

Commerce 4GR3 Student Experience and Development IV Fall 2025 Course Outline

DeGroote School of Business McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course aims to provide students with the opportunity to work collaboratively with peers to analyze real business problems and create innovative and holistic solutions by partnering with leading and progressive sectoral organizations. This unique partnership opportunity offered by this course serves to create opportunities for innovation, recruitment / job placement, training and development as well as community engagement.

The objectives of this course are the following:

- 1. Provide real world opportunities for the students in business consulting, business analytics, project management and problem solving
- 2. Guide students through the process of applying learned management theories dynamically and creatively to identify, research and analyze business issues and to make recommendations with an understanding of impact at a strategic level.
- 3. Strengthen business management abilities and leadership skills through teamwork and handson project management.
- 4. Enhance communication skills in a professional setting, both in oral and written form.
- 5. Develop capabilities in self and peer-evaluation as well as encourage reflexivity and peermentorship practice.
- 6. Recognize and articulate the impact of the capstone project on their professional skills and leadership development and how the experience can be leveraged for future career success and personal development
- 7. Understand the impact students have as leaders during a real-world client project.



INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Core / Day / Time	Course Instructors	Teaching Assistants
C01 Thursday 11:30AM – 2:20PM	Grace Huang huangg12@mcmaster.ca	Jashan Choong choonj3@mcmaster.ca Ghayathri Athyankad Dayanandan athyankg@mcmaster.ca
C02 Wednesday 11:30AM - 2:20PM	Karleen Dudeck dudeckkj@mcmaster.ca	Jashan Choong choonj3@mcmaster.ca Rania Malik malikr15@mcmaster.ca
C03 Monday 2:30PM - 5:20PM	Tim Fung fungt@mcmaster.ca	Amenah El Werfalli elwerfaa@mcmaster.ca Aroma Qamar qamara12@mcmaster.ca
C04 Monday 8:30AM - 11:20AM	Tim Fung fungt@mcmaster.ca	Vidhi Lamba lambav@mcmaster.ca

Sections C01, C02 and C03 will be further divided into 2 sub-sections. There will be one Teaching Assistant per sub-section.

Cour	SFE	I FMF	NTS
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Credit Value: A2L:		Leadership: Ethics:		IT skills: Numeracy:		Global view: Written skills:	
Participation:		Innovation:		Group work:		Oral skills:	
Evidence-based:	Yes	Experiential:	Yes	Final Exam:	No	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course consolidates the various learning experiences in the Bachelor of Commerce and GR0 Programs by providing students with the opportunity to work collaboratively with peers to analyze real business problems and create innovative and holistic solutions. In this course, students engage in a business consulting project that will require the application of knowledge acquired in the past years as well as communication, collaboration, problem solving and self-management skills in a professional manner. As with previous GR0 courses, this course also supports students in building their leadership abilities and to be job-ready as they come near the start of a career path.



<u>Career Professional Development (CPD)</u>. As this course marks the final semester of your undergraduate program, it also marks the new beginning of your professional journey as a graduate. To conclude your CPD, the CPD team will work with you to uncover and translate the learned and practised professional skillsets into your personal professional portfolio.

<u>Leadership Development.</u> Following up on your leadership development journey that started in 3GR0, you will be completing another survey based on your collaboration with peers during the experiential project. You will receive individualized feedback about your leadership style as well as tips and suggestions to further develop your leadership skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- 1. Attain real world experiences in business consulting, project management and problem solving through the completion of a course project that addresses an organization's need.
- 2. Demonstrate a structured yet creative approach to researching and analyzing a business issue by applying learned frameworks, from problem definition to making recommendations with an understanding of impact at a strategic level.
- 3. Gain confidence in speaking and presenting in public, engaging in conversations in large group settings, and communicating effectively orally and in written forms.
- 3. Practice business management and leadership skillsets while working in teams; specifically, collaboration, facilitation, client engagement, client influence, communication, working through ambiguous issues and obstacles, innovation, critical thinking, time management, adaptability and resilience skills required to manage the completion of tasks.
- 4. Evaluate self- and team-performance, as well as leadership development through reflexivity and peer-mentorship practice.

Leadership Development

- Discover how individual leadership competencies emerge and impact peers while working in teams to solve a business problem.
- Identify and leverage one's strengths to amplify impact while improving on areas that support your aspiration to becoming a more authentic and impactful leader.

Career Development

- Translate the reflection on the experiential learning activities into essential practical business professional skillsets that set students apart.
- Cultivate a continuous learning mindset to advance and adapt to changing professional requirements.



COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required Reading

Client Briefing Material (see A2L)

Recommended Reading (Optional):

The McKinsey Way

https://mcmaster.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_MU/deno1h/alma99103300980170737 1 (free of charge through McMaster Library)

The Student Guide to Case Method. https://www.ivevpublishing.ca/s/ivey-coursepack/a1R5c00000FvVuTEAV (Optional - \$11.25)

Required Technology:

Digital Applications/Accounts

- Avenue to Learn: All course information, required materials, general announcements, and other
 resources you will need will be included in the course Avenue shell. To access your course, go to
 <u>Avenue to Learn</u> (http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/)
- 2. **Top Hat:** Participation during Class Events, Tutorials and any organized group activities will be assessed via engagement activities using Top Hat. You will receive instructions via Avenue to create your account and join the course. Please note that using Top Hat is free for DeGroote students, you do not need to pay to create an account.

Top Hat registration how-to guide: https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide. Your Course code will be listed on Avenue.

Technology Support Note: If you run into a problem with any course related technology, please contact technical support of the respective platform. Your TA is not your technical support person but do keep them updated on any issues that cannot be quickly resolved, so we can determine if it is an individual issue, or it is a system wide problem affecting multiple students. The list of technical support links/contact information is posted on Avenue.



COURSE OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

Course Website - Avenue to Learn:

On this site you will find:

- Lecture slides in PowerPoint
- Links to useful course-related websites
- Additional information about course evaluation components
- Course documents such as this syllabus, any amendments to the schedule
- Articles of interest

ACTIVITY	DELIVERY	DESCRIPTION	TOOL(S)
Lecture Core Content	In-person	Live in-person lectures.	Top Hat for participation
Readings	Asynch	 Client briefing material is required reading to provide students with the needed industry background. Recommended readings complement lecture notes to enhance students' consulting skill sets. 	Readings linked in Avenue, or in recommended textbook.
Tutorials	In-Person	Open Q&A forum with in-class working time to provide guidance on how to complete upcoming assignments.	
Group Work	Both	Individual group work to complete experiential project requirements.	Async: any virtual tools

Avenue to Learn is an important communication platform for this course. You should develop the habit of checking the course folder on a daily basis. It is your responsibility to ensure that your e-mail address and account settings in Avenue are correct for you to receive messages.



Evaluative Component

Missed Assignments will receive a grade of zero unless the student has submitted and been approved for a Notification of Absence or MSAF. Late assignments **will be penalized 25%** for each day they are late. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

GRADE COMPONENT	WEIGHT	DESCRIPTION
Engagement	25%	Attendance, Active In-Class Verbal Engagement, In-Class Activities Additional class-related assignments
Business Workbook	25%	Leadership, Project & Career Reflection
Business Workbook Part I	5%	Self-Reflection and Evaluation on Leadership, Experiential Project and Career (Individual submission)
Business Workbook Part II	5%	Self-Reflection and Evaluation on Leadership, Experiential Project and Career (Individual submission) 5%
360 Team Performance	5%	Team performance assessment (Group submission)
Business Workbook Part III	10%	Self-Reflection and Evaluation on Leadership, Experiential Project and Career (Individual submission) 5% Peer Performance Assessment (Individual submission) 5%
Experiential Project Deliverable**	50%	Group Submission
Project Proposal and Team Charter	5%	Project team charter to guide how the team works (template provided). Outline of project objective, scope, plan client deliverables (template provided)
Strategic Opportunity and Analysis Report	18%	15-page word document on analyses conducted and insights
Final Presentation*	17%	Client PowerPoint presentation
Client Pitch	10%	Client Pitch Deck

^{*}Final Presentation is a mandatory component for this course. All students must show up and present as a pre-requisite to passing this course

^{**}Up to 25% of the Experiential Project Deliverable (equivalent to 12.5% of marks), subject to instructor discretion, can be adjusted based on individual performance informed by 360 Team



Performance, Peer Assessment, and contributions during class sessions, written reports and presentations.

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Experiential Project Deliverable

The following deliverables are part of your overall client experiential project deliverable. The project accounts for **50%** of your final grade. There are four parts to this overall experiential project.

Deliverable #1 - Project Proposal and Team Charter

This deliverable accounts for **5%** of your grade. You will develop a project proposal document that outlines the problem statement, project scope, research questions, analytical approach, project plan, resources and expected deliverables. You will also complete your team charter which outlines the principles that govern how your working team collaborates and builds a high performance team culture.

A word template will be provided.

Deliverable #2 – Strategic Opportunity and Analysis Report

This deliverable accounts for **18%** of your grade. You will write a 15-page report focuses on research and analysis of the stated business problems and other emergent issues as an interim update to the client. A word template will be provided as a guide.

Deliverable #4 - Final Presentation*

This deliverable accounts for **17%** of your grade. You will produce a final PowerPoint presentation to be shared with the client. A suggested approach will be provided as a guide. 5% of the 17% will be attributable to individual performance.

*This is a mandatory portion of this course. All students must present as a pre-requisite to passing this course.

Deliverable #5 - Client Pitch

This deliverable accounts for **10%** of your grade. You will deliver a short pitch live to the client.



Participation

25% of in-class activities

- Attend all sessions in-person.
- Engage in verbal contribution to in-class discussion
- Complete all required in-class activities (e.g. Top Hat) and homework assignments
- Please display your name in clearly visible name plate in live lectures to accurately assess your verbal contribution in class.

Additional class-related assignments

- Writing an email to the client requesting additional data or clarification on the project.
 Consolidating the questions from your group in a list format (template provided).
- Project and Team Performance Reflection on Top Hat
- Additional in class engagement assignments to be announced at the instructor's discretion.

Note: Please inform your TA if you are going to miss classes, arrive late or leave early as a courtesy and respect. Failing to do so may result in penalties (instructor has the discretion to deduct all of your participation marks if students miss 2 classes and more without MSAF or direct communication with the TA)

Leadership, Project and Career Reflection

Business Workbook:

This deliverable accounts for **25**% of your grade. You will reflect and evaluate on your leadership development, your project experience and learning from 4GR3 and how your experience could benefit and / help you with your career development, job search process and your personal and professional development.

In addition to completing the workbook, you will need to submit the following (instructions will be in the workbook):

- An updated resume (using the template provided) including your capstone experience (following the requirements shared in the workshop).
- A screenshot of your capstone project as it appears in your LinkedIn profile (following the requirements shared in the workshop).

360 Team Performance

Complete the 360 Team Performance assessment for 5%

Peer Performance Assessment

Complete your peer assessment for 5%



This assignment is graded based on authenticity, reflexivity and honesty and not on the performance itself. The Peer Performance Assessment could impact individual performance (5% of the Final Presentation group mark)

WRITTEN DELIVERABLES

Unless otherwise directed, all hand-in assignments are expected to be in the best business standard.

- Double- spaced
- 1" margins all around
- 12-point font in Times New Roman
- For citation follows the APA style

SUBMISSIONS

All documents are to be submitted via Avenue to Learn, unless otherwise stated, and must be submitted before the stipulated deadline. Otherwise penalty will be applied.

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 <u>"Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work"</u> 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

SOME USE PERMITTED

Students may use generative AI for [editing/translating/outlining/brainstorming/revising/etc] their work throughout the course so long as the use of generative AI is referenced and cited following citation instructions given in the syllabus. Use of generative AI outside the stated use of [editing/translating/outlining/brainstorming/revising/etc] without citation will constitute academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to be clear on the limitations for use and to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately.

Please see the <u>Provisional Guidelines on the Use of Generative AI in Operational Excellence - Academic Excellence - Office of the Provost (mcmaster.ca)</u> for more information.

If you have any questions or unclear about permission of usage, please speak to your instructor.

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 <u>Academic Integrity</u> <u>Policy</u>, 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.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. email, Avenue to Learn (A2L), web pages, TopHat, MS Teams, 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, usernames for the McMaster email 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 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.



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 <u>Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities</u> (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 <u>Student Accessibility Services</u> (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or <u>sas@mcmaster.ca</u> to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's <u>Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities</u> 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 <u>or</u> 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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COURSE POLICIES

Your enrolment in Commerce 4GR3 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

Commerce 4GR3 Student Experience and Development IV Fall 2025 Course Schedule

Date	Theme	Activity/ Content	Preparation, Deliverables and Due Date		
Week 1		No classes			
Sept 1 - 5 Week 2 Sept 8 - 12	Class 1: Course Introduction	Course Overview Guest Speaker: Leadership Assessment Overview Introduction to Team Roles Classroom Engagement Team Activity (Team)	Preparation (Prior to Class): Review course outline Deliverables NDAs due within 24hours (where required)- submit on Avenue 4GR3 Business Workbook – Part 1 (5%) (due 11:59m the day prior to next week's class) Activities Finalize teams on Avenue after drop/add		
Week 3 Sept 15 - 19	Class 2: Client Project Kick-Off	Client Introduction and Project Overview Guest speaker: Career Development Classroom Engagement Team Activity (Client Research, Understanding the Context)	(due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class) Preparation (Prior to Class) Review Library Video Review Client Project Brief Conduct preliminary client organization and industry research Prepare to engage in Q&A with client		
Week 4 Sept 22 - 26	Tutorial 1: Project Proposal and Team Charter Development Strategic Frameworks Review	 Review Project Proposal and Team Charter Deliverables How to build a high-performance team Strategic Frameworks Review Classroom Engagement Team Activity (Determining Key Issues) 	 Preparation (Prior to Class) Identify project relevant strategic frameworks Establish hypothesis on key issues Deliverables: Project Proposal and Team Charter (due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class (5%) 		



Week 5 Sept 29 – Oct 3	Tutorial 2: Review SOAR Report Preparation	 Review Strategic Opportunity and Analysis Report (SOAR) Deliverable Classroom Engagement Team Activity Using Generative AI How to prepare client questions 	 Preparation (Prior to Class): Prepare questions for clients Identify possible solutions Deliverables: Prepare an individual email requesting for additional data and or seeking answers / clarity on certain questions (individual submission) Prepare a consolidated list of groups of questions (group submission) Individual Email and Group Consolidated Questions due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class *If no individual submission, there is no group mark for that individual
Week 6 Oct 6 – 10	Tutorial 3: Leadership and Team Performance Check in	 How to create solution hypotheses How to conduct a team performance discussion Classroom Engagement Team Activity Creating Solution Hypothesis 360-team performance and Leadership Reflection check point 	Activities: Groups work on their 360-team performance assessment Deliverables: SOAR report due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class (18%) Business Workbook Part II due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class (5%) 360-Performance Assessment due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class (5%)
Note: CO2 has a different schedule that CO1, CO3 and CO4 for weeks 6, 8 and 9		 CO2 only: Activities/content listed above, plus Guest Speaker: Career Development and Client Engagement – Preparing for Client Check In 	
Week 7 Oct 13 - 17		No Cla Mid-ter	rm Recess



Week 8 Oct 20 – 24	CO1, CO3 and CO4: Tutorial 4: Preparing for Client Check In, Final Presentation	 Guest Speaker: Career Development and Client Engagement – Preparing for Client Check In How to Develop a Decision Matrix Final Presentation – Consulting vs Pitch Classroom Engagement Team Activity (Connecting the dots) 	Preparation (Prior to Class) ■ Begin slide content creation for: 1. Research Insights; 2. Key Issues; 3. Solutions Hypotheses; 4. Decision Criteria
Note: CO2 has a different schedule that CO1, CO3 and CO4 for weeks 6, 8 and 9	CO2 only: Class 3: Client Check-in	CO2 only: Client Check-In Session: Feedback and Q&A	
Week 9 Oct 27 – 31	CO1, CO3, and CO4: Class 3: Client Check-In	C01, C03 and C04: Client Check-In Session: Feedback and Q&A	 Deliverables: Leadership Survey opens and complete Survey by end of class
Note: CO2 has a different schedule that CO1, CO3 and CO4 for weeks 6, 8 and 9	CO2 only: Tutorial 4: Preparing for Client Check In, Final Presentation	 CO2 only: How to Develop a Decision Matrix Final Presentation – Consulting vs Pitch Classroom Engagement Team Activity (Connecting the dots) 	
Week 10 Nov 3 - 7	Tutorial 5: Leadership Journey	 Guest Speaker: Your Leadership Journey General Tutorial (Topics based on client / class needs) 	 Deliverables: Final Presentation Slides due 11:59pm the day prior to next week's class (17%)
Week 11 Nov 10 - 14	Class 4: Final Presentation	Students will be allotted a time slot to present their final client presentation during class time. They will be assigned into one of the three groups led by TAs or their instructor: • Group A – TA (1) • Group B – TA (2) • Group C – Instructor 15 min + 5 min Q&A	Activities: As part of the Classroom Engagement Team Activities, reflect on your project and team performance (Top Hat Assignment – due 11:59pm on next week's class day



Week 12 Nov 17 - 21	Tutorial 6: Pitch Work Period	Students will work on their pitch material	 Deliverables: To prepare for pitch practice, start building key speaking points and work with the TA mentors
Week 13 Nov 24 - 28	Class 5: Mock Pitch Practice	 Students present their 10-min pitch live to their classmates 2 Rooms may be needed depends on class size 	 Deliverables Mock Pitch Slides due 11:59pm the day prior to this week's class
Week 14 Dec 1 - 5	Class 6: Client Pitch Day	Students present their 10-min pitch live to their clients. • 2 Rooms may be needed depends on class size	 Deliverables: Final Pitch Slides due 11:59pm the day before this week's class (10%) Peer Performance Assessment due 11:59pm end of this week Business Workbook Part III due end of this week's class (5%)
		Thursday Dec 4 All Classes End	