Commerce 4BL3
Occupational Health and Safety Management
Fall 2026 Course Outline

Human Resources and Management Area
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

INSTRUCTOR AND TA CONTACT INFORMATION

Section 1: Friday 2:30 – 5:30	**Student TA**
Dr. Catherine Connelly	Fatemeh Navazi
Professor and Business Research Chair	PhD candidate in management information systems
connell@mcmaster.ca	navazif@mcmaster.ca
Office Hours: by appointment	

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	No	Global view:	No
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

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COURSE INFORMATION

Lectures: 3 hours, once per week
Tutorials: none
Course Delivery Mode: in person
Course Description: This course enhances students' knowledge on managing occupational health and safety, teaches research skills, and assists students in developing strategies for creating healthy workplaces.
Prerequisite(s): COMMERCE 2BC3 or IBH 2AC3; and registration in any Bachelor of Commerce or Engineering and Management program or relevant minor.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- Mosaic
- Avenue to Learn
- Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations
- McMaster University Library

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, your professional skills should be improved by being able to better:

- Understand and discuss theories, concepts, legislation and issues affecting workers and workplaces.
- Apply ethical principles to all types of businesses
- Identify the important opportunities and challenges facing workers and their workplaces and develop and implement strategies for change and individual and organizational levels.
- Participate and/or lead effectively in a team-based environment.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

As a specialized elective, this course is designed to build on your previous knowledge of workers and workplaces, and to act as a stepping-stone to your future learning. The purpose of this course is to enhance your knowledge of managing occupational health and safety in workplaces, teach critical thinking, discussion, and presentation skills, and assist you to develop strategies for creating healthy workplaces.

This course includes lectures and class discussions and presentations. These methods allow students to:

1. Test their understanding of theories and concepts presented in the readings.
2. Develop skills in communicating ideas, in developing and presenting arguments, in listening to and understanding others, and in challenging others' views in a way that advances everyone's understanding.
3. Think critically, because each student must analyse the information presented, and determine how to apply it to novel situations.

In this course, the role of the professor will more often tend toward stimulating and guiding student discussion. I will ask questions and encourage you to present and support different points of view in discussion.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND TEXTS

Foster, J., Cake, S., & Barnetson, B. (2026). Health and Safety in Canadian Workplaces. Second Edition. AU Press.

This textbook is open access, and available to you at no cost.

CLASS FORMAT

This is an in-person class. I will provide short lectures to help you understand the material, but much of our time together will be spent discussing the material and working in small groups.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Components and Weights

Participation	10%
Assignment 1	15%
Assignment 2	30%
Final Exam	45%
Total	100%

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Assignment 1 – Policy Analysis (15%)
Form a team of one to three people. Use AI to generate a company dress code for a local coffee shop, or find one online. As a team, evaluate the policy from an occupational health and safety perspective: what is effective? What is missing? What is wrong? Prepare a more effective policy. Do not use AI for your evaluation of the policy.

This assignment should be five pages or less (no title page), double-spaced, times new roman font with one-inch margins.

All team members share the same grade.

Due: Friday September 25, 5:30pm
Submit on Avenue to Learn as a Word document.
No extensions available

Assignment 2 – Hazard Recognition, Assessment, and Control (5 +25%)
Form a team of one to three people. This can be the same team as in Assignment 1, but it does not need to be. As a team, perform a "bowtie" analysis of an unsafe situation that you find on campus, in public, or at your workplace. Document the situation. What would contribute to an incident? How could the effects be mitigated? Do not use AI for this assignment.

The presentation for this assignment (5%) will precede the written submission. This provides me with an opportunity to give you some early feedback. Your presentation will be approximately 15 minutes, not including time for questions. This presentation will help you to practice explaining safety concerns and solutions to top management.

Due: Friday October 30 and November 6, in class
Present in person
No extensions available

The written portion of this assignment (25%) should be ten pages or less (no title page), double-spaced, times new roman font with one-inch margins. This report will help you to practice explaining safety concerns and solutions to top management.

All team members share the same grade.

Due: Friday November 13, 5:30pm
Submit on Avenue to Learn as a Word document.
No extensions available

Participation (10%)
All students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the course material, verbally, in class. Generally, you should err on the side of participating more than you would ordinarily. Your comments and questions are welcome, will not be judged, and help to make the entire course much more interesting and enjoyable for everyone. There is no penalty for being "wrong" but there is a (small) penalty for being silent.

Please be aware that some of the topics that we will discuss will be upsetting for some students. Professional demeanour is mandatory. Behaviours or comments that would be inappropriate in a boardroom setting are also inappropriate in the classroom.

Class attendance is strongly encouraged, because the material covered in class will substantially augment that which is available in the text. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to acquire the course notes from one of your classmates. Slides will also be available from the course website. Poor attendance will affect your participation grade.

If you are wondering if your participation is adequate, send me an email or come to my office and I will provide an estimate of your anticipated participation grade for the semester.
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Final Exam (45%)
This exam will be closed-book, cumulative (i.e., cover everything in the entire course), and will be held in person during the exam period. There will be no multiple choice. The long-answer questions will be similar to the exercises that we did together in class.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will not be accepted.

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 and confirms the identity of the student.

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.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

Students may use generative AI in this course in accordance with the guidelines outlined for each assessment, and so long as the use of generative AI is referenced and cited following citation instructions given in the syllabus. **Use of generative AI outside assessment guidelines or without citation will constitute academic dishonesty.** It is the student's responsibility to be clear on the limitations for use for each assessment and to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately.

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. email, 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 4BL3 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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CLASS	DATE	ASSIGNMENT
1	Friday, Sept. 11	Workplace Injury in Theory and Practice Read Chapter 1 Case discussion
2	Sept. 18	Legislative Framework of Injury Prevention and Compensation Read Chapter 2 Policy Development
3	Sept. 25	Hazard Recognition, Assessment, and Control Read Chapter 3 Case discussion Bowtie Analysis
Assignment 1: Policy Creation and Analysis		
4	Oct. 2	Physical and Chemical Hazards Read Chapters 4 & 5 Bowtie Analyses
5	Oct. 9	Biological and Psychosocial Hazards Read Chapters 6 & 7 Bowtie Analyses

READING BREAK		
6	Oct. 23	Health Effects of Employment and Training and Injury Prevention Programs Read Chapters 8 & 9 Training Plan
7	Oct. 30	Presentations
8	Nov. 6	Presentations
9	Nov. 13	Incident Investigation Read Chapter 10 Case discussion
Assignment 2: Hazard Recognition, Assessment, and Control		
10	Nov. 20	Graduated Return to Work Planning Read Chapter 11 Case discussions
11	Nov. 27	Disability Management Read Chapter 11 Case discussions
12	Dec. 4	Wrap up and Review Case discussion
EXAM		