

**Commerce 4SH3
Case Analysis & Presentation Skills
Fall 2019 Course Outline**

**Strategic Management Area
DeGroot School of Business
McMaster University**

COURSE OBJECTIVE

A unique experiential and applied course in McMaster's Commerce program, this course is designed with several inter-related objectives in mind: (1) introduce you to current theory and practice in case analysis; (2) enhance your ability to produce *creative, action-oriented, practical* solutions to business problems; (3) improve your written and oral communication abilities; (4) encourage you to present detailed implementation and contingency plans and be able to defend them in a competitive environment.

Note: Students having taken this course will be given strong consideration if they wish to represent the DeGroot School of Business in student competitions (e.g., JDCC, UW Global Business Case Competition).

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Mon 14:30 – 17:20
Dr. François Neville
Instructor
nevillef@mcmaster.ca
Office: DSB 201
Office Hours: after class
Tel: (905) 525-9140 x21463
Class Location: DSB 505

Teaching Assistant
TBD
TAsMACID@mcmaster.ca

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value: 3	Leadership: Yes	IT skills: Yes	Global view: Yes
Avenue: Yes	Ethics: Yes	Numeracy: Yes	Written skills: Yes

Participation: Yes	Innovation: Yes	Group work: Yes	Oral skills: Yes
Evidence-based: Yes	Experiential: Yes	Final Exam: No	Guest speaker(s): Yes

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The case method is an experiential learning method that brings realism to problem solving and allows students to realistically assess what a firm is able to overcome and how it applies its limited resources to the problem or opportunity at hand. 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 present their analysis and recommendations to a panel of judges. Hence, they will also develop their presentation skills, team management and communication skills. The first half of the course will provide students with the tools they need to approach case analysis. These tools include problem solving methodologies, communication approaches and team building skills. The second half of the course will allow students to practice applying these tools in case analysis situations. The cases will cover various industries and companies as well as different disciplines. Students will also be able to critique the analyses of their peers. This develops students' ability to anticipate questions that may be asked of them by a panel of judges as well as learn techniques brought forth by others in the course.

In alignment with the DeGroote School of Business' Statement of Purpose, this course will emphasize effective experiential learning approaches to prepare students for market-ready success.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Identify important and relevant information for making business decisions.
- Utilize appropriate analysis techniques to assess industry and organizational situations.
- Generate realistic alternatives for various organizational situations and evaluate those alternatives to determine which will best solve the issue facing the organization.
- Apply and integrate theories from various business disciplines to real-world situations.
- Build, foster and manage effective teams.
- Demonstrate effective presentation skills.
- Handle challenging questions directly following a presentation.
- Demonstrate critical evaluation and critiquing skills.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Avenue registration for course content, readings and case materials

- <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

Custom Courseware

- Purchase a copy at the bookstore

EVALUATION

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Components and Weights

Group Components	
Case presentations (7)*	50%
Assignment 1	5%
Assignment 2	10%
Individual Components	
Self-reflections (3)	10%
Peer evaluations (7)	10%
Feedback (2)	5%
In-class participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

Note: Students who *meet* the expectations as laid out in this outline on all components can expect a grade of B in this course.

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	Letter Grade	Percent
A+	90-100	C+	67-69
A	85-89	C	63-66
A-	80-84	C-	60-62
B+	77-79	D+	57-59
B	73-76	D	53-56
B-	70-72	D-	50-52
		F	00-49

* 20% of this component is marked individually. See “Case Presentations” section for further details.

Communication and Feedback

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 Area Administrative Assistants.

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

Note: Please include “Commerce 4SH3” In the subject field of all e-mail communications related to this course. Please allow a 24-hour response time for all communications.

Appeals and Re-evaluation

Students who wish to have a course component re-evaluated must complete the following form:

http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/Form_A.pdf

In order for the component to be re-read:

- The component must be worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course;
- Students pay a fee of \$50 in Gilmour Hall 209 and the receipt is then brought to Student Experience - Academic Office (formerly the APO) in DSB 112;
- The Area Chair will seek out an independent adjudicator to re-grade the component;
- An adjustment to the grade for the component will be made if a grade change of three points or greater on the 12-point scale (equivalent to 10 marks out of 100) has been suggested by the adjudicator as assigned by the Area Chair;
- If a grade change is made, the student fee will be refunded.

Course Deliverables

Case Presentations

This component is worth **50%** of your final grade and will be marked in group format. Teams of 3 or 4 students will conduct case analyses and present them in class. Cases will follow formats that best match the formats of the case competitions that students may participate in. Students must purchase the 4SH3 course pack when it is made available which will cover the cost of case licenses. There is one case in the courseware. All other cases will be provided to students by the instructor.

The length of presentations will be **15 minutes** long followed by a **5-minute** question & answer period (consistent with case competition formats). Students are expected to make effective use of material discussed in class as well as other resources available from the Web or specialized relevant references. The mark of the team presentation will be based on how professional and comprehensive the

presentation is, and how well the Q&A period was handled by the team. The time limits will be strictly enforced: team presentations will be strictly cut-off at the 15-minute mark; presentations must be at least 13 minutes long (teams are subject to an automatic 10% deduction if they fail to meet the 13-minute minimum time requirement).

20% of each presentation's grade will focus on presentation skills (i.e., quality of language, delivery) and will be marked individually. This evaluation will reflect the student's abilities to deliver a professional and convincing section of the presentation. The evaluation will also depend on the student's abilities in fielding questions following the presentations as well as his/her support of the other group members. Specific details concerning protocols and guidelines around case resolution and presentations will be posted on Avenue to Learn (A2L) and discussed in class.

It is expected that there is a learning curve involved in developing case analysis and presentation skills, and as such, the cases will be evaluated on a graduating scale, as follows:

Case	Weight
1	3%
2	5%
3	6%
4-5	8%
6-7	10%
TOTAL	50%

Note: Periodically throughout the semester, industry professionals might be invited to join the class and evaluate presentations, as well as offer their perspectives.

Assignment 1 – Studying Exemplars

This component is worth **5%** of your final grade and will be marked in group format. Your team will have to watch videos and review the PowerPoint slide decks of **3** finalist teams in the UW Global business case competition. You will then be required to prepare a concise summary of the 3 presentations, evaluate and critique each presentation, and expand on some of the lessons that you have learned from each presentation and how they apply in your own approach to analyzing cases and presenting. More details will be posted on A2L and discussed in class.

Assignment 2 – Company Analysis

This component is worth **10%** of your final grade and will be marked in group format. Your team will select a publicly-traded company of your choosing (one company per group) and produce a comprehensive report on the company's current state of affairs by conducting a detailed analysis using the tools and skills that have been discussed in class and that you have used to solve cases. More details will be posted on A2L and discussed in class.

Self-reflections

This component is worth **10%** of your final grade and will be marked individually. Students will complete **3** written reports on their case analysis and presentation skills (each will account for **5%** of your grade). The first will focus on where you think your case analysis and presentation skills are at the present time

(i.e., strengths and weaknesses), needed areas of improvement, as well as setting personal goals and outlining a plan of action for how you expect to achieve these goals. Subsequent self-reflections will follow a similar structure but also offer insights into progress toward goal achievement, identify lessons that have emerged, and uncover additional areas of improvement.

Feedback

This component is worth **5%** of your final grade and will be marked individually. Students are required to assess the performance of other groups who are presenting each week. Constructive and detailed feedback is expected on the content as well as the presentation skills of the presenting groups. A standard evaluation form will be used for the case critiques, which must be handed in after each case presentation. These critiques will help to further develop the critical assessment skills of evaluators as well as provide further quality feedback to presenters. Each student will be required to offer feedback on **2** occasions throughout the semester, as outlined in the case and presentation schedule.

In-class Participation

This component is worth **10%** of your final grade and will be marked individually. In order to stimulate a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment, this course is designed to leverage the unique knowledge, skills, and abilities of each student. As such, student participation is not only strongly encouraged, but is also required in order to benefit the entire group as well as students on an individual basis.

You are expected to be an active participant and to make meaningful comments on the material being discussed. Hence, participating adequately contributes to developing and improving abilities to present and defend positions, as well as competencies related to managing the process of evaluation and debate—skills and competencies that have practical implications for future managers and leaders. If you are disruptive or unprofessional (e.g., talks with others; falls asleep; surfs the web), points will be deducted. If you do not attend, you forfeit the opportunity to earn points. The following provides a general guideline for assessment:

Grade	Participation level
9-10	Consistently making quality comments and sharing ideas with the class; Integrating course concepts and material into comments
8-8.9	Regularly attending, preparing for class and making solid contributions when called on during class
7-7.9	Speaking very rarely, being ill-prepared to make meaningful contributions
6-6.9	Almost no spontaneous contributions to class; frequently absent
Less than 5.9	Absent often and no in-class contributions

I encourage you to schedule a meeting with me if issues arise related to regular participation.

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

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

AUTHENTICITY/PLAGIARISM DETECTION

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to;

www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS

In this course we will be using X*. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the

McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure.

If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

X* = e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc

REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Students may request relief from a regularly scheduled midterm, test, assignment or other course components. Please refer to the policy and procedure on the DeGroot website at the link below;

<http://ug.degroot.mcmaster.ca/forms-and-resources/misled-course-work-policy/>

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca.

For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

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 requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request, including the dates/times needing to be accommodated and the courses which will be impacted, to their Faculty Office normally within 10 days of the beginning of term or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

<https://multifaith.mcmaster.ca/riso>

POTENTIAL MODIFICATION TO THE COURSE

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term. There may be changes to 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 enrolment in Commerce 4SH3 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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Fall 2019 Course Schedule**

Date	Discussion Focus	Activity & Deliverable(s)
Sept. 9	Introduction & overview Demystifying cases	Ice breakers & team building
Sept. 16	Presentation & PowerPoint skills Format of case presentations Case: Lego	PowerPoint practice Improvisation exercise
Sept. 23	CASE 1	
Sept. 30	Analysis tools Case: Lego	External & internal analysis Due: Self-reflection 1
Oct. 7	CASE 2	
Oct. 14	No class - Reading Week	
Oct. 21	In-class work on Assignments	Due: Assignment 1 (11pm)
Oct. 28	CASE 3	
Nov. 4	Alternatives & recommendation Implementation Case: Lego	Alternatives & recommendation Implementation Due: Self-reflection 2
Nov. 11	CASE 4	Due: Assignment 2 (11pm)
Nov. 18	CASE 5	
Nov. 25	CASE 6	
Dec. 2	CASE 7	Due: Self-reflection 3