

BUSADMIN P615A
Management Consulting
Fall 2026 Course Outline

Strategic Management Area
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course is designed to provide students with diverse, practical learning experiences to build and refine their management consulting skills. Through the application of key frameworks in strategy, marketing, and innovation, students will learn to diagnose business challenges, identify opportunities, and develop structured, evidence-based solutions. The course also emphasizes the importance of clear, persuasive communication with clients and internal stakeholders. Beyond core consulting skills, students will work on cultivating executive presence, leadership abilities, and the professional mindset essential for success in advisory roles.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Section 1: Wednesdays @ 2:30 – 5:20 PM

Dr. Amir Taherizadeh (Instructor)

amir.taherizadeh@mcmaster.ca

Office: RJC 218

Office Hours: Right after class

Tel: (905) 525-9140 x23015

Class Location: RJC 249

Kaelyn McGinty (Teaching Assistant)

mcgintyk@mcmaster.ca

Available by appointment

COURSE ELEMENTS

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to develop students' management consulting skills across a variety of business contexts. Students will apply management theory and consulting frameworks as tools to diagnose organizational challenges, identify opportunities, and develop practical, actionable recommendations for clients. The course emphasizes cultivating a consulting mindset and strategic problem-solving capabilities. By the end of the course, students will have gained a deeper understanding of how to improve business performance through strategy refinement, customer insight, and targeted innovation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Critically evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of main business strategies in industry context through analyzing management case studies
- Apply management theories dynamically and creatively to analyze business dilemmas.
- Apply management consultancy frameworks to problem contexts through directly interacting with problem stakeholders.
- Develop pragmatic data-informed recommendations for enterprise clients by collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data from the problem setting.
- Develop management consultancy grade communication skills through lab and workshop training
- Improve your leadership skills through leading client consultancy sessions
- Conduct market (and marketing) research, analyze trends, and identify potential consulting offerings
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses as a management consultant
- Build resilience and adaptability by managing shifting timelines, unforeseen challenges, and learning to recalibrate strategies, adjust priorities, and realign team efforts to maintain project momentum and client value.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Title	Price	Note
Avenue 2 Learn (A2L) – Content > Assigned readings, videos and materials http://avenue.mcmaster.ca	N.A.	A2L
Course Textbook Garrette, B., Phelps, C., & Sibony, O. (2018). Cracked it! How to solve big problems and sell solutions like top strategy consultants (1st ed. 2018.). Springer Int. Publishing. TBD – HSB coursepack link to be provided.	Paid by McMaster	HSB Coursepack
Business Cases & Readings TBD - HSB coursepack link to be provided.	Paid by DeGroote	HSB Coursepack
Do Your Students Know How to Analyze a Case—Really? https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/a-framework-for-using-cases-to-help-students-become-better-decision-makers	Gratis	Optional

EVALUATION

Learning in this course is driven primarily by **active in-class discussions and participation** in the analysis of comprehensive business cases, complemented by out-of-class preparation and research. Additional learning comes through lectures on strategic concepts, assigned readings, and the development of presentations, case analyses, simulation decisions, and consulting projects. Most work will be assessed on an individual basis. However, in cases where group collaboration is required, all members of the team will receive the same grade, subject to adjustment based on peer evaluations.

Your final grade will be determined as per the following breakdown:

#	Grade Component	I/G	%	Description	Due Date
1	Participation - <i>Developing Your Executive Voice and Presence</i>	I	15%	Participation is assessed weekly through a variety of in-class and designated out-of-class activities. Students are expected to arrive prepared, engage professionally, contribute meaningfully to case discussions and activities, and apply course concepts to advance the learning of the class. See pp. 4–5 for more details.	Sept 9 – Dec 2 weekly in-class
2	MBB Pitch – <i>Building Client- Ready Consulting Decks</i>	I	10%	Develop a polished five-slide executive presentation analyzing the success, competitive position and future strategic direction of a selected public figure using MBB-style storyline, evidence and slide-design conventions. See p. 6 for more details.	Tue, Oct 6 upload by 23:59
3	Reflection – <i>The Self-Aware Leader Workshop</i>	I	5%	Following the Self-Aware Leader Workshop facilitated by Corrin Whiteway, complete an individual reflection examining insights about your self-awareness, leadership effectiveness and identifying practical actions for professional development. See p. 7 for more details.	Wed, Oct 14 in-class Fri, Oct 16 reflection due 23:59
4	Midterm Quiz – <i>Consulting Concepts and Frameworks</i>	I	20%	Demonstrate understanding and application of the consulting problem-solving concepts, analytical approaches and strategic tools introduced in Chapters 1–7 of <i>Cracked It!</i> in 1.5-hour quiz administered via A2L during class time. See p. 8 for more details.	Wed, Oct 21 in-class at 14:30
5	Individual Research Project – <i>Identifying a Consulting Niche</i>	I	15%	Research a target industry and role, identify relevant market and capability requirements, assess personal development gaps, and recommend how the MBA can strengthen your positioning. Submit a consulting-style executive deck. See p. 9 for more details.	Tues, Nov 3 upload by 23:59
6	Case Study Quiz – <i>Limited-Reference Applied Analysis</i>	I	15%	Apply course concepts and consulting frameworks to analyze a business case, identify key strategic issues and develop practical, evidence-based recommendations in a 2.5-hour case study. Students may bring 1 double-sided A4 reference sheet. See p. 10 for more details.	Wed, Nov 18 in-class at 14:30
7	Group Consulting Project – <i>Client Industry Analysis</i>	G	20%	Working in P615B client project groups, conduct a strategic analysis of the client's industry and operating context, identify key client implications, and propose a direction for the next phase of the engagement. Submit a client-ready deck and present the analysis in a formal 20-minute presentation with 5-minute Q&A. See p. 11 for more details.	Tue, Dec 1 upload by 23:59 Wed, Dec 2 present in class

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

Assessment #1 – Participation: Developing Your Executive Voice and Presence

INDIVIDUAL | 15% | ASSESSED WEEKLY THROUGHOUT SEMESTER

Purpose

Effective communication is a prerequisite to success in the business world; effective consultants must communicate clearly, listen actively, contribute relevant insights, and engage professionally with clients and colleagues. This assessment is designed to develop students' executive voice and presence through regular participation in class discussions, case activities, and designated out-of-class assignments.

Participation is evaluated on the **quality, relevance and professionalism** of each students' contributions – not just frequency alone. Students are expected to demonstrate preparation, connect course concepts to business situations, engage constructively with classmates, and communicate recommendations with clarity and judgement.

Expectations for Participation

Attendance is required but does not, by itself, constitute participation. Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared to engage with assigned cases, readings, exercises and class discussions.

Strong participation typically looks like:

- advancing the discussion with a *relevant* interpretation, implication, or recommendation;
- applying a course framework or *analytical* lens to the situation under discussion;
- *connecting* ideas across cases, course concepts, industries, or current business issues;
- asking a thoughtful question that *deepens* the analysis;
- *constructively* building on, clarifying, or respectfully challenging a classmate's contribution;
- communicating an executive-level recommendation supported by sound *reasoning*;
- contributing *meaningfully* to assigned out-of-class participation activities.

Participation does not require speaking in every class discussion and unnecessarily consuming airtime. Students are assessed on the value of their contributions, with recognition that thoughtful listening, preparation and well-timed contributions are integral to professional communication.

Quality of Contributions

Participation is assessed according to the extent to which a contribution moves the class discussion forward.

Level	Description
5. Exceptional	Introduces a highly relevant insight, identifies an important implication, applies an appropriate framework effectively, or advances a well-supported consultant recommendation that materially strengthens the discussion.
4. Strong	Contributes a clear and relevant analysis, connects the discussion to course material or evidence, or productively builds on another student's point.
3. Satisfactory	Demonstrates preparation and contributes a relevant observation or response, but with limited analysis, application, or added insight.
2. Limited	Restates case facts or prior discussion without explaining implications, provides a minimally relevant comment, or participates inconsistently.
1. Insufficient	Is unprepared, does not engage meaningfully in participation opportunities, or demonstrates conduct that detracts from a professional and inclusive learning environment.

Before you speak, always ask yourself:

- 1) *How will my contribution advance the conversation?*
- 2) *Can I connect this issue to a course framework, previous analysis or relevant business context? Am I connecting the dots with other topics in a meaningful way?*
- 3) *Can I build on or constructively challenge another student's point in a meaningful and respectful way?*
- 4) *What implication, decision or recommendation would I identify as a consultant?*

Professional and Inclusive Engagement

The course is designed to support rigorous, respectful and inclusive discussion. Students are expected to treat each class as a real working environment and engage professionally with differing perspectives, communicate respectfully, and contribute to an environment in which each person can participate meaningfully.

Midterm Feedback

You will receive a midterm participation grade and feedback. This is intended to help students understand their performance and identify opportunities to strengthen participation for the remainder of the term.

Tips from TA

- Read cases and other assigned materials prior to the day of class. It also helps to read cases twice; first time, purely read the text, then second time, read while making notes/highlights.
- If participating feels intimidating, set a small goal for yourself, such as raising your hand 2-3 times per class. It can also help to contribute early on in the session, before you start overthinking or feel like someone else has already made your point.

Assessment #2 – MBB Pitch: Building Client-Ready Decks

INDIVIDUAL | 10% | DUE: TUES, OCT 6TH, 2026, BY 23:59

Purpose

Consultants must communicate complex information through concise, evidence-based executive presentations. This assignment develops students' ability to structure a compelling storyline, present comparative analysis, and make clear recommendations using the **McKinsey, Bain, Boston Consulting (MBB) presentation style**.

Deliverable

Select a well-known celebrity, athlete or business leader. Develop a polished **5-slide executive presentation in MBB format** analyzing their success, competitive position and future strategic direction.

Slide	Required Content
1. Overview and Success Drivers	Introduce the individual and explain the key highlights/drivers of their career, commercial or financial success (e.g., sources of revenue, amount per revenue stream, etc).
2. Competitive Positioning	Compare the individual to relevant peers using meaningful measures of performance or differentiation (e.g., revenue, years active, primary target audiences)
3. Key Challenge & Recommendation	Identify a material threat or challenge to their continued success and recommend a clear path forward.
4. Reflection	Using the Content–Process–Premise framework, reflect on what you learned through the exercise and how it informs your development as a consultant.
5. References	Include references in APA 7 th format and appropriate AI acknowledgement.

Submission

Submit the completed deck in **PDF format** via designated Avenue 2 Learn folder (Assessments > Assignments) in the P615A course shell by 23:59 (11:59 PM) on Tuesday, October 6th, 2026.

Tips from TA

- Watch the **Online Tutorial #1** on Avenue 2 Learn > Content > Online Tutorials.
- You can also refer to the following article written by a former McKinsey consultant on what constitutes an MBB style deck: *Deckary. (2026, January 26). Consulting presentations: The MBB guide to professional slides.* <https://deckary.com/blog/pillar-consulting-presentations-guide>
- Download presentation templates from websites like Canva, Slidesgo, or SlidesCarnival, rather than building from scratch. Don't go crazy with colours and pictures, use tables or charts to organize information, and pick professional fonts.

Assessment #3 – Reflection: The Self-Aware Leader Workshop

INDIVIDUAL | 5% | DUE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16TH, 2026, BY 23:59

Purpose

Consultants must understand how their communication style, behaviours and decision-making skills influence their effectiveness in teams and client-facing environments. This assignment is designed to help students critically reflect on insights gained through the **Self-Aware Leader Workshop**, held by Corrin Whiteway, and translate those insights into practical actions for their professional development.

Assignment

Following the Self-Aware Leader Workshop, complete an individual reflection analyzing what you learned about yourself as a leader and emerging consultant.

Your reflection should move beyond describing workshop activities. Instead, it should identify meaningful insights about your own behaviours, strengths, development areas or assumptions, and explain how these insights may influence your effectiveness in future team, leadership or client-facing settings.

Deliverable

Prepare a concise **2-page written reflection** (500 words +/- 100) addressing the following areas.

Section	Required Content
1. Key Insights	Identify one significant insight gained from the workshop about your own self-awareness, leadership style, communication, decision-making or professional presence.
2. Evidence and Interpretation	Explain the specific workshop activity, feedback, discussion or observation that led to this insight and why it is meaningful.
3. Application	Analyze how this insight may affect your effectiveness in consulting teams, client interactions or professional problem-solving environments.
4. Development Action Plan	Identify two specific and actionable steps you will take to strengthen your self-awareness, leadership effectiveness or professional communication in future team and client-facing environments.

If you choose to include references or external sources/images in any form, please cite in APA 7th format.

Submission

Submit completed reflection in **PDF format** via designated Avenue 2 Learn folder (Assessments > Assignments) in the P615A course shell by the stated deadline.

Level 3 – No AI Usage Permitted

This is an individual reflective assessment. The deliverable should represent your *own* personal analysis and writing and must be completed without the use of generative AI assistance. You are not being graded on the sophistication of your writing, but on the actual content and level of introspection demonstrated. An AI acknowledgement statement is required,

Tips from TA

- Slides will be provided following the workshop, but it is encouraged to handwrite notes, observations or anything that thought-provokes you during the session for incorporating into your reflection later.
- If it helps, you are welcome to employ the same Content-Process-Premise framework used in other assignments.

Assessment #4 – Midterm Quiz: Consulting Concepts and Frameworks

INDIVIDUAL | 20% | SCHEDULED: WED, OCT 21ST, 2026, BETWEEN 14:30 – 16:00

Purpose

Consultants must be able to structure ambiguous business problems, select appropriate analytical approaches, and translate their analysis into practical solutions. The midterm assesses your understanding of the problem-solving concepts, analytical approaches and strategic consulting tools presented in the course textbook, ***Cracked It! How to Solve Big Problems and Sell Solutions Like Top Strategy Consultants***.

Overview

The midterm is a **closed-book quiz worth 20% of your final grade**, administered and completed individually through A2L during class time. Questions will be presented in a combination of single-answer, multiple-choice and free-text/written formats. You will have **1.5 hours (90 minutes)** to complete the quiz.

Bring a charged laptop or tablet to complete the quiz in-class, as well as a spare charger in case your battery starts to die. No calculator or additional devices are required. Scrap paper will be provided for making notes. Students must comply with all course and university requirements governing in-class assessments.

Scope of Midterm

The midterm quiz will assess your understanding and application of the consulting problem-solving approaches introduced in **Chapter 1-7 of the course textbook, *Cracked It!***

Students may be assessed on their ability to:

- Explain and identify the 5 pitfalls in problem-solving;
- Explain and apply the 4S method;
- Formulate a meaningful problem statement using the TOSCA framework;
- Distinguish between hypothesis-driven and issue-driven approaches, and determine when each approach is most appropriate;
- Structure a problem using hypothesis pyramids, issue trees, MECE logic and relevant analytical frameworks;
- Evaluate evidence, assumptions and analytical conclusions, including the use of benchmarks, sensitivity analysis and common sources of analytical error;
- Apply course concepts to short business or consulting scenarios using clear, concise and well-supported reasoning.

Required Reading

- Garrette, B., Phelps, C., & Sibony, O. (2018). *Cracked it! How to solve big problems and sell solutions like top strategy consultants*. Springer International Publishing. **[Found in your [HSB Coursepack link](#)]**

Tips from TA

- Don't procrastinate reading the book.... stay on top off the schedule presented in the course outline or create a realistic reading routine that works best for you.
- Allocate up to 1 hour per chapter for reading and making notes. Consolidate your notes as you read onto a single document/page to act as a quick review sheet. This will save you time while preparing for midterm and final case study.
- If you have access to a paid version of a generative AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT Plus, Claude Pro, or Gemini Pro), you can upload your quick-review sheet as a PDF, Word document, or image and ask the tool to quiz you on the concepts.

Assessment #5 – Individual Research Project: Identifying a Consulting Niche

INDIVIDUAL | 15% | DUE: TUES, NOV 3, 2026, BY 23:59

Purpose

Consultants must identify emerging client needs, understand capability gaps, and translate market insight into practical recommendations. This assignment is designed to help you explore a target industry and role, assess the capabilities required for success, and develop a focused professional development plan.

Assignment

Select an **industry** and **role or functional area** in which you **aspire to build a career**. Using primary and secondary research, develop an evidence-based analysis of the trends, opportunities, challenges and capability requirements affecting your chosen area. Students will then identify gaps between the capabilities required in the market and your current experience and recommend how you can use the MBA experience to better position yourself for your target role.

Deliverable

This assessment consists of a polished **5-10 slide consulting-style executive deck** that synthesizes your research, findings and recommendations.

Section	Required Content
1. Target Industry and Role Overview	Introduce the selected industry and role, including why it is relevant to your career interests.
2. Market Trends and Capability Needs	Identify key industry trends, opportunities or challenges, and the capabilities employers or clients require in response.
3. Personal Capability Gap Analysis	Assess the most significant gaps between your current profile and the requirements of your target role.
4. MBA Development Plan	Provide three specific and actionable recommendations for how you will use the MBA experience to develop the required capabilities and strengthen your positioning.
5. Reflection	Using the Content–Process–Premise framework, reflect on what you learned through the exercise and how it informs your professional development.
6. References	Include references in APA 7 th format and appropriate AI acknowledgement.

Submission

Submit the completed deck in **PDF format** via designated Avenue 2 Learn folder (Assessments > Assignments) in the P615A course shell by **23:59 (11:59 PM) on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2026**.

Tips from TA

- Watch the **Online Tutorial #2** dedicated to this assignment on Avenue 2 Learn > Content > Online Tutorials.
- Begin thinking about this assignment *prior* to GRIT Week to make the most out of it. Use it as an opportunity to network and secure a coffee chat with a real person in the field of work you aspire to work, while also strengthening your primary research component.

Assessment #6 – Case Study Quiz: Limited-Reference Applied Analysis

INDIVIDUAL | 15% | SCHEDULED: WED, NOV 18TH, 2026, BETWEEN 14:30 – 17:00

Purpose

Consultants must be able to analyze unfamiliar business situations, identify the core issues, apply appropriate frameworks and communicate practical recommendations under time constraints. The case study quiz is designed to assess students' ability to integrate and apply the consulting concepts, tools and approaches developed throughout the course so far in a realistic business advisory scenario.

Overview

This final assessment is a **limited-reference case study quiz worth 15% of your final grade**, administered and completed individually during class time. You will be provided an unfamiliar business case and a set of questions. You will have **2.5 hours (150 minutes)** to read the case and provide written/typed responses.

You may bring **one double-sided, A4-size crib sheet** summarizing course concepts, frameworks or analytical tools.

Bring a charged laptop or tablet device to complete the case study in-class, as well as a spare charger in case your device's battery starts to die. No calculator or additional devices are required. Scrap paper will be provided for making notes. Students must comply with all course and university requirements governing in-class assessments.

Scope of Case Study Quiz

The case study will assess your ability to move from case information to structured analysis, strategic insight and clear recommendations. You should not attempt to apply every framework covered in the course but rather select and use the tools *most* relevant to the problem(s) presented.

You should prepare to be assessed on your ability to:

- Define the central problem or opportunity presented in the case;
- Identify the most relevant facts, issues, stakeholders and constraints (TOSCA);
- Structure the analysis using appropriate consulting frameworks or problem-solving approaches (hypothesis-driven, issue-driven, design thinking, etc);
- Evaluate the organization's external environment, competitive position, internal considerations or strategic options, as relevant to the case (PESTLE, Porter's Five Forces, etc)
- Prioritize key insights rather than summarize case facts;
- Develop practical and well-supported recommendations;
- Communicate analysis clearly, logically and professionally.

Permitted Materials

- One double-sided, A4-size crib sheet inspected and approved by TA.

Recommended Reading

- Garrette, B., Phelps, C., & Sibony, O. (2018). *Cracked it! How to solve big problems and sell solutions like top strategy consultants*. Springer International Publishing. **[Found in your [HSB Coursepack link](#)]**

Tips from TA

- Remember that quick review sheet I recommended creating for the midterm? It could potentially come back into use here, or at least, serve as a basis for your crib sheet.

Assessment #7 – Group Consulting Project: Client Industry Analysis

GROUP | 20% | DECK DUE: TUES, DEC 1ST, 2026 BY 23:59 | PRESENTATIONS: WED, DEC 2ND DURING CLASS

Purpose

Consultants must be able to quickly develop an informed understanding of a client's business environment, define the strategic context surrounding a client problem, and communicate relevant insights clearly and professionally. This assignment is designed to help students apply consulting tools and frameworks to a real client engagement while developing a strong foundation for the continuation of the project in P615B.

Assignment

Working in assigned **P615B client project groups**, students will conduct a strategic analysis of their client's industry and the consulting problem identified for their engagement. Through secondary research and relevant stakeholder interactions (if applicable at this stage), teams will develop an understanding of the client's operating context, key industry dynamics, stakeholder needs, and the factors shaping their consulting problem. Teams will then synthesize their findings into a client-ready presentation that communicates the most important insights, proposed direction and plan of action for the Winter-term project.

This assessment represents **Phase 1** of the team consulting engagement in P615B Winter 2027. Teams are not expected to deliver a final solution to the client's problem at this stage. Rather, the objective is to establish a credible, evidence-based understanding of the problem context and identify the priority areas that should guide subsequent analysis in Phase 2 during the Winter term.

Deliverables

1. A polished **consulting-style executive presentation deck** presenting the team's industry analysis, key client implications and plan of action for Phase 2.
2. A formal **20-minute in-class presentation** followed by a **5-minute Q&A** period from instructor, TA and class.

The presentation should address the following areas, as appropriate to your client's industry:

Section	Required Content
1. Industry Overview	Define the relevant industry and provide an evidence-based overview of its size, growth, structure, customer segments or other key characteristics.
2. Competitive Landscape	Identify major competitors or categories of competitors, assess their positioning and explain the basis of competition within the industry,
3. Key External Trends and Forces	Analyze the economic, social, technological, regulatory or other external factors most relevant to the client's operating environment.
4. Strategic Industry Analysis	Apply one or more relevant consulting frameworks, such as Porter's 5 Forces or another relevant analytical tool, to assess industry attractiveness, pressure points or sources of opportunity.
5. Implications for the Client	Translate analysis into clear implications for the client, highlighting most material risks, opportunities or considerations for your team's consulting engagement.
6. References	Include references in APA 7 th format, appendices or supporting exhibits.

Tips from TA

- Watch the **Online Tutorial #3** on Avenue 2 Learn > Content > Online Tutorials.
- Treat this assignment as your secondary research-based "foundation" of your client's consulting project and core problem for the next term. The deeper you go now, the more ready you'll be to hit the ground running in Jan 2027.

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. Attendance will be recorded in each class to help identify students who may be at risk or in need of additional support.

Instructors will be using Top Hat 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 SEAO (Student Experience 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 P615A 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

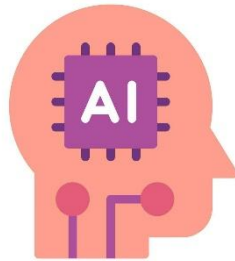
AI Policy for Course Submissions

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.

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 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. (2024). Response generated by ChatGPT (Version GPT-4) on August 26, 2024. Retrieved from [OpenAI ChatGPT].
- **Image Generated by AI:**
OpenAI. (2024). Image generated by DALL-E on August 26, 2024. 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Experiential Learning Activities	Readings and Notes
Learning Loop 1: Fundamentals of Strategy Consulting: Critical Thinking, Problematization, and Developing a Differentiated Strategy				
1	Wed. Sep 9	Foundations - Course Overview - Communicating as a Consultant - Cross-Cultural Communication - Building an MBB slide - Mezirow's Reflective Framework	In-Class Exercises	- Garrette, B., Phelps, C., & Sibony, O. (2018). <i>Cracked it! How to solve big problems and sell solutions like top strategy consultants</i>. Springer Publishing. (Chapters 1 + 2) - Meyer, E. (2014). Navigating the Cultural Minefield. <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 92(5). - <u>Optional</u>: Meyer, E. (2014). The culture map: Breaking through the invisible boundaries of global business. PublicAffairs.
2	Wed. Sep 16	State the Problem - Overview of 4S Process (State-Structure-Solve-Sell) - State the Problem (TOSCA Framework) - Consulting Frameworks & Concepts: 3-Circles Analysis, Play to Win	Taherizadeh, A. (forthcoming). <i>EVA: Business Model Innovation for Sustainable Growth and Profitability</i> . Ivey Publishing.	- Cracked It! (Chapters 3 + 4) - Introduction + Chapter 1 from Lafley, A. G., & Martin, R. L. (2013). <i>Playing to win: How strategy really works</i>. Harvard Business Review Press.
3	Wed. Sep 23	Structure the Problem - Consulting Process: Structure the Problem: Pyramids and Trees - Consulting Frameworks & Concepts: Blue Ocean Strategy, Strategy Canvas, 4 Actions Framework	Taherizadeh, A. (2025). <i>Hatley: Overcoming Growth Challenges for Global Expansion</i> . Ivey Publishing.	- Cracked It! (Chapter 5) - Kim, W. C., & Mauborgne, R. A. (2005). Blue Ocean Strategy: From Theory to Practice. <i>California Management Review</i>, 47(3), 105–124.
4	Wed, Sep 30	<u>NO CLASS</u> – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation		

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Experiential Learning Activities	Readings and Notes
Learning Loop 2: Structuring, Solving and Redefining Client Problems				
5	Wed. Oct 7	Structure → Solve the Problem - Structure the Problem: Analytical Frameworks, Eight Degrees of Analysis - Solve the Problem	Chang, V., and Zhu, Q. (2019). <i>Freshippo: Data-Driven Business Model Innovation</i> . Harvard Business Publishing Education.	- Cracked It! (Chapter 6 + 7) - Taherizadeh, A., & Beaudry, C. (2023). An emergent grounded theory of AI-driven digital transformation: Canadian SMEs' perspectives. <i>Industry and Innovation</i>, 30(9), 1244–1273.
6	Wed. Oct 14	The Self-Aware Leader Workshop	In-Class Exercises	- Cecchi-Dimeglio, P. (2024, February 14). How self-awareness elevates leadership effectiveness. <i>Forbes</i>. https://www.forbes.com/sites/paolacecchi-dimeglio/2024/02/14/how-self-awareness-elevates-leadership-effectiveness/ - Higgs, M., & Rowland, D. (2010). Emperors With Clothes On: The Role of Self-awareness in Developing Effective Change Leadership. <i>Journal of Change Management</i>, 10(4), 369–385. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2010.516483
7	Wed. Oct 21	Midterm Quiz (20%)	In-Class Assessment	Cracked It! (Chapter 1-7)
8	Wed. Oct 28	Redefine + Design Thinking - Consulting Process: Structure and Solve the Problem Using Design Thinking - Consulting Frameworks & Concepts: Pathway to Purchase; Know Your Customer and their Journey; Developing Customer Personas; Customer Journey Mapping and Analysis	Elsworth, J. et al. (2020). <i>The Home Depot Inc.: A Digital Transformation for Customer Experience</i> . Ivey Publishing	- Cracked It! (Chapter 8 + 9) - How to Create a Realistic Customer Journey Map - Kolko, J. (2015). Design Thinking Comes of Age. - Bason, C., and Austin, R.D. (2019). The Right Way to Lead Design Thinking.

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Experiential Learning Activities	Readings and Notes
Learning Loop 3: Synthesizing and Communicating Client Solutions				
9	Wed. Nov 4	Sell the Solution - Consulting Process: Core Message and Storyline - Consulting Frameworks & Concepts: Pyramid Principle	CASE - TBD	- Cracked It! (Chapter 10 + 11)
10	Wed. Nov 11	<u>NO CLASS</u> – GRIT Week		
11	Wed. Nov 18	Case Study Quiz (15%)	In-Class Assessment	TBD
Learning Loop 4: From Frameworks to Practice, Consulting Project Kickoffs				
12	Wed. Nov 25	From Frameworks to Practice - Consulting Frameworks & Concepts: S-Curves, Three Horizons Framework, Types of Innovation - Transition to P615B	In Class Coaching	Christensen, C.M., Hall, T., Dillon, K., Duncan, D.S., Duncan, D. (2016). Know Your Customers' "Jobs to Be Done".
13	Wed. Dec 2	Group Consulting Project - Industry Analysis Presentations	In Class Presentations	N/A

End of This Document.