

BUSADMIN F741
Introduction to FinTech
Fall 2026 Course Outline

Finance and Business Economics Area
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course provides a broad introduction to Financial Technology (FinTech), introducing you to key players and technologies 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 to instil an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this space.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Section C01: Tuesday 8:30-11:20 a.m.

Dr. Katya Malinova

Instructor

malinovk@mcmaster.ca

Office: DSB A106

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment

Class Location: See Mosaic

Student TA

See Avenue to Learn for details

Course website: Avenue to Learn (<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>)

COURSE ELEMENTS

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:	No	Guest speaker(s):	No



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Financial technology is at the forefront of global development and is paving the way for significant shifts in long established orders. It is giving rise to rapid changes in the way we make, manage, interact with, and even define money. 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 rapidly evolving sector.

Learning in this course is primarily through lectures and in-class discussions, and also includes readings, other course materials, out-of-class analysis, and collaborative group work. The subject matter will provide you with an understanding of Financial Technology and insights to critically assess the trajectory of the industry and develop new innovations in Financial Technology.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course will provide students with an introduction to Financial Technology. Specifically, it will enable students to understand and critically assess:

- how financial services have evolved, how the industry currently operates, and the roles of key players and existing products;
 - how FinTech has evolved, what is driving its growth, and the competitive landscape across different market segments;
 - the technologies that underpin FinTech innovations, including blockchain and the infrastructure supporting decentralized finance;
 - applications of data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence across financial services, including associated opportunities and risks;
 - the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in the FinTech sector; and
 - key regulatory and market developments shaping the future of financial services.
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REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Avenue to Learn registration for course content, readings, case materials, and slides: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

No required textbook for this course.

All required readings, as well as further suggested optional readings, will be posted on A2L.

OPTIONAL COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

- Michael R. King & Richard W. Nesbitt, *FinTech Explained: How Technology is Changing Financial Services and Driving Financial Inclusion* (University of Toronto Press, 2023). Cost: \$49.95 CAD (paperback).
- Campbell R. Harvey, Ashwin Ramachandran, & Joey Santoro, *DeFi and the Future of Finance* (Wiley, 2021). Cost: \$31.99 CAD (hardcover). Second-hand copies are acceptable.

CLASS FORMAT

Course activities will combine lectures, in-class discussions, readings and other course materials, and in-class quizzes. Active participation in class discussions is expected and contributes to the Class Contribution grade.

EVALUATION

You will be evaluated based on the following components according to the weights below. Some components are individual and some are group-based.

Components and Weights	
In-Class Quizzes (best 3 out of 4)	40%
FinTech Profile Assignment (individual)	15%
Group Project (groups of 4)	35%
Class Contribution	10%
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+	77-79	9
B	73-76	8
B-	70-72	7
F	00-69	0

COURSE DELIVERABLES

This course has several deliverables. The overview below is intended to give you an idea of what to expect. Detailed instructions and requirements will be posted on A2L and discussed in class. All written submissions and presentation slides must be submitted through A2L unless otherwise indicated.

In-Class Quizzes (best 3 out of 4 = 40%)

Four 30-minute in-class quizzes will be held during the term on September 29, October 27, November 10, and November 24. The quizzes will assess understanding and application of material covered in the course. They may include a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer, and brief applied questions or exercises. Further details will be provided in class and/or on A2L. Your best three quizzes count toward the final grade; the lowest score is dropped.

8:30am section -- In-class quizzes will normally be held at the end of the scheduled class.



FinTech Profile Assignment (15%)

This individual assignment is worth 15% of your final grade. You will be asked to prepare a brief company profile for a specific FinTech. The assignment will include a written submission and an in-class component based on the profile. The written submission is due on Friday, October 16 at 11:59 p.m.; the in-class component will take place on Tuesday, October 20. Details and requirements will be posted on A2L. The written and in-class components together account for the 15% assignment grade.

Group Project (35%)

You will work in groups of four to develop and analyze a concept for a new FinTech company, product, or service. The project will also include a simple demonstration or mock-up of the proposed concept, such as a basic app, website, interface, workflow, or other visual or interactive representation. Students may use generative AI and other AI-enabled tools in developing the project and demonstration or mock-up. Details will be provided on A2L.

A brief project proposal/outline (1-2 pages) is due on Tuesday, November 10 at 11:59 p.m. and is worth 2% of the final grade. The written report, presentation slides, and accompanying demonstration or mock-up, including any required access links or files, are due on Sunday, November 29 at 11:59 p.m. Group presentations will take place in class on Tuesday, December 1.

The remaining group project components account for the remaining 33% of the grade and will be evaluated according to the project requirements provided on A2L.

Class Contribution (10%)

You are expected to actively participate in each class and to contribute to the in-class discussion, for instance, by asking and answering questions. Participation grades will be based on an assessment of a variety of factors, including the quantity and the quality of your in-class contributions. You are also expected to attend and actively participate in the group presentation sessions.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Each written submission will include a 30-minute grace period with no penalty, to accommodate unexpected technical issues. Beyond this grace period, late submissions will not be accepted and will instead be treated as Missed Academic Work in accordance with the policy below. In-class quizzes and other in-class assessments must be completed during the scheduled class period. Because the lowest quiz score is dropped, a single missed quiz receives a zero and is dropped; no documentation is required. Any additional missed quizzes, and other missed in-class work, will be handled in accordance with the Missed Academic Work policy.

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.

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 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.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Students may use generative AI in this course in accordance with the guidelines outlined for each assessment, and so long as the use of generative AI is referenced and cited following citation instructions given in the syllabus. 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 limitations for use for each assessment and to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately.

COURSE SCHEDULE

MBA F741: Introduction to FinTech Fall 2026 Course Schedule

The topics and schedule listed below are tentative and may be adjusted based on class progress, significant developments in the space, and final enrolment. Presentation dates may also be adjusted depending on the number of project groups.

Week	Date	Topics and Activities
1	Sept. 8	What is FinTech? Why now?
2	Sept. 15	Payments I: How money moves; payment systems and key challenges.
3	Sept. 22	Payments II: Competition in retail digital payments; Canadian payment modernization and current developments.
4	Sept. 29	Quiz 1 (in class). Payment innovation and Consumer-Driven Banking (Open Banking).
5	Oct. 6	FinTech in Lending and Credit: digital platforms, data, and AI applications.
6	Oct. 13	FinTech in Wealth Management and Personal Finance: digital advice, personalization, and AI applications.
7	Oct. 20	FinTech Profile written submission due Fri, Oct. 16 at 11:59 p.m. FinTech Profile in-class component. AI, Machine Learning, and Data in Financial Services: applications, opportunities, and risks.
8	Oct. 27	Quiz 2 (in class). Blockchain Foundations: blockchain, consensus protocols, and smart contracts.
9	Nov. 3	Blockchain applications and digital money.
10	Nov. 10	Quiz 3 (in class). Group Project proposal/outline due at 11:59 p.m. Stablecoins and tokenization.
11	Nov. 17	Decentralized Finance (DeFi) and Digital Asset Markets.
12	Nov. 24	Quiz 4 (in class). AI, Fraud, Financial Crime, RegTech, and emerging FinTech issues.
13	Dec. 1	Project package due Sunday, Nov. 29 at 11:59 p.m. Group presentations (in class).