

Commerce 4KH3
Strategies for Electronic and Mobile Business
Fall 2026 Course outline
Information Systems
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Analyze the strategies employed in electronic and mobile business models to create and capture value.
2. Evaluate key concepts, technologies, and management challenges shaping electronic and mobile business environments.
3. Apply insights from real-world case studies to assess the performance and evolution of digital business practices.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND COURSE LOCATION DETAILS

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Instructor	Teaching Assistants
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Office: DSB 421	
Office Hours: by appointment	Office Hours: by appointment

Course Website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>. The course website on Avenue to Learn (A2L) will be the primary mode of information dissemination and communication. Please check this website regularly for posts concerning this course.

Course Meeting Time: Mondays (11:30 a.m.-2:20 p.m.)

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	Leadership:	Yes	IT skills:	Yes	Global view:	Yes
Avenue:	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:	No	Guest speaker(s):	Yes

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the strategic issues the modern business manager must deal with in making strategic decisions concerning the choice, implementation and execution of electronic and mobile business solutions for start-ups and established enterprises.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Prepare a business plan;
2. Assess and critique the strategy for an online start-up or electronic business expansion initiative; and
3. Discuss and apply solutions to typical management issues in electronic and mobile business.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

There is ***no required textbook*** for this course. Avenue will be used to provide students with course content, readings, and case materials (<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>).

However, the following ***optional reading material*** is suggested:

Strategies for e-Business: Concepts and Cases on Value Creation and Digital Business Transformation, 4th Edition, 2020, Tawfik Jelassi Francisco J. Martínez-López, Springer. Download free from McMaster eLibrary:
<https://link-springer-com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/book/10.1007/978-3-030-48950-2#about>.



EVALUATION

Learning in this course results primarily from assigned readings, class lectures, case studies, digital business plan projects, and in-class participation. Missed assignments/exams will receive a grade of zero unless the student has submitted and been approved for a Notification of Absence or MSAF.

Components and Weights

The components of the course grade will be weighted as follows.

Participation/ Reflections	Participation and written reflections	36%
Business Plan for Digital Start-up	Business plan project proposal (group)	10%
	In-class presentation (group)	14%
	Written report (group)	40%
Total		100%

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

Communication and Feedback

Students who wish to correspond with the instructor or TA 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. Email regarding course issues should NOT be sent to Area Administrative Assistants. Instructors are required to provide evaluation feedback for at least 10% of the final grade to students prior to Week 9 in the term. Instructors may conduct an informal course review with students by Week 4 to allow time for modifications in curriculum delivery.

Course Deliverables

Participation

Value: 35% of a student's final grade.

In-class participation is worth 35% of the final grade and is based on both collaborative and individual engagement. Students will work in assigned groups of 5 to complete weekly in-class activities that apply core course concepts to practical scenarios. All group members will receive the same grade for each assignment. During the final three weeks of the term, groups will present their business plan projects. On presentation days, all non-presenting groups are expected to serve as peer reviewers, providing written feedback on each presentation's strengths and areas for improvement. Participation marks will reflect attendance, contributions to group activities, peer-review quality, and active involvement throughout the course. If any group experiences issues with unequal participation or lack of collaboration, students are expected to inform the instructor **immediately** so that appropriate steps can be taken.

Students must pay full attention to all presenters. Using a cellphone, participating in side conversations, or any distracting communication during a presentation will result in a grade of zero for class participation, unless the device use is for an approved accommodation or has instructor approval

Weekly Project Application Reflections

Each weekly worksheet concludes with a brief group reflection that connects the lecture, reading, and in-class activity to the group's digital start-up. Groups must identify the most useful concept, apply it to a specific business-plan decision, identify the evidence still required, and assign a concrete next action.

These reflections form a cumulative project-development log. They are completed during class, assessed within the 35% participation component rather than as a separate graded deliverable, and should be used to progressively strengthen the project proposal, presentation, and final written Digital Business Plan.

Business Plan for Digital Start-Up

Value: 65% of Final Grade

This major project is divided into three parts:

1. Project proposal in-class presentation – 10%
2. Final project in-class presentation – 10%
3. Final written report – 45%

Students will work in assigned groups of 5 to develop a comprehensive business plan for a digital start-up. The start-up may be a novel idea ("new to the world") or an innovative improvement on an existing solution. The plan should be realistic, research-informed, and aligned with course concepts.

Please note: During the presentation, each group member will be asked questions to evaluate their understanding of the content presented in the report. All members are expected to be familiar with the entire report and capable of explaining any part of it. Accordingly, the report grade will reflect both the quality of the

content and each member's comprehension. Individual grades may differ based on each member's understanding and presentation performance.

All members of a group will receive the same grade for both the written report and presentation. If any issues arise with group dynamics (e.g., uneven contributions, absentee members), students must inform the instructor promptly. The instructor would intervene by facilitating resolution, redistributing marks, or reorganizing teams if necessary.

In Week 6, groups submit their project proposals and present in class to demonstrate progress on their business model, market research, and initial planning. All the written reports must be submitted via Avenue in Word format by the stated deadline. No email submissions will be accepted.

Late Submission Policy: Reports submitted late will receive a one-letter grade deduction per day late. For example, an "A" paper submitted one day late will receive an "A-", two days late a "B+", and so on.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be handed in electronically through the course website by the deadline date and time specified for each component. **Reports submitted late will receive a one-letter-grade deduction per day.**

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.

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/>

* Non-Commerce students must follow the Missed Course Work protocols outlined by their home faculty and Program Office.

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.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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 stated 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](#).

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 **4KH3** 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 degroote.mcmaster.ca

your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic / Event
1	Sep. 14	Course overview Digital Innovation & Trends: McKinsey : <i>The state of AI in 2026</i> Formation of groups for digital business plan project
2	Sep. 21	Business Models: HBR (20002) . <i>Why business models matter</i> Selection of the Business Plan project (Group)
3	Sep. 28	External (industry) analysis HBR (2008) . <i>The five competitive forces that shape strategy</i>
4	Oct. 5	Digital Capabilities: MIT SMR (2017) . <i>How to develop a great digital strategy</i>
5	Oct.12	Mid-term Recess: No Class
6	Oct. 19	Business plan project proposal presentation (group) Submit Business Plan Project Proposal at 10am
7	Oct. 26	Platforms & Ecosystems: HBR (2016) <i>Pipelines, platforms, and the new rules of strategy</i>
8	Nov. 2	Customer Value & UX: Norman, D., & Nielsen, J. (1998). The Definition of User Experience (UX). URL: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/definition-user-experience/ Devopedia (2023). User Experience (UX). URL: https://devopedia.org/user-experience
9	Nov. 9	Mobile & Social Commerce: Salesforce (2024) . <i>State of Commerce Report</i>

Week	Date	Topic / Event
10	Nov. 16	Lean Startups & Analytics: Harvard Business Review (2013). <i>Why the lean startup changes everything</i> Submit group project report at 5pm
11	Nov. 23	Presentations of Digital Business Plans
12	Nov. 30	Presentations of Digital Business Plans
13	Dec. 7	Presentations of Digital Business Plans