

## Business Skills – Fall 2024 – Course Outline

### 1. Course Information

Course	SS4960F/AS9860A	MDA 9160A-01	MDA 9160A-02
Location	PAB 36	UCC 66	NCB 284
Day/Time	Thurs - 12:30 to 3:30 pm	Wed - 9 am to Noon	Fri - 9 am to Noon

#### List of Prerequisites

Undergraduate Students: Registration in 4<sup>th</sup> year of an Actuarial Science, Data Science, Statistics or Financial Modelling module.

Graduate Students: Registration in a graduate program offered by the Department of Statistical and Actuarial Sciences, or the Master of Data Analytics program.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Department Counsellors to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course, and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees if you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

### 2. Instructor Information

Instructors	Email	Office	In-person Office Hours
Ashley McAlpine	<a href="mailto:ashley.mcalpine@uwo.ca">ashley.mcalpine@uwo.ca</a>	WSC 274	Thursdays: 10:00 – 11:00 am
TA for SS4960F/AS9860A: Amirhossien Aminimanesh ( <a href="mailto:aaminima@uwo.ca">aaminima@uwo.ca</a> )			
TA for MDA9160-01: Luc Benoit ( <a href="mailto:lbenoit5@uwo.ca">lbenoit5@uwo.ca</a> )			
TA for MDA9160-02: Jessica Dobbin ( <a href="mailto:jdobbin7@uwo.ca">jdobbin7@uwo.ca</a> )			

#### Email

Students must use their Western (@uwo.ca) email addresses when contacting their instructor. If the instructor's office hours do not work with your class schedule, send an email to your instructor to arrange another time to meet.

### 3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

This course aims to develop important business skills that are often not emphasized in the formal education of quantitative financial professionals. The course focuses on four main topic areas:

1. How businesses work
2. Financial statement analysis
3. Oral and written communication skills
4. Leadership and people management

This course partners with the Careers & Experience Team at Western to offer students practical experience by helping a local company address a specific business challenge. Students will gain insight into the company's operations, work in teams to analyze the situation and create solutions, and present their findings to the company's management.

### Tentative Lecture Schedule:

Lecture	Topics	SS4960/ SS9860	MDA 9160-01	MDA 9160-02
1	Intro to course Business Framework	Sept 12	Sept 11	Sept 6
2	Southwest Case, SWOT & Financial Ratio Analysis <b>Assigned:</b> CliftonStrengths Assessment	Sept 19	Sept 18	Sept 19*
n/a	Writing & Feedback Assignment	Sept 23 from 6 to 8:30 (TC 141)		
3	Introduce Industry Project – Industry Partner Visits Class <b>Due:</b> CliftonStrengths Assessment <b>Assigned:</b> Business Proposal Presentation	Sept 26	Sept 25	Sept 27
4	Guest Speaker – CliftonStrengths Results & Workshop Industry Project Groups Assigned Debate	Oct 3	Oct 2	Oct 4
5	<b>Due:</b> Business Proposal Presentation Project Management <b>Assigned:</b> Project Plan	Oct 10	Oct 9	Oct 11
6	Reading Week (Oct 17 – 21) Team Leads go on-site to meet Industry Partner			
7	Guest Speaker – Managing People & Giving Feedback Guess the Audience Game <b>Due:</b> Project Plan <b>Assigned:</b> Role Play	Oct 24	Oct 23	Oct 25
8	<b>Due:</b> Role Play Time to work on Industry Project	Oct 31	Oct 30	Nov 1
9	Guest Speaker – Presentation Skills & Pitch Karaoke TRACOM Social Style Model <b>Assigned:</b> Technical Topic Presentation	Nov 7	Nov 6	Nov 8
10	<b>Due:</b> Technical Topic Presentation Time to work on Industry Project	Nov 14	Nov 13	Nov 15
11	Guest Speaker – Design Thinking & Workshop Field Trip: Morrisette Institute for Entrepreneurship	Nov 21	Nov 20	Nov 22
12	Industry Project Presentations <b>Due:</b> Deliverables to Industry Partner	Nov 28	Nov 27	Nov 29
13	In-class Reflection Paper Guest Speaker Panel Discussion	Dec 5	Dec 4	Dec 6

\* No class on Sept 13 due to Western Day at Canada Life. No class on Sept 20 due to Vector Institute's AI Summit & Career Fair. Having a class on Sept 19 from 6-9pm instead.

The intent for this course to be delivered in person. Should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously or asynchronously, the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

## 4. Course Materials

The resources required for this course:

- **Ivey Coursepack - \$58.10**
  - Purchase using this link: <https://www.iveypublishing.ca/s/ivey-coursepack/a1ROF000001nitl2AA> (you will need to create a student account)
  - This provides you an e-version of the articles.
- **Southwest Airlines Case Study - \$16.00**
  - Purchase using this link: **TBD**
  - Pick up the printed version of the case (no e-version available) at the Western Bookstore.
- **CliftonStrengths Assessment - \$16.00**
  - Purchase information will be provided at a later date.

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://westernu.brightspace.com/>) on a regular basis for course material and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be distributed. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page or contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 5. Methods of Evaluation

The course grade will be calculated as listed below:

Class Attendance	5%
Class Participation	15%
Writing & Feedback Assignment	10%
Business Proposal	10%
Role Play	5%
Technical Topic Presentation	10%
Feedback on Peer's Presentation	5%
Industry Project	40%
(i) Project Plan - 5%	
(ii) Presentation - 10%	
(iii) Deliverable to Industry Partner - 20%	
(iv) Reflection Paper - 5%	
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Total	100%

## General information about missed coursework

### **Undergraduate Students:**

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf),

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage: [https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/)  
All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the **Industry Group Project** assessment is excluded from this, and therefore always requires formal supporting documentation.

When a student *mistakenly* submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** for the assessment listed above or those in the **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility** section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

If you are granted Academic Consideration for missing a deadline, your instructor will decide whether to offer a make-up opportunity or if your course grade will be reweighted. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.

If you are not granted Academic Consideration for missing a deadline, a late penalty of 20% per day will be applied. Work that is submitted 5 or more days late will not be graded.

### **Graduate Students:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstance, please follow the procedure below.

1. For medical absences, get a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner.
2. For non-medical absences, get appropriate documentation to prove the absence.

Note that in all cases, students are required to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the missed assessment or deadline.

If your instructor concludes that you had a valid reason for missing a deadline, your instructor will decide whether to offer a make-up opportunity or if your course grade will be reweighted. This is determined on a case-by-case basis.

If your instructor concludes that you did not have a valid reason for missing a deadline, a late penalty of 20% per day will be applied. Work that is submitted 5 or more days late will not be graded.

### **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility**

Class attendance accounts for 5% of the total course grade. For each class attended on time, students will earn 0.5% (late arrivals will receive 0%). The first class is excluded from grading, which leaves eleven remaining classes. A student can be late or absent for one of the eleven classes and still receive the full 5%. Students who attend all eleven classes on time will earn 5.5%.

Class participation makes up 15% of the total course grade. Students will receive a participation grade after each of the eleven classes (with the first class excluded from grading). The lowest participation grade will be dropped, and the average of the remaining ten grades will determine the class participation grade.

Considering the assessment flexibility outlined above, the instructor will deny all Academic Consideration requests. For instance, if a student misses two classes, one absence will not impact their attendance or participation grade. For the second absence, the student will receive a zero for both attendance and participation, even if Academic Consideration is granted.

### **Essential Learning Requirements**

Even when Academic Considerations are granted for missed coursework, the following are deemed essential to earn a passing grade:

- A passing grade for class attendance
- A passing grade on each of the four components of the Industry Project

## **6. Additional Statements**

### **Religious Accommodation**

When conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible but not later than two weeks prior to the writing or the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDID website for the recognized religious holidays: <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>.

### **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf).

## Academic Policies

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy, [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

**AI tools, such as ChatGPT, are prohibited for this course.** Using these tools would be considered academic misconduct. A key expectation of this course is that students complete their own work.

## Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html) if you have any questions regarding accommodations.