IBH 3BA3

Understanding Entrepreneurship

Fall 2026 Course Outline

HR & Management Area

DeGroote School of Business

McMaster University

INSTRUCTOR AND TA CONTACT INFORMATION

Fridays 8:30 – 11:20 AM
Ryan Moran, MBA
Instructor
MoranRP@mcmaster.ca
Office: N/A – instructor will be on campus Fridays
Office Hours: Fridays 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM, by appointment
Class Location: TBA

Morgan Hughes
TA
Email: TBA
Office: N/A
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE ELEMENTS

Credit Value:	3	**Leadership:**	Yes	**IT skills:**	No	**Global view:**	Yes
A2L:	Yes	**Ethics:**	Yes	**Numeracy:**	Yes	**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 INFORMATION

Lectures: 3hr x1/wk

Tutorials: N/A

Course Delivery Mode: In-person

Course Description: This course examines entrepreneurial ventures from a wide range of contexts, using experiential learning to develop practical understanding of the key challenges facing entrepreneurs. The course focuses on key topics in entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship, introducing students to the range of business models used to pursue both social and financial objectives. Students will grapple with challenges in creating opportunities, business models, funding, growth, and measuring success. Through case studies, guest lectures, and class discussion, students will explore real-world entrepreneurial challenges and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for entrepreneurial success.

Course Premise: Regardless of future career plans, students can benefit from learning to think and act entrepreneurially. The course examines risk and failure, purpose and motivation, innovation, social impact, civic entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, resilience, ethics, and life design. Students will connect these themes to the lived experiences of entrepreneurs and to their own evolving understanding of what it means to build something of value.

MEETING DETAILS

IBH 3BA3 meets in person every Friday from 8:30 AM to 11:20 AM during the Fall 2026 term. Students should arrive ready to participate in discussion, workshops, guest speaker Q&A, case analysis, and collaborative activities. Office

hours are available Fridays from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM by appointment; the instructor will be on campus and can be reached at MoranRP@mcmaster.ca to arrange a meeting.

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:

- Develop and articulate entrepreneurial ideas through iterative testing, reflection, and feedback.
- Assess entrepreneurial opportunities and risks using relevant frameworks and evidence.
- Analyze social impact, ethical tensions, and stakeholder responsibilities in entrepreneurial decision-making.
- Communicate entrepreneurial stories and arguments effectively through writing, speaking, discussion, and media.
- Apply entrepreneurial problem-solving to civic, community, organizational, and market contexts.
- Compare diverse entrepreneurial pathways across sectors and identify how context shapes entrepreneurial action.
- Work collaboratively to synthesize evidence and produce an engaging entrepreneurial storytelling project.

COURSE LEARNING GOALS

- Appreciate the diverse pathways of entrepreneurship across sectors and career stages.
- Understand the role of purpose, authenticity, risk, and social impact in entrepreneurship.
- Recognize entrepreneurship as a tool for civic, community, and organizational change.
- Understand how innovation and entrepreneurial thinking can occur both inside and outside new ventures.
- Reflect on how entrepreneurial thinking can inform one's own career, life, and professional identity.

REQUIRED MATERIALS AND TEXTS

These items are an integral part of the lesson plan for the course, and not having these materials could have a negative impact on a student's learning outcomes for the course.

Required

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

Jim McKelvey, The Innovation Stack — $35.00. Second-hand copies are permitted.

Bill Burnett & Dave Evans, Designing Your Life — $42.00. Second-hand copies are permitted.

Coursepack — $29.60.

Coursepack / Case Readings: https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1442425

- VisionSpring: A Lens for Growth (HBS 810108)
- Dropbox: It Just Works (HBS 811065)
- IDEO: Human-Centered Service Design (HBS 614088)
- Warby Parker: Vision of a Good Brand (HBS 412090)
- Community First! Village: Scaling Goodness? — Jan W. Rivkin, Coelin P. Scibetta
- Research: How Entrepreneurship Can Revitalize Local Communities — Suntae Kim, Anna Kim
- Entrepreneurs and the Truth — Kyle Jensen, Tom Byers, Laura Dunham, Jon Fjeld

Additional Readings Provided Through A2L

- "How Nonprofits Are Flipping the Script" — Entrepreneur

- "The Civic Economy" — Nesta UK report excerpt
- Ethics in Entrepreneurship — selected resource

Optional / Recommended

Randy Komisar, The Monk and the Riddle, or a comparable entrepreneurship memoir or reflection selected by the student, may be used as an optional lens for journals and class discussion. Examples include Small Giants, Let My People Go Surfing, Lost and Founder, and Rework.

CLASS FORMAT

This is an in-person, three-hour seminar-based course held once per week. Each class blends short lectures, case and article discussion, experiential activities, guest speakers, and structured reflection. A short break will occur partway through class at a natural pause point.

- Mini-lectures introducing key concepts, frameworks, and debates.
- Case and article discussions grounded in real-world entrepreneurial challenges.
- Experiential activities such as rapid ideation, role-playing, peer feedback, reflection, and applied workshops.
- Pet Biz Project (PBP) integration, where students stress-test a hypothetical entrepreneurial idea against the week's theme.
- Guest speaker presentations and Q&A connecting course concepts with practicing entrepreneurs and community leaders.

Students are expected to come prepared, actively participate, and connect weekly material to the course assignments and their own developing perspective on entrepreneurship.

COURSE EVALUATION

There is no final examination in this course. Evaluation is based on seminar participation, individual written analysis, reflective application, and a collaborative podcast project. Unless otherwise indicated, written work will be submitted through Avenue to Learn. Detailed rubrics and submission instructions will be provided on A2L.

COURSE DELIVERABLES

Class Participation & Engagement — 20% (Individual)

Because this is a seminar-based course, learning depends on students being present, prepared, and actively engaged. Participation includes attendance, preparation for readings and cases, contributions to class discussion, workshops and activities, guest speaker Q&A, TopHat or other in-class checks, and constructive engagement with peers.

The 20% participation grade is composed of 5% for attendance and preparedness and 15% for the quality and consistency of engagement across the term. Strong participation does not require speaking the most; it requires thoughtful, relevant, respectful, and consistent contribution to the learning environment.

Timing: Weekly throughout the term.

Interview with an Entrepreneur Report — 30% (Individual)

Students will select and interview an entrepreneur, preferably outside their immediate family, to uncover the story behind the venture: why it began, challenges faced, approaches to risk, pivots made, and impacts on the broader community. The report must weave together interview evidence with course concepts, readings, and frameworks.

- Conducted in pairs for the interview process, with each student submitting an individual report.
- Approximately 4–6 pages, single-spaced.
- Interview should explore motivations, opportunity evaluation, challenges, pivots, and broader impact.
- Interview should be recorded, with participant consent, to support transcription accuracy and analysis.
- Students are evaluated on entrepreneurial storytelling, critical analysis, use of evidence, and connections to course concepts.

Assigned: Week 2. Due: October 23, 2026.

Podcast Project — 35% (Group)

Working in groups, students transform the Entrepreneur Interview Reports into a collaborative storytelling project. Each group will select a unifying theme and integrate the strongest moments and insights from multiple interviews into a professionally produced podcast episode. The episode should be engaging, cohesive, and explicitly connected to course themes.

- Groups of approximately six students create a 15–20 minute podcast episode based on interview material contributed by group members.
- The episode must focus on a unifying entrepreneurial theme such as resilience, innovation, purpose, risk, or social responsibility.
- Includes narration, editing, and integration of interview excerpts.
- Presented in class near the end of term, followed by live Q&A and peer feedback.
- Includes confidential peer evaluation, which may adjust individual grades to reflect contribution.

Assigned: October 23, 2026. Outline Check-In: November 6. Preview / production check-in: November 20. Presentations: November 27 and December 4, 2026.

Journal Integration of Pet Biz Project (PBP) — 15% (Individual)

On the first day of class, students create a “Pet Biz Project,” a hypothetical business idea that serves as a personal sandbox for applying course concepts. Across the semester, journal entries connect weekly readings, cases, speakers, and activities to the PBP and to broader personal reflection. Students are encouraged to stress-test, pivot, or even abandon the idea as their understanding develops.

- Journal entries connect weekly themes to the PBP, personal reflection, and life/career design.

- Entries should demonstrate evolution, learning, and engagement with course readings and activities.
- An end-of-term reflection may be used to synthesize how the student's thinking changed over the semester.

Assigned: Week 1. Referenced throughout the term.

Participation

Name cards and class pictures may be used to help give credit for participation. Students should display a name card with their full first and last name for every class. Since student participation is an important component of this course, official McMaster student ID photographs may be used to ensure that each student is assessed accurately and identified appropriately for grading and group work.

Final Exam

There is no final examination in this course.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

In-class work cannot be submitted after the class is over. Students should upload or hand in any required in-class worksheets or exercises before leaving the classroom.

Late submissions of course assignments will be penalized 10% per day after the specified deadline, unless relief has been approved under McMaster's policies for missed academic work or an alternate arrangement has been approved by the instructor in advance.

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.

The instructor 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 a concern remains unresolved after speaking with the instructor, students 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 DeGroote missed course work policy:

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, students will be given as much advance notice as possible.

GENERATIVE AI

Some Use Permitted

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.

In general, generative AI may be used to support brainstorming, outlining, editing, and supporting research. It may not be used to do the substantive assessed work for the student. Students may not use AI to fabricate interviews, sources, evidence, reflections, or analysis; to generate assessed work presented as their own; or to replace the required process of interviewing, interpreting, reflecting, writing, and exercising judgment. Specific assessment instructions may further limit or clarify acceptable use.

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 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. 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, web pages, or other learning platforms). 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 McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to other students in the same course. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have questions or concerns, please discuss them with the instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

This course does not include an online-proctored examination. If the delivery format or assessment structure changes in exceptional circumstances, students will be notified in advance of any technology requirements.

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. 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 interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities.

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 IBH 3BA3: Understanding Entrepreneurship 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

IBH 3BA3

Understanding Entrepreneurship

Fall 2026 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Theme / Topic	Readings, Activities & Deliverables
1	Fri. Sept. 11	**Course Kickoff: Why Entrepreneurship?**	Theme: Audacity, humility, and the entrepreneurial path. Read: Course outline; introductory excerpts/readings posted on A2L. In class: Course overview, entrepreneurial pathways, instructor framing, Pet Biz Project brainstorm, Life Story Timeline, participation expectations.
2	Fri. Sept. 18	**Purpose, Risk & Motivation**	Theme: Why people really start things. Read: The Innovation Stack, introductory chapters / assigned selection. In class: Purpose and motivation discussion, risk, entrepreneurial identity, interview assignment briefing and interview preparation.
3	Fri. Sept. 25	**Social Entrepreneurship & Meaningful Metrics**	Theme: Business as a means, not the end. Read: "How Nonprofits Are Flipping the Script"; Case: VisionSpring: A Lens for Growth. In class: Social entrepreneurship, theory of change, impact metrics, speaker/discussion, interview preparation.
4	Fri. Oct. 2	**Lean Startup & Testing Ideas**	Theme: Learning before launching. Read: The Innovation Stack, assigned selection; Case: Dropbox: It Just Works. In class: Lean experimentation, MVP thinking, case discussion, Pet Biz application.
5	Fri. Oct. 9	**Entrepreneurship as Civic Work**	Theme: Building communities while building businesses. Read: "Research: How Entrepreneurship Can Revitalize Local Communities"; "The Civic Economy" excerpt. In class: Civic leadership, stakeholder empathy, entrepreneurship as city-building, community-first ventures.
—	Oct. 12–18	**FALL READING WEEK**	No class. Continue entrepreneur interview work as needed.
6	Fri. Oct. 23	**Innovation from the Edge**	Theme: Solving problems others ignore. Read: The Innovation Stack, assigned selection. In class: Underserved problems, innovation stacks, prototyping and applied ideation. DUE: Interview with an Entrepreneur Report (30%). Podcast Project assigned.

Week	Date	Theme / Topic	Readings, Activities & Deliverables
7	Fri. Oct. 30	**Designing a Life**	Theme: Personal alignment and life design. Read: Designing Your Life, assigned selection. In class: Reframing careers, Odyssey Plan workshop, reflection and Pet Biz alignment.
8	Fri. Nov. 6	**Innovation Inside Organizations**	Theme: Intrapreneurship and internal change. Read: Designing Your Life, assigned selection; Case: IDEO: Human-Centered Service Design. In class: Stakeholder dynamics, intrapreneurship, internal persuasion and change. Podcast outline check-in.
9	Fri. Nov. 13	**Resilience & Scaling**	Theme: Staying upright through chaos. Read: The Innovation Stack, assigned selection; Community First! Village: Scaling Goodness?; Case: Warby Parker: Vision of a Good Brand. In class: Resilience, growth, timing, trade-offs and scaling. Podcast development check-in.
10	Fri. Nov. 20	**Entrepreneurship & Social Responsibility**	Theme: Growth, power, responsibility, and ethics. Read: Entrepreneurs and the Truth; Ethics in Entrepreneurship; The Innovation Stack, assigned selection. In class: Ethical dilemmas, responsibility to community, debate, Pet Biz ethical scenarios, and podcast preview / production check-in.
11	Fri. Nov. 27	**Podcast Presentations I**	Theme: Entrepreneurial stories as evidence and insight. In class: First half of groups present podcast episodes, followed by live Q&A, peer feedback, and instructor synthesis.
12	Fri. Dec. 4	**Podcast Presentations II & Designing the Next Chapter**	Theme: Life, legacy, and next steps. Read: Designing Your Life, concluding selection. In class: Remaining podcast presentations, live Q&A and peer feedback; final synthesis and next-chapter reflection. DUE: Podcast Project (35%) and peer evaluations. Journal / PBP final reflection completed by end of term.