YORK
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

EXPLORING THE FUNCTIONS OF BUSINESS

FALL 2026: SECTION G

COURSE OUTLINE[i]

SECTION INFORMATION

Course Director:	**Anirban Kar**
Email:	anirbank@yorku.ca
Timing of Class:	**Wednesdays, 2:30 pm to 5:20 pm**
Classroom:	**Vari Hall (VH) D**
Online Office Hours:	Please email me and I will schedule a zoom meeting.
In-Person Office Hours:	Thursdays, 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm (walk-in)
Office:	Atkinson Building (ATK) 422 (on the 4th level)
Course Web Site:	eClass.yorku.ca

Please note that this section is offered on-campus and in-person

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the functional areas of business, using critical discourse. The course introduces you to sub-disciplines of managing a business (e.g., organization, strategy, accounting, finance, marketing, supply chain management, etc.), as well as to current issues and future challenges. The critical discourse is reflected in the course readings, which pair classic business management articles with writings from alternative or contradictory perspectives. Using a variety of media, you will examine current news stories to illustrate and assess the practical relevance of each of the business management ideas presented. You will be challenged to develop, articulate, and support your thinking in relation to contemporary business issues. This course will also prepare you for success in upper-level courses.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Describe scope and central concepts of functional areas of business management.
- Identify and analyze the interplay of key economic, social, and environmental trends, and their implications for different functional areas of business.
- Critically analyze business management issues and be able to formulate and describe alternative perspectives.
- Write clear and persuasive argument to support a chosen position or course of action.
- Identify management area(s) and issues that are of particular interest to you in relation to upper-level course specialization.

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COURSE READINGS AND TEXTS:

1. Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students* (3rd ed.). Captus Press. Available at the York U Bookstore (https://campus.bookstore.yorku.ca/) ($27.50); an e-text is also available directly from the publisher, Captus Press ($ 23.75; Non-Printable).
2. Article and chapter readings as listed in the course schedule (at the end of this outline), available through the course website in e-Class and York libraries.

COURSE LEARNING EVALUATIONS

Component	Weightage	Timelines
Writing assignments	20%	**Weekly**
Midterm exam	25%	**Sunday, October 18, 2026, 2:00 pm**
Group assignment	20%	**Monday, December 7, 9:00 pm**
Final exam	35%	During final exam period (December 10-23, 2026)

Writing assignments (20% of course grade)

These weekly assignments are designed to help you absorb the course material (from week 2 onwards) while improving the effectiveness of your writing. Completed assignments are to be a maximum of 1-page, single-spaced, and will be graded for content, grammar, writing style, and formatting – details will be provided in class. The assignments are based on the weekly readings and are due **21:00 (9:00 pm)** hours the day before the related lecture. Assignments must be uploaded to eClass.

The 20% writing assignment grade is broken down as follows:

Completion of assignments (10 weeks): 10%

2 submissions randomly chosen for grading: 10% (5% each)

Midterm exam (25% of course grade)

The midterm exam will be held on **Sunday, October 18, 2026, 2:00 pm**. The exam will evaluate material covered in weeks 1-5 including all assigned readings and all lecture content and may include a combination of multiple choice, short/long written answer, and case-based questions. Additional details will be provided during the term.

Midterm exam conflicts and missed midterm exams:

If you are unable to write the regularly scheduled midterm exam for academically legitimate reasons:

1. Schedule Conflicts (e.g., religious accommodations; YU sports team participation, another YU exam): You must notify the course director by email at least two (2) weeks (14 days) prior to the set date. Provide full details regarding the conflicting event and relevant contact where applicable (e.g., faith leader, coach, course director).
2. Illness: You must notify the course director by email within forty-eight (48) hours of the exam, along with an Attending Physician's Statement.

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3. Accessibility Accommodations: If you are registered with Accessibility Services and are seeking alternate exam accommodation, you must follow the procedures of the Alternate Exam office (https://altexams.students.yorku.ca/). Be sure to check the required submission dates early in the term.

Approval to write a makeup midterm is at the discretion of the course director or relevant office. If you are approved to write you will be sent details regarding time and/or location of your makeup. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of your request within a few days of submitting documentation, you should follow up with the course director. In all cases it is the student's responsibility to proactively address a missed or alternate exam situation. There is only one opportunity to write a makeup exam. Students who do not write either the regular or makeup midterm exam as scheduled will receive a grade of zero (0) on this component. Grades will not be reweighted to the final exam.

Group assignment (20% of course grade)

The group assignment provides an opportunity for you to connect with other students in this large, introductory class so you can work together and help each other navigate the course and your first-year experience at York. You will be randomly assigned to a group of approximately 5 students after the term drop date, typically, in Week 3. The group assignment will have students develop and defend a given position with respect to a current business affairs issue and present their work in the form of a coordinated debate and/or multi-media presentation during the latter half of the term. The group is expected to manage all its organizational and work assignment tasks with fairness and respect. The course director will be happy to mediate group issues provided assistance is requested in a timely manner.

Final Exam (35% of course grade)

The final exam will be closed book and two-and-a-half hour long. It will be scheduled by the Registrar during the final exam period (December 10-23, 2026) – details will be announced. The format may include a combination of multiple choice, short/long written answer, and case-based questions.

For deferred exam requests please see: https://www.yorku.ca/laps/sas/academic-resources/deferred-exam-requests/

Late Assignment Submissions

Assignments not submitted as specified by the due date/time will receive a grade of zero. This is a firm policy for all students in all sections.

Turnitin

In this course all electronic submissions to eClass will be screened using Turnitin prior to evaluation. Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service that faculty use on a voluntary basis. Additional student information can be found at https://lthelp.yorku.ca/assignments-students/submit-turnitin-assignment?from_search=58566697.

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Grade Reappraisals

You may, with sufficient academic grounds, request that a grade in the course be reappraised. A written request for reappraisal must be submitted to the course director within one week of receiving your grade and must specify (a) what the student would like re-graded (i.e, specific questions, entire exam, etc.) and (b) a clear justification for why re-grading is necessary. The course director may refuse to reappraise if sufficient academic grounds are not demonstrated. Students need to be aware that a request for a grade reappraisal may result in the original grade being raised, lowered, or confirmed. For further information see: http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/2014-2015/policies/petitions/index.htm.

IMPORTANT SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES & INFORMATION

There are several important policies that apply to all ADMS and DEMS courses. As a student in this course, it is your responsibility to carefully review, understand, and follow these regulations. These policies cover the following topics:

- Deferred exams
- Academic Honesty
- Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy
- In-Class Tests and Exams – the 20% Rule
- Reappraisals
- Accommodation Procedures
- Religious Accommodation
- Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Senate Policy)

Complete details can be found here:
https://www.yorku.ca/laps/sas/academic-resources/common-course-policies/

Please review these policies immediately to ensure you are familiar with them.

Academic Honesty (AH)

In this course, we strive to maintain academic integrity to the highest extent possible. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of academic integrity by completing SPARK's Academic Integrity module at the beginning of the course. Breaches of academic integrity range from cheating to plagiarism (i.e., the improper crediting of another's work, the representation of another's ideas as your own, etc.). All instances of academic dishonesty in this course will be reported to the appropriate university authorities and can be punishable according to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

Be aware that penalties for AH violations can be much more severe than the grades allotted to the assignment in question. Submitting a single writing assignment that is plagiarized could very likely lead to failure in the course. To ensure you are fully aware of York's AH policies and your responsibilities as a student, you are required to complete an online AH course module before you can access any of the writing assignments in this course.

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Please take this very seriously. We strongly encourage and expect you to hand in each assignment, but if the choice is between handing in someone else's work and handing in nothing at all, it is better to submit nothing than to submit something that violates AH policy. Many, many ADMS 1010 students have come to regret submitting work that was taken from friends or online sources – changing a few words and/or the order ideas are presented does NOT make the submission yours. Please be careful, and if in doubt, ask your instructor.

Following these simple rules will help you avoid AH missteps:

- Be very familiar with Senate Policy on Academic Honesty
- Complete your work well in advance of the deadline
- Write your entire assignment yourself (each and every word!) from the ground up

And by all means, DO NOT…

- look online to get 'ideas' based on previous student submissions
- have 'your friend's' work stored on your computer - many of these are 'accidentally' uploaded.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Sep 9). Getting engaged: Introduction to critical thinking and contemporary business issues

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 1: What is critical thinking?)

Parker, M. (2018: April 27). Why we should Bulldoze the Business School. *The Guardian*.

Watch:

The Trouble with Experts (CBC Doc Zone): 0-4:03, 10:55-16:19, 20:29-24:58.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0S9vbMkp_8U
Shut Down the Business School **(optional)**:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQbg4oRYC18

Week 2 (Sep 16). So, you want to be a manager? (Management)

Mintzberg, H. (1990). The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact. *Harvard Business Review, 68*(2), 163–176.

Drucker, P. F. (2005). Managing Oneself. *Harvard Business Review, 83*(1), 100–109.

Week 3 (Sep 23). Getting organized (Organization Theory)

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 2: Claims)

Chandler, A. D. (1990). The Enduring Logic of Industrial Success. *Harvard Business Review, 68*(2), 130–140.

Schumacher, E. F. (1973). *Small is beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered*. London: Blond and Briggs. (Part I/Chapter 5: A question of size)

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Week 4 (Sep 30): Current issues, future challenges (Business Ethics, Corporate Social Responsibility; Sustainability, Emergency Management)

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 3: Evidence)
Friedman, M. (1970, September 13). The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits. *New York Times*, pp. 32–33, 122, 124, 126.
Posner, E. (2019: August 22). Milton Friedman Was Wrong. *The Atlantic*.

Watch:
IPCC Sixth Assessment Report - Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis
IPCC Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation & Vulnerability
IPCC Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change
What is IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report? (optional)
IPCC Sixth Assessment Report - The Numbers Behind the Science (optional)

Recommended:
Porter, M. E. and Kramer, M. (2011) Creating Shared Value. *Harvard Business Review, 89*(1), 62–77.

Week 5 (Oct 7). Questions of value (Economics and Strategy) and Review for Midterm Exam

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 4: Underlying assumptions)
Corporate Finance Institute (2021). Neoclassical Economics and Assumptions
Ragan, C. (2015: June 16) Adam Smith's greatest legacy is his balanced approach. *The Globe and Mail*
Fox, J. (2015) From "Economic Man" to Behavioral Economics. *Harvard Business Review*, *93*(5), 78–85.
Fox, J. (2012) The Economics of Well-Being. *Harvard Business Review*, *90*(1), 78-83.

Watch: Behavioral Economics: Crash Course

Recommended (optional):
Thinking Fast and Slow (Daniel Kahneman)
Predictably Irrational (Dan Ariely)
Layard, P. R. G. (2005). *Happiness: Lessons from a new science*. New York: Penguin Press. (Chapter 9: Does economics have a clue?)

Week 6 Reading break followed by Midterm Exam on Sunday, October 18, 2026

Week 7 (Oct 21). Value measurement and intermediaries I (Accounting)

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 5: Causal claims)
Explore this website: https://www.cpacanada.ca/en/
Luca, M. (Nov. 5, 2021). Leaders: Stop Confusing Correlation with Causation. *Harvard Business Review*.

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Pucker, K. P. (2021). Overselling Sustainability Reporting. *Harvard Business Review*, *99*(3), 134–143.
http://canadian-accountant.com/content/profession/accounting-principles-part-i

Recommended (optional):
Soyer, E. and Hogarth, R.M. (Dec. 17. 2020). Don't Let Good Story Sell You on a Bad Idea. *Harvard Business Review (Online)*.
Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (1992). The Balanced Scorecard – Measures That Drive Performance. *Harvard Business Review, 70*(1), 71–79.

Week 8 (Oct 28). Value measurement and intermediaries II (Finance)

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 6: Techniques of persuasion)
Mazzucato, M. (2018) *The Value of Everything*. Public Affairs, New York, NY. (Preface: Stories About Wealth Creation, pp. xiii-xix; Introduction: Making versus Taking, pp. 1-15)

Watch:
Crash Course: Money and Finance
Bank of Canada: Count on Us

Recommended:
What is Economic Value (Mazzucato TED Talk):
The Big Short (2015), available through York Libraries
Inside Job (2010)

Week 9 (Nov 4). Value chains (Management Science, Operations & Supply Chain Management, International Business)

Martin, R. (2019). The High Price of Efficiency. *Harvard Business Review*, *97*(1), 42–55.
Watch:
The Story of Stuff
CBC Marketplace: Here's where your Amazon returns go
Fordism and Taylorism
Scientific Management

Recommended: Modern Times (Charlie Chaplin, 1936); Available through York Libraries

Week 10 (Nov 11). The human factor (Human Resources Management, Organizational Behavior)

Dyer, L. (2019). *Critical Thinking for Business Students*. Captus Press. (Chapter 7: Writing a persuasive essay)
Herzberg, F. (1987). One more time: How do you motivate employees? *Harvard Business Review, 65*(5), 109–120.

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Watch:

What Money Can't Buy (Michael Sandel)
Drive (Daniel Pink)
The Economics of Happiness (Crash Course)

Recommended (optional):

Sandel, M. J. (2012). *What money can't buy: the moral limits of markets*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. (Chapter 2: Incentives)
The Science of Happiness, Motivation and Meaning

Week 11 (Nov 18). Getting the word out (Marketing; Public relations; Communications)

Klein, N. (2000). *No logo: Taking aim at the brand bullies*. New York: Picador. (Chapter 1: New branded world)
Sidibe, M. (2020). Marketing Meets Mission. *Harvard Business Review, 98*(3), 134–144.
Watch: The Explainer: Don't Just Sell Stuff — Satisfy Needs (Marketing Myopia)

Week 12 (Nov 25): Business for the future

Alperovitz, G. (2011, May 25). *The New-Economy Movement*.
Kiechel III, W. (2012). The Management Century. *Harvard Business Review, 90*(11), 62–75.

Week 13 (Dec 2): Group assignment and review for the final exam

Final Exam: Will be scheduled between December 10 and 23, 2026

All readings listed are required unless marked "Recommended" or "optional." Recommended or optional readings will not be specifically tested but will provide additional insight related to the course learning objectives.

[i] This outline is subject to change as deemed necessary by the Course Director.

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