

Commerce 1BA3 – Organizational Behavior Spring 2026 Course Outline

Human Resources and Management Area
DeGroot School of Business
McMaster University

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Tuesdays and Thursdays 18:30 – 21:30

Dr. Youngrong Lee

Instructor

lee1613@mcmaster.ca

Office: GSB 105A

Office Hours: By appointment only

Office: GSB 105A

Class Location: KTH B135

TA

Seyed Javad Emadi Chashmi, PhD Student

emadichs@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Tue and Wed (when: TBD. Where: Zoom)

Course website: <http://avenue.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(s):	No

COURSE INFORMATION

Lectures: 3hr x 2/wk

Course Delivery Mode: In-person

Course Description:

The central objective of this course is to develop an understanding of human behaviour in organizations with a view toward effective management of such behaviour.

This course provides an introduction to organizational behaviour (OB)—how individuals, groups, and structures shape and are shaped by organizational life. It covers core OB concepts including personality, perception, motivation, group dynamics, leadership, power, conflict, and organizational change.

A distinguishing feature of this course is the addition of a critical perspective. Alongside learning core concepts from the textbook, students are invited to examine how organizational processes can produce and reproduce inequalities, and how we can proactively identify and address them to improve organizational culture and the experiences of people within it. The course asks not only how organizations function, but also who benefits, who is marginalized, how structures of power are built into everyday organizational life, and how we can help make it better.

MEETING DETAILS

We will meet in person every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Outside the class, if you would like to discuss course-related matters, I am happy to meet with you online or in person. Please email me at lee1613@mcmaster.ca to arrange a meeting.

In this course, much of your time will be spent in group interaction. This enables you to share ideas, complete team projects, 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 & Punctuality

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. Also, I expect you to be in the classroom on time: punctuality is the mark of a true professional and reflects self-discipline and respect for others—your colleagues, your instructor, and yourself.

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 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 in the first week of classes. The group should address how to apply key OB concepts to real examples and use ideas from the textbook to understand how organization works. Your instructor and TA will be available to assist groups who experience problems.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- [Mosaic](#)
- [Avenue to Learn](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations](#)
- [McMaster University Library](#)

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Identify and apply core OB concepts and theories to real organizational contexts.
- Develop a toolkit of useful skills, strategies, and approaches drawn from OB.
- Critically evaluate the assumptions and limits of mainstream OB frameworks.
- Communicate complex organizational analysis in clear written and oral form.
- Collaborate effectively in team-based research and presentation.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

- Understand key theories and concepts related to individuals, groups, and interpersonal processes within organizational contexts.
- Understand these theories and concepts in the contexts of real-world organizations and society.
- Critically examine the tensions between mainstream OB frameworks and social inequalities.
- Recognize the value of both individual and collective approaches to learning.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND TEXTS

Required:

Organizational Behaviour: Understanding and Managing Life at Work, 13th edition (2026), Published by Pearson Canada (June 11, 2025). Authors: Gary Johns and Alan M. Saks.

The course materials for this course will be delivered through the Immediate Access Program in partnership with the Campus Store. You'll receive digital access to the required textbook on Avenue to Learn starting the first day of class:

REVEL FOR ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOUR: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING LIFE AT WORK

The discounted price for this resource is \$59.95. This cost will be shown on your student account at the beginning of the term. The deadline to make changes to your IA options (remove or reinstate your access) is May 15th any changes that you make will be reflected on your student account after that deadline.

You can manage your access at any time before the May 15th deadline through your personalized booklist on the Campus Store website. A reminder email will be sent to your McMaster account before the deadline. If you choose not to participate, you will no longer have access to these materials after the deadline. The Immediate Access program helps ensure you have everything you need to succeed in this course.

Textbook Listing: <https://textbooks.mcmaster.ca>

CLASS FORMAT

The teaching methods in this course include two weekly classes, PowerPoint slides, and team-based work.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES	DESCRIPTION	NOTE
Live Lectures	2 X 3 hours live sessions per week; opportunity to elaborate on course core content, present challenges, and engage discussion, including group 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
Team-based assignments	2X written assignments; one final presentation.	5-6 members will form a team to complete the three assignments collectively.

In-class teamwork	3 X 30minutes over the semester	Arranging multiple extra meetings with team members can be tricky during the spring semester. You can take advantage of the in-class 30 minutes teamwork time (during our normal class hours).
Meeting with TA and instructor	TA will hold a regular Zoom drop-in office hour. (2 hours per week. Schedule TBD)	Instructor is available via email appointment.

COURSE EVALUATION

Component	Weight	Due
Midterm Test (multiple choice, in-class)	35%	Thu, May 26
Assignment 1* - a short essay: Submit to A2L	10%	Tue, May 19
Assignment 2* - a complete essay: Submit to A2L	10%	Tue, Jun 4
Final Presentation* (team, 8 min + Q&A)	10%	Tue, Jun 11
Final Exam (multiple choice, non-cumulative)	35%	Jun 18
TOTAL	100%	

*These three items (2 assignments and 1 presentation) are team-based and receive a team score (i.e., the same score for all team members on each team. Exception: free-riders will receive a deducted score).

*The rubric and detailed instruction for the team assignments will be available in Avenue to Learn.

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Midterm exam: Multiple Choice Exam (35%). May 26

Final exams: Multiple Choice Exam (35%), June 18

There are two multiple choice examination in this course that accounts for 70% (each 35%) of your final grade. The exam will cover material from the textbook, lectures and class discussion. The multiple-choice exam will **NOT** cover case content material and will NOT cover optional readings or team-based relevant work. They are **closed book**, and non-cumulative exam.

Team assignments (total 30%): The three assignments, each 10% worth of the final grade, are all marked as a team (exception: deducted scores for free-riders)

You will work in teams of 5–6 students. You will form your own team from the first class and then submit it by the second session to A2L. The team will stay the same for the whole course.

Over the course of this term, your team will look at critically analyze how organizations work. Each team selects one contemporary OB issue and one real organization or sector as their case. Across two written assignments and a presentation, each team critically examines how mainstream OB frames this issue, what the framing illuminates, what it obscures, and what a more critical perspective reveals— and propose at least one solution to address it.

The three parts build on each other, and detailed guidelines are available on Avenue to Learn (A2L):

➤ **Team-based assignment #1 (10%)**

- Issue Framing and Mainstream OB Analysis (15%).
- 500–700 words (not counting references) DUE: May 19.
- One submission per team (Choose one team member to submit on behalf of the group, though it remains a collective responsibility to ensure the submission is made on time.)
- What to do: Choose one contemporary OB issue in a real organizational context (for-profits, non-profits, corporations, hospitals, unions, etc.) and describe how OB textbook would explain that.

➤ **Team-based assignment #2 (10%)**

- Critically examine and complete a short analysis
- 1,200–1,500 words (not counting references). DUE: June 4
- One submission per team (Choose one team member to submit on behalf of the group, though it remains a collective responsibility to ensure the submission is made on time.)
- What to do: This is the main piece of writing in this course. The goal is to examine the OB issue in the organization/sector you chose from a critical perspective and identify strength and weakness of the mainstream approach.

➤ **Final presentations (10%)**

- Present to the class, 8 minutes presentation + 5 minutes Q&A. June 11 and 16
- Teams will sign up for presentations, between June 11 or 16 (sign-up sheets will be available in A2L)
- Choose one, or a few members, or all of your team members to present.
- What to do: Teams present their main arguments from Assignment 2 to the class, incorporating the feedback received from the instructor and proposing a solution to the issue.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late team assignments will be penalized 10% for each 24 hours they are late and will not be accepted after 72 hours past the deadline (resulting in a grade of 0). While one person is responsible for the act of submission, ensuring punctuality is every team member's responsibility.

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.

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 #2 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

Students who have concerns about the course content, evaluation methods, or delivery should first reach out to the course instructor. If your concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, you may then reach out to the relevant Area Chair for further consideration.

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.degroot.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

Students may use generative AI for editing, translating, brainstorming and revising 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, brainstorming, and revising their work 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.

*If used, please add a relevant statement at the end of the document. E.g., "ChatGPT was used to [edit / proofread / translate / revise] the essay." However, crucially, AI tools can make mistakes, so it is your responsibility to review and verify any AI-assisted content. Failing to perform this quality check may affect your academic integrity as well as scores. Also, to preserve your own capacity for thinking, I strongly encourage you not to delegate the key parts of your learning to AI. These skills must be built, developed, and practiced—they atrophy when we stop using them.

Useful resource:

"An open letter to students in SHSS" <https://www.cshss.cam.ac.uk/education/generative-artificial-intelligence-ai-and-scholarship/generative-ai-and-your-learning>

"Generative AI for Students" <https://provost.mcmaster.ca/generative-artificial-intelligence-2/generative-ai-for-students/>

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](#).

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. Avenue to Learn, 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. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, 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. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line 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 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, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Commerce 1BA3 Organizational Behavior Spring 2026 Course Schedule

Wk	Ses	Date	Topic	Read Ahead	Notes / Assignments
1	1	Tue, May 5	Introduction + Organizational Behaviour and Management	<i>Ch. 1</i>	Team formation begins
	2	Thu, May 7	Personality and Learning	<i>Ch. 2</i>	Team formation: submit BEFORE the class to A2L
2	3	Tue, May 12	Perception, Attribution, and Diversity + Values, Attitudes, and Work Behaviour	<i>Ch. 3+4</i>	
	4	Thu, May 14	Theories of Work Motivation	<i>Ch. 5</i>	In-class team work (30 min)
3	5	Tue, May 19	Motivation in Practice	<i>Ch. 6</i>	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE (before class)
	6	Thu, May 21	Groups and Teamwork + Social Influence, Socialization, and Organizational Culture	<i>Ch. 7+8</i>	
4	7	Tue, May 26	MIDTERM TEST + In-class team work after midterm	-	In-class team work (30 min) after test
	8	Thu, May 28	Leadership + Communication	<i>Ch. 9+10</i>	
5	9	Tue, Jun 2	Decision Making + Power, Politics, and Ethics	<i>Ch. 11+12</i>	
	10	Thu, Jun 4	Conflict and Stress	<i>Ch. 13</i>	ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE (before class)
6	11	Tue, Jun 9	Organizational Change, Development, and Innovation	<i>Ch. 15</i>	In-class team work (30 min)
	12	Thu, Jun 11	FINAL PRESENTATIONS (8-10 min + 5 min Q&A)	—	Presentations
7	13	Tue, Jun 16	FINAL PRESENTATION (8-10 min + 5 min Q&A)	—	Presentations <i>Chapter 14 (Environment, Strategy, and Structure) will be recorded and uploaded.</i>

Wk	Ses	Date	Topic	Read Ahead	Notes / Assignments
	14	Thu, Jun 18	FINAL EXAM	—	Final exam (non-cumulative)