Oct 4 Friday, Oct 2	Implementation & Execution Workshop Case: Pulse Fitness	• Connect a recommendation to implementation steps • Identify KPIs that measure progress, performance, and impact. • Develop implementation steps including timelines and responsibilities • Identify implementation risks and barriers and mitigation strategies	Prepare: • Case Analysis Snapshot (submit to Top Hat before class starts) • Brainstorm alternatives In-Class Activities: • KPI Dashboard (submit to Top Hat before end of class)
Week 5 Oct 5 – 11	No in-person class	• No in-person Class	
Week 6 Oct 12 – 18 Friday, Oct 16	Presentation Skills Workshop – Part 1 Guest Speaker from Lectaura	• Understand the impact of non-verbal communication on effective communication • Engage your audience through storytelling • Demonstrate professional delivery skills including clarity, pacing, confidence, and audience awareness	In-Class Activities • Lectaura app introduction

Week	Topic / Time	Learning Outcomes	Activities / Assignments
Week 7 Oct 19 – 25 Friday, Oct 23	Presentation Skills Workshop – Part 2	- Identify personal presentation strengths and areas for improvement. - Structure a clear and persuasive business presentation for a defined audience - Build effective visuals to support a persuasive presentation - Navigating a Q&A with confidence and clarity - Give and receive constructive peer feedback that is specific, respectful, and actionable	Assignment Due: Presentation Skills Development Reflection #1 due Oct 22 @ 5 PM
Week 8 Oct 26 – Nov 1 Friday, Oct 30	Stakeholder Communication Workshop Case: Remote Work Policy	- Analyze a business decision from the perspective of multiple stakeholders - Identify what different audiences need to know, care about, and act on - Prepare a concise decision briefing note that uses evidence to support a recommendation	In-Class Activities: - Case Analysis Snapshot (submit to Top Hat before class starts) - Stakeholder Analysis - Team Performance Evaluation (Individual) Assignment Due: - Presentation Skills Development Reflection #2 due Oct 29 @ 5:00 PM
Week 9 Nov 2 – 8 Friday, Nov 6	Team Reflection & TA Check-In No In-person Class Mandatory TA check-in session during class time (Virtual - all group members required)	- Assess team progress, roles, norms, and collaboration practices - Identify team strengths, challenges, and sources of conflict or misalignment - Develop strategies to improve coordination, accountability, and communication - Use peer and TA feedback to adjust team processes - Reflect on individual contributions to team effectiveness	Virtual Activities: - Mandatory TA check-in during class time (Virtual) - Submit Live Case Preferences (Avenue) Assignment Due: - Midterm Team Check-in (Group) due Nov 5 @ 5:00 PM - Presentation Skills Development Reflection #3 due Nov 5 @ 5:00 PM - Stakeholder Briefing Notes (Group) due Nov 6 @ 5:00 PM

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Week 10 Nov 9 – 15	GRIT Week	Check Avenue Announcements for schedule and deliverables	Check Avenue Announcements for schedule and deliverables
Week 11 Nov 16 – 22 Friday, Nov 20	Live Case Kick-off Week Monday, Nov 17: Live Case Released on Avenue Friday, Nov 20: Live Case Kickoff Meeting with Clients	- Interpret a live case challenge by identifying the client context, decision problem, and key uncertainties - Prepare relevant and professional questions for a client - Conduct an initial situation assessment using appropriate case analysis tools - Identify what additional information is needed to strengthen analysis and recommendations - Coordinate team roles and work plans for the live case	Prepare: - Read case and prepare for in-class case discussion In-Class Activities: - Client Question Brief - Situation Assessment Briefing Note Assignment Due: - Presentation Skills Development Reflection #4 due Nov 5 @ 5:00 PM
Week 12 Nov 23 – 29 Friday, Nov 27	Live Case Client Meeting Week No In-person Class Optional TA check-in session before client meetings (Virtual) Meetings with Clients (Virtual - all group members required)	- Engage professionally with a client by asking clear, purposeful, and evidence-informed questions - Use client responses to refine problem statement, assumptions, and analysis - Incorporate feedback from the client and TA into the team's strategic direction - Manage ambiguity by distinguishing confirmed information from assumptions	Prepare: - Prepare for client meeting Virtual Activities: - Optional TA check-in session before client meeting (Virtual) - Client meetings (Virtual) - Client Q&A Reflection (Top Hat) - Presentation Skills Development Reflection #5 due Nov 26 @ 5:00 PM

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Week 13 Nov 30 – Dec 6 Friday, Dec 4	Live Case Presentation Day	• Present a clear, evidence-based strategic recommendation to a client audience • Communicate analysis, alternatives, implementation considerations, and risks persuasively • Respond professionally to questions and feedback • Demonstrate coordinated team presentation skills • Reflect on peer contributions and individual learning from the live case experience.	In-Class Activities: • Case Presentations to Clients • See Avenue for presentation schedule Self-Paced Activities: • Optional Final Team Performance Evaluation Check-in (Individual) due Dec 7 @ 5:00 PM Assignments Due: • Strategic Analysis & Recommendations Briefing Note (Group) due Dec 1 @ 5:00 PM • Presentation Skills Development Reflection #6 due Dec 3 @ 5:00 PM • Live Case Presentation Slides (Group) due Dec 3 @ 5:00 PM • Professional Development Reflection (Individual) due Dec 7 @ 5:00 PM • Optional Team Performance Evaluation (Individual) due Dec 7 @ 5:00 AM