

Commerce 1BA3 - Organizational Behaviour Spring 2025 Course Outline

Human Resources and Management Area DeGroote School of Business McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The central objective of this course is to enrich your ability to understand and practice many of the “survival skills” necessary to succeed in modern organizations. The content of this course focuses on individuals and groups as the primary unit of analysis. You will learn (or learn in greater detail), topics such as personality; values; perception; motivation; communication; group dynamics; leadership; power & politics; conflict & stress management, and change management. The emphasis throughout the course is on the strategic management of organizations as well as on your own individual skill development, through the effective understanding and application of theory and related behavioural choices.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Lucy Djelalian Pepper, Lecturer
djelall@mcmaster.ca

Tuesdays and Thursdays – 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Office Hours: By Appointment only

Course Website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>
Teaching Assistant: Toli Amare - amaret1@mcmaster.ca

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	No	Global view:	Yes
A2L:	Yes	Ethics:	Yes	Numeracy:	No	Written skills:	Yes
Participation:	Yes	Innovation:	Yes	Group work:	Yes	Oral skills:	Yes
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	Yes	Guest speaker:	No

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Teaching Methods

The teaching methods in this course include two 3-hour classes per week, PowerPoint slides, and practical skill-building assignments. This multiplicity of methods allows students to:

1. Test their understanding of theories and concepts presented in the readings. More specifically to test their understanding of attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups in organizations.
2. Use theories/concepts to analyze and develop solutions to actual problems at the individual, group/team and organizational levels.
3. Apply their knowledge directly through application-based activities built within the course. The teaching methods are designed to enhance their self-awareness and capacity for self-improvement; enable them to understand, interact with, and influence others; and equip them to serve in a variety of roles in organizations.

Course Expectations

In this course, much of your time will be spent in group interaction. This enables you to share ideas and to improve communication skills. Through interaction, you will discover for yourself the meaning of concepts, the subtleties inherent in everyday business situations, and the rationales for various solutions to managerial problems. To achieve effective interaction, I have three expectations:

1. **Attendance.** Because interaction is central, and also because your fellow group members will be relying on you for ideas, I expect you to attend every class. Valid reasons for absence include serious illness and family emergencies. Studying for exams and completing assignments are not valid reasons to miss class.
2. **Preparation.** You are expected to read assigned material in advance and to be fully prepared for class discussion. You may be called upon to begin the class and to contribute to discussion at any time. Unsupported opinion will not substitute for informed discussion. Adequate preparation is the only way to avoid embarrassment.
3. **Group work.** Groups will be created at the end of the first week of classes. The group should address group problems or conflict in a timely fashion. Your TA will be available to assist groups who experience problems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Increase your understanding of the theories and concepts related to individuals, groups, and interpersonal processes within the organizational context.
- Gain a broad intellectual understanding of the central concepts in judgment and decision making.

- Improve your analytical abilities with respect to problem identification, analysis, and the development of alternative solutions.
- Develop a toolkit of useful skills, strategies, and approaches drawn from OB.
- Develop confidence in your ability to make changes within yourself, relationships, teams and organizations.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required Textbook:

Organizational Behaviour: Understanding and Managing Life at Work (12th Edition)

Published by Pearson Education Canada © 2023, by Gary Johns and Alan Saks

COURSE OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

Missed tests/exams will receive a grade of zero unless the student has submitted and been approved for a Notification of Absence or MSAF. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

EVALUATIONS	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
In-class Group Assignments	30%	2 x 15% each; Students will be working within groups to complete 2 written assignments, each consisting of 5 questions related to course content. -Assignment #1: Covers content from Topics 1-4 -Assignment #2: Covers content from Topics 5-9
Midterm Exam	35%	Multiple Choice Questions
Final Exam	35%	Multiple Choice Questions (Non-cumulative)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION	TOOL(S)
Live Lectures	2X 3-hour live sessions per week; opportunity to elaborate on course core content, present challenges, engage discussion	PowerPoint slides posted weekly in Avenue
Readings/Videos	Tied to weekly topics	HBR articles & YouTube Videos may be referenced in class to support and illustrate concepts
Office Hours	By appointment only	
In-class Group Assignments	2 X 15% each	Assignment questions are designed to allow students to apply critical course concepts to practical business situations.

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

COURSE DELIVERABLES

In-Class Group Assignments (30%)

The closed book in-class group assignments will occur during normally scheduled class time. You will be responsible for organizing your own group of five members; this established group of students will remain the same for both assignments. Names of group members will need to be submitted by the end of the first week of classes.

On the day of each in-class assignment, groups will be given five questions each worth 10 marks, usually drawn from the textbook and in-class discussions. Groups will be given 50 minutes to respond to the assigned questions in writing within a specific pink booklet. There will be 2 assignments each worth 15%.

Each student must clearly indicate their name next to the question they choose to answer. If all five responses receive a score of 5 or higher (out of 10), the group will be awarded a collective grade. However, should any individual's response receive a score below 5, that student will be assigned the grade they earned. The rest of the group's grade will then be recalculated, excluding the score of the student whose response did not meet the minimum threshold. This new policy is designed to discourage social loafing and to promote individual accountability by encouraging students to adequately prepare and contribute meaningfully to group work.

Midterm Exam – Thursday, May 29, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (35%)

The midterm exam will be composed of multiple-choice questions. More details will be provided closer to the exam.

Final Exam – Thursday, June 19, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (35%)

The final exam will be non-cumulative and will be the same format as the midterm exam. More details will be provided as we get closer to the end of the semester.

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. All students must receive feedback regarding their progress prior to the final date by which a student may cancel the course without failure by default.

- *For Level 1 and Level 2 courses, this feedback must equal a minimum of 20% of the final grade.*
- *For Level 3 courses and above, this feedback must equal a minimum of 10% of the final grade.*

Instructors may solicit feedback via an informal course review with students by Week #4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

REQUESTING RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar [“Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”](#) and the link below;

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

COURSE MODIFICATION

From time to time there may be a need to remove/add topics or to change the schedule or the delivery format. If these are necessary, you will be given as much advance notice as possible.

GENERATIVE AI

USE PROHIBITED

Students are not permitted to use generative AI in this course. In alignment with [McMaster academic integrity policy](#), it “shall be an offence knowingly to ... submit academic work for assessment that was purchased or acquired from another source”. This includes work created by generative AI tools. Also state in the policy is the following, “Contract Cheating is the act of “outsourcing of student work to third parties” (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016, p. 639) with or without payment.” Using Generative AI tools is a form of contract cheating. Charges of academic dishonesty will be brought forward to the Office of Academic Integrity.

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. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

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.

For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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.

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 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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

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 their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

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.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email

RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS

All researchers conducting research that involves human participants, their records or their biological material are required to receive approval from one of McMaster's Research Ethics Boards before (a) they can recruit participants and (b) collect or access their data. Failure to comply with relevant policies is a research misconduct matter. Contact these boards for further information about your requirements and the application process.

McMaster Research Ethics Board (General board): <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (Medical board): <http://www.hireb.ca/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in Commerce 1BA3 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.

CERTIFIED HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONAL (CHRP)

This course can be used as one of the course requirements for obtaining the Certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP) designation. CHRP is the professional designation offered by

The Human Resources Professionals Association. The courses offered in the DeGroote Commerce program that contribute to CHRP requirements are:

- 1BA3 Organizational Behaviour,
- 2BC3 Human Resource Management and Labour Relations,
- 4BB3 Personnel Selection,
- 4BC3 Collective Bargaining,
- 4BE3 Compensation/Reward Systems,
- 4BI3 Training and Development,
- 4BL3 Occupational Health and Safety,
- 4BM3 Strategic Human Resource Planning,
- 2AA3 Financial Accounting I,
- 2AB3 Managerial Accounting I.

More details are available on the Human Resource Professionals Association website:

<http://www.hrpa.ca>

COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS	DATES	TOPIC	READING & DELIVERABLES
1	May 6	O.B. Introduction	Read Chapter 1 Read Chapter 2 p. 54-65 (2.1 & 2.2 in e-text)
2	May 8	Personality, Abilities, Values & Attitudes	Read Chapter 4 Read Chapter 5 p.181-182 (5.1 in e-text)
3	May 13	Perception Intro to Motivation	Read Chapter 3 Read Chapter 5
4	May 15	Motivation continued	Read Chapter 2 p.66-83 (2.3 - 2.6 in e-text) Read Chapter 6 Practice Assignment
5	May 20	Individual Decision-Making	Read Chapter 11 p. 422-437 (11.1 & 11.2 in e-text) In-class Assignment #1 (Based on Ch. 1,2,3,4,5,6) (15%)
6	May 22	Communication Intro to Group Dynamics	Read Chapter 10
7	May 27	Group Dynamics, Teamwork & Group Decision-Making cont'd	Read Chapter 7 Read Chapter 11 p. 438-447 (11.3 & 11.4 in e-text)
8	May 29	MIDTERM EXAM	Mid-term Exam (Based on Ch. 1,2,3,4,5,6,10,11 p. 422-437/e-text 11.1-11.2) (35%)
9	June 3	Culture & Socialization	Read Chapter 8
10	June 5	Leadership	Read Chapter 9
11	June 10	Power, Politics & Ethics Conflict & Stress	Read Chapter 12 Read Chapter 13
12	June 12	Environment, Strategy & Structure	Read Chapter 14 In-class Assignment #2 (Based on Ch. 7,8,9,10,11) (15%)
13	June 17	Environment, Strategy & Structure cont'd Organizational Change	Read Chapter 15
14	June 19	FINAL EXAM	Final Exam Based on Ch. 7,8,9,11 (p. 438-447/e-text 11.3-11.4), Ch. 12,13,14,15 (35%)

**Commerce 1BA3 - Organizational Behaviour – Spring 2025
E-Text Reading List**

For those students using REVEL and the e-text, the list below indicates the sections you are expected to read each week.

May 6 | O.B Introduction | Chapter 1

- Ch. 1 Introduction: Organizational Behaviour and Management
- 1.1: What Are Organizations?
- 1.2: What Is Organizational Behaviour?
- 1.3: Goals of Organizational Behaviour
- 1.4: Early Prescriptions Concerning Management
- 1.5: Contemporary Management – The Contingency Approach
- 1.6: What Do Managers Do?
- 1.7: Some Contemporary Management Concerns
- Ch. 1 Summary: Organizational Behaviour and Management

May 8 | Personality, Abilities, Values & Attitudes | Chapters 2, 4 & 5

- 2.1: What is Personality?
- 2.2: Personality Variables in Organizational Behaviour
- 2.3: Advances in Personality and Organizational Behaviour
- Ch. 2 Summary: Personality
- Ch. 4 Introduction: Values, Attitudes, and Work Behaviour
- 4.1: What Are Values?
- 4.2: What Are Attitudes?
- 4.3: What Is Job Satisfaction?
- 4.4: Consequences of Job Satisfaction
- 4.5: What Is Organizational Commitment?
- Ch. 4 Summary: Values, Attitudes, and Work Behaviour
- 5.2: Motivation and Performance
 - Read “General Cognitive Ability” and “Emotional Intelligence” sections only.

May 13 | Perception | Motivation | Chapters 3 & 5

- Ch. 3 Introduction: Perception, Attribution, and Diversity
- 3.1: What Is Perception?
- 3.2: Social Identity Theory
- 3.3: Basic Biases in Person Perception
- 3.4: Attribution: Perceiving Causes and Motives
- 3.5: Person Perception and Workforce Diversity
- 3.6: Perceptions and Organizational Behaviour
- 3.7: Person Perception in Human Resources Management
- Ch. 3 Summary: Perception, Attribution, and Diversity
- Ch. 5 Introduction: Theories of Work Motivation
- 5.1: What Is Motivation?
- 5.3: Need Theories of Work Motivation
- 5.4: Process Theories of Work Motivation
- 5.5: Do Motivation Theories Translate Across Cultures?
- 5.6: Putting It All Together: Integrating Theories of Work Motivation

- Ch. 5 Summary: Theories of Work Motivation

May 15 | Motivation Cont. | Chapters 2 & 6

- 2.4: What Is Learning?
- 2.5: Operant Learning Theory
- 2.6: Reducing the Probability of Behaviour
- 2.7: Social Cognitive Theory
- 2.8: Organizational Learning Practices
- Ch. 2 Summary: Learning
- Ch. 6 Introduction: Motivation in Practice
- 6.1: Money as a Motivator
- 6.2: Linking Pay to Performance on Production Jobs
- 6.3: Linking Pay to Performance on White-Collar Jobs
- 6.4: Using Pay to Motivate Teamwork
- 6.5: Job Design as a Motivator
- 6.6: Management by Objectives
- 6.7: Flexible Work Arrangements as Motivators for a Diverse Workforce
- 6.8: Motivational Practices in Perspective
- Ch. 6 Summary: Motivation in Practice

May 20 | Individual Decision Making | Communication | Chapters 11 & 10

- 11.1: What Is Decision Making?
- 11.2-11.5: The Compleat Decision Maker – A Rational Decision-Making Model
- Ch. 11 Summary: Individual Decision-Making
- Ch. 10 Introduction: Communication
- 10.1: Basics of Organizational Communication
- 10.2: Voice, Silence, and the Mum Effect
- 10.3: The Grapevine
- 10.4: The Verbal Language of Work
- 10.5: Gender Differences in Communication
- 10.6: Cross-Cultural Communication
- 10.7: Computer Mediated Communication and Social Media
- 10.8: Personal Approaches to Improving Communication
- Ch. 10 Summary: Communication

May 22 and 27 | Group Dynamics & Decision Making | Chapters 7 & 11

- Ch. 7 Introduction: Groups and Teamwork
- 7.1: What Is a Group?
- 7.2: Group Structure and Its Consequences
- 7.3: Group Cohesiveness
- 7.4: Social Loafing
- 7.5: Designing Effective Work Teams
- 7.6: Self-Managed Work Teams
- 7.7: Cross-Functional Work Teams
- 7.8: Virtual Teams

- Ch. 7 Summary: Groups and Teamwork
- 11.6: Group Decision Making
- 11.7: Contemporary Approaches to Improving Decision Making
- Ch. 11 Summary: Group Decision-Making

June 3 | Culture & Socialization | Chapter 8

- Ch. 8 Introduction: Social Influence, Socialization, and Organizational Culture
- 8.1: Social Influence in Organizations
- 8.2: Organizational Socialization
- 8.3: Unrealistic Expectations and the Psychological Contract
- 8.4: Methods of Organizational Socialization
- 8.5: Organizational Culture
- 8.6: Contributors to the Culture
- 8.7: Diagnosing a Culture
- Ch. 8 Summary: Social Influence, Socialization, and Organizational Culture

June 5 | Leadership | Chapter 9

- Ch. 9 Introduction: Leadership
- 9.1: What is Leadership?
- 9.2: Are Leaders Born or Made? The Trait Theory of Leadership
- 9.3: The Behaviour of Leaders
- 9.4: Situational Theories of Leadership
- 9.5: Participative Leadership: Involving Employees in Decisions
- 9.6: Exchange Relationship-Based Theories of Leadership
- 9.7: Theories of Positive Leadership
- 9.8: Gender and Leadership
- 9.9: Culture and Leadership
- 9.10: Global Leadership
- Ch. 9 Summary: Leadership

June 10 | Power, Politics & Ethics | Conflict & Stress | Chapter 12 and Chapter 13

- Ch. 12 Introduction: Power, Politics, and Ethics
- 12.1: What Is Power?
- 12.2: How Do People Obtain Power?
- 12.3: Empowerment—Putting Power Where It Is Needed
- 12.4: Who wants Power?
- 12.5: Controlling Strategic Contingencies—How Subunits Obtain Power
- 12.6: Organizational Politics – Using and Abusing Power
- 12.7: Ethics in Organizations
- 12.8: Sexual Harassment – When Power and Ethics Collide
- Ch. 12 Summary: Power, Politics, and Ethics
- Ch. 13 Introduction: Conflict and Stress
- 13.1: Conflict and Its Causes in Organizations
- 13.2: Types of Conflict

- 13.3: Modes of Managing Conflict
- 13.4: Managing Conflict with Negotiation
- 13.5: A Model of Stress in Organizations
- 13.6: Stressors in Organizational Life
- 13.7: Reactions to Organizational Stress
- Ch. 13 Summary: Conflict and Stress

June 12 & 17 | Environment, Strategy, & Structure | Chapter 14

- Ch. 14 Introduction: Environment, Strategy, and Structure
- 14.1: The External Environment of Organizations
- 14.2: Strategic Responses to Uncertainty and Resource Dependence
- 14.3: What is Organizational Structure?
- 14.4: Departmentation
- 14.5 Basic Methods of Coordinating Divided Labour
- 14.6: Traditional Structural Characteristics
- 14.7: Contemporary Organic Structures
- 14.8: Other Forms of Strategic Response
- Ch. 14 Summary: Environment, Strategy, & Structure

June 17 | Organizational Change | Chapter 15

- Ch. 15 Introduction: Organizational Change, Development, and Innovation
- 15.1: The Concept of Organizational Change
- 15.2: The Learning Organization
- 15.3: Issues in the Change Process
- 15.4: Organizational Development: Planned Organizational Change
- 15.5: Some Specific Organizational Development Strategies
- 15.6: Does Organizational Development Work?
- 15.7: The Innovation Process
- 15.8: Diffusing Innovative Ideas
- Ch. 15 Summary: Organizational Change, Development, and Innovation