

ITM 550 – Advanced E-business

COURSE OUTLINE FOR Fall 2025, Section 0011 and 0021

Classroom: TRS2-109

Class time: Section 0011 - Monday 0800-1100 hrs and Section 0021 - Thursday 1200-1500 hrs

Prerequisite(s): ((C)ITM 100 or (C)ITM 102), (C)ITM 305 and (C)MKT100 or in the two-year Business Tech. Ontario College Diploma Graduate Program

Anti-requisite(s): (C)ITM350

Faculty Information

- Faculty Name: Deborah Fels
- Office Location: TRS3-090
- Office Hours: Monday 1100 – 1200 hrs, and Thursday 1500-1600 hrs; in-person only
- Course Website: my.torontomu.ca (for courses using D2L)
- Email Address: dfels@torontomu.ca
- Academic Assistant (AA): TBA

Email Policy

Students are expected to monitor and retrieve messages and information sent through D2L and TMU email on a frequent and consistent basis. In accordance with the Policy on TMU Student E-mail Accounts ([Policy 157](#)), Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) requires that any electronic communication by students to TMU faculty or staff be sent from their official university email account. Communications sent from other accounts may be disregarded.

Course Description

Building on concepts gained in core ITM business and technology courses, this course will advance theoretical knowledge and applications of electronic commerce (e-Commerce). It integrates technical, social, and business aspects involved in the creation and maintenance of an e-Commerce presence. Business, financial and marketing models that underpin e-Commerce are advanced. Interface, interaction and database design as well as security and analytics measures necessary for building and maintaining an e-Commerce presence are explained. E-commerce examples illustrating course concepts are discussed and analyzed. All concepts are applied in a hands-on laboratory and project activities.

Course Details

Teaching Methods

The instruction will take place at scheduled hours, following the approach outlined in D2L Brightspace. Laboratory exercises will be submitted as an assignment for that laboratory and be due the following week. There are five laboratory assignments. A major project with five separate deliverables will also be used for students to demonstrate competency in the course concepts. Students will work in groups for the project.

There will be a lecture for the first one hour and forty-five minutes of the listed time, followed by a one-hour laboratory as indicated in the schedule. The AA will be available during lab time for assistance with the lab material and software, questions and discussion.

For direct feedback on projects, work in progress demonstrations, where it is necessary to view videos or websites together, all group members must attend and participate in answering questions from others and providing feedback to other groups/projects. If a group member is absent, no grades will be assigned.

Variations within a course

All sections of a course (Day and CE sections) will follow the same course outline and will use the same course delivery methods, methods of evaluation, and grading schemes. Any deviations will be posted on D2L Brightspace once approved by the course coordinator.

Materials for laboratory (e-versions of all reading materials are accessible through the TMU library)

1. A license for Shopify is required. See <https://www.shopify.com/ca/free-trial-offer>. You will need at least 3 months.
2. Sims, L. (2018). *Building your online store with WordPress and WooCommerce: Learn to leverage the critical role e-commerce plays in today's competitive marketplace* (1st ed.). Berkeley, CA: Apress L. P.
3. Ballard, Gavin. *The Definitive Guide to Shopify Themes: Master the Design Skills to Build World-Class e-Commerce Sites*, Apress L. P., 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/lib/ryerson/detail.action?docID=50422>

Texts & other reading materials (e-versions of all reading materials are accessible through the TMU library).

Subscription to Shopify: \$1/month for one month trial, the \$38/month afterwards (total cost is \$77 for course. Please unsubscribe after the course.

1. Asensio, A. (2018). *World wide data: The future of digital marketing, e-commerce, and big data* (First ed.). New York: Business Expert Press.
2. Bilotta, N., & Romano, S. (2019). *The rise of tech giants: A game changer in global finance and politics*. Bern: Peter Lang.

3. Phillips, J. (2016). *e-Commerce Analytics : Analyze and Improve the Impact of Your Digital Strategy*. Pearson FT Press. Available as an E-Book in Ryerson Library
4. Huang, Q., Chen, X., Ou, C. X., Davison, R. M., & Hua, Z. (2017). Understanding buyers' loyalty to a C2C platform: the roles of social capital, satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of e-commerce institutional mechanisms. *Information systems journal*, 27(1), 91-119.
5. Lim, S. F. W., Jin, X., & Srai, J. S. (2018). Consumer-driven e-commerce. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*. (last mile logistics business models chapter)
6. Chauhan, S. (2020). COVID-19: An inflection point for E-commerce. *Express Computer*
7. Shopify. (n.d.). What Is e-Commerce? A Comprehensive Guide. from <https://www.shopify.in/encyclopedia/what-is-e-Commerce>
8. Better Lemonade Stand. (2020). What is e-Commerce <https://www.abetterlemonadestand.com/what-is-e-Commerce/>
9. Webscale. (2020). The state of e-Commerce infrastructure 2019. <https://www.webscale.com/blog/infographic-state-e-Commerce-infrastructure-2019/>
10. Bathgate, J. (2020). *Retailcustomerexperience.com - network media group: Why content is the foundation for a successful e-commerce shopping experience*. Singer Island: Newstex. Retrieved from <https://www.retailcustomerexperience.com/blogs/why-content-is-the-foundation-for-a-successful-e-commerce-shopping-experience/>
11. Salazar, K., Kaley, A. (2018). The new e-Commerce user experience: Changes in users' expectations. Retrieved on Dec. 30. 2023 from <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/e-Commerce-expectations/>
12. Sherwin, K., (2020). 5 types of e-Commerce shoppers - video. Retrieved Dec. 30, 2020 from <https://www.nngroup.com/videos/5-types-e-commerce-shoppers/>
13. Kelsey, Todd. *Introduction to Search Engine Marketing and Adwords : A Guide for Absolute Beginners*, Apress L. P., 2017
14. Tan, F. T. C., Guo, Z., Cahalane, M., & Cheng, D. (2016). Developing business analytic capabilities for combating e-commerce identity fraud: A study of Trustev's digital verification solution. *Information & Management*, 53(7), 878-891. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2016.07.002>
15. bt Mohd, N. A., & Zaaba, Z. F. (2019). A review of usability and security evaluation model of e-Commerce website. *Procedia Computer Science*, 161, 1199-1205.
16. Balraj, N. (2016). A study of ethical and social issues in E-commerce: A quarterly peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary international journal. *Splint International Journal of Professionals*, 3(6), 92-99
17. Xiao, P., & Liu, X. (2019). The enactment of the e-commerce law in China and its impact on food e-commerce. *European Food and Feed Law Review: EFFL*, 14(3), 257-260
18. Findlay, S., & Kazmin, A. (2019). India's e-Commerce law forces Amazon and Flipkart to pull products. *FT.Com*
19. Shopify podcasts: <https://www.shopify.com/podcasts>

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe what students are expected to have learned or achieved; as a result, they usually describe what students will be capable of doing, or what evidence will be provided to substantiate learning.

The students in this course will build on previous knowledge and experiences of business and technological fundamentals and the application of technology, software and infrastructure to the creation and maintenance of an e-Commerce presence online. ITM550 concentrates on the application and development of technology to support eBusiness/e-Commerce strategy and initiatives in today's digital economy. The learning objectives for this course are: (1) to develop a comprehensive knowledge of how business, financial, technical and design fundamentals are applied in an e-Commerce context; (2) to analyze the infrastructure, security, analytics and user needs of e-Commerce; and (3) to develop competencies and skills in applying knowledge in a hands-on setting.

Course-level learning outcomes

- The course is designed to provide students with:
- Knowledge of the fundamental technology drivers in eBusiness/e-Commerce including network infrastructure, software and user interface design and functionality, database design, content development, and limitations;
- Knowledge of the current status of business and financial models and strategies in an e-Commerce context;
- Knowledge of how basic business functions (such as marketing, sales, manufacturing, distribution and customer service) are implemented in an eBusiness/e-Commerce context;
- Ability to analyze and explain the ethics, social issues, and responsibilities of e-Commerce;
- Ability to analyze the security and analytics requirements of e-Commerce; and
- Knowledge of creating and maintaining an e-Commerce presence.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is integral to your learning, the credibility of your degree or certification, and the integrity of the university as a whole. [Senate Policy 60: Academic Integrity](#) defines academic misconduct, provides a non-exhaustive list of examples of behaviours that may be considered as academic misconduct, and explains how academic misconduct concerns are evaluated and decided. The entirety of the policy applies in this course. As well, please note that submitting work created in whole or in part by artificial intelligence tools unless expressly permitted by the Faculty/Contract Lecturer, is considered a violation of Policy 60.

Generative AI Course Policy, Plagiarism Detection, and Virtual Proctoring

Generative AI Course Policy

The use of Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Quillbot, Grammarly, Google Translate) can be used to help with the writing process as grammar and spelling checkers. They cannot be used to generate original material, such as an introduction or conclusion. If these applications are used, they must be cited within the assignment or report accordingly. However, material from these applications cannot be copied directly. Copy and pasted material will be considered a breach of Policy 60: Academic Integrity.

Turnitin or another originality detection software

Turnitin.com is an originality detection and plagiarism prevention service to which TMU subscribes. It is a tool to assist instructors in determining the similarity between students' work and the work of other students who have submitted papers to the site (at any university), internet sources, and a wide range of books, journals and other publications. While it does not contain all possible sources, it gives instructors some assurance that students' work is their own. No decisions are made by the service; it generates an "originality report," which instructors must evaluate to judge if something is original/plagiarized.

Students agree by taking this course that their written work will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Instructors can opt to have student's papers included in the Turnitin.com database or not. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms-of-use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com website. Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with their instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Even when an instructor has not indicated that a plagiarism detection service will be used, or when a student has opted out of the plagiarism detection service, if the instructor has reason to suspect that an individual piece of work has been plagiarized, the instructor is permitted to submit that work in a non-identifying way to any plagiarism detection service.

Topics and Course Schedule

Week	Lecture Topic	Readings	Hands-on/Labs	Due dates
1	Introduction to e-Business and e-Commerce	Readings 6, 7 & 8	Lab 1 e-Commerce: Amazon, Alibaba, and Kijiji	
2	E-commerce business and revenue models	Reading 2 (Ch. 2) & 5	Lab 2 Case analysis (LA1)	
3	E-Commerce infrastructure, hardware, databases	Reading 1 & 9	Lab 3 SQL database design and relational diagrams for e-Commerce	LA1
4	E-Commerce software design and tools	Reading 10	Lab 4 Builder tools 1	Project proposal
5	E-Commerce content and media	Reading 11	Lab 5 Builder tools 2 (LA2)	
Study week				
6	Designing e-Commerce and m-Commerce interfaces	Readings 12 & 13	Lab 6 Using metrics for evaluating e-commerce interfaces (LA3)	LA2
7	E-commerce marketing, advertising, and consumer behaviour	Readings 1 & 4	Lab 7 SEM and SEO techniques (LA4)	LA3
8	Work In Progress presentations and Peer evaluation class			Video due before class. Work in progress report and peer evaluations
9	E-Commerce Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and analytics	Reading 14 (ch. 3, 4, & 6), and 3	Lab 8 e-Commerce analytics tools (LA5)	LA4 and Self-study

10	E-Commerce security	Readings 15 & 16	Lab 9 e-Commerce security tools and analysis	LA5
11	Ethical, social and political issues in e-Commerce	Readings 17, 18, & 19		
12	Final project demonstrations and Peer evaluation class			Video due before class and peer evaluations Final report and website due in week 13 (TBA)

Evaluation, Assessment and Feedback

The grade for this course is composed of the mark received for each of the following components:

Evaluation Component	Due date	Percentage of the final grade (%)	Anticipated return date
5 Lab Assignments (Individual submission)			
LA1 - Case analysis on e-commerce giants	Week 3	5	Week 4
LA2 - Builder tools	Week 6	5	Week 7
LA3 - Using metrics for evaluating e-commerce interfaces	Week 7	5	Week 8
LA4 - SEM and SEO techniques	Week 9	5	Week 10
LA5 - e-Commerce analytics tools	Week 10	5	Week 11
Assignment (Individual submission)			
1. Self-study	Week 9	30	Week 11
2. WIP peer evaluation	Week 8	5	Week 9
3. Final peer evaluation	Week 12	5	Week 14

<i>Project (group submission)</i> 1. Project Proposal (group, 8%) 2. Work In Progress report + video (group, 5%) 3. Final project report + Demo video (22%)	Week 4	8	Week 6
	Week 8, video due before class	5	Week 9
	Video due week 12 before class; report due in week 13 (date (TBA)	22	Week 16
Total		100%	

Project instructions will be released after the previous deliverable is submitted, and students are required to read the instructions.

In addition, in order to pass this course, students must pass the final project.

NOTE: Students must achieve a course grade of at least 50% to pass this course.

At least 20% of student's grades based on individual work will be returned to students prior to [the last date to drop a course](#) in [good academic standing](#)

Citation Format for Essays and Term Papers

All essay assignments, term papers and other written works must adhere to APA citation format. Technical errors (spelling, punctuation, proofing, grammar, format, and citations) and/or inappropriate levels of language or composition will result in marks being deducted.

For writing and language support see: <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-life-and-learning/learning-support/writing-support/>

Late Assignments

Assignments must be handed in by the deadline (11:59 pm on the day it is due), otherwise, the submission will be deemed late and a penalty of 10% per day late will be applied. Assignments more than three (3) calendar days late will not be accepted and a grade of zero (0) will be assigned.

Exemption or deferral of an assignment may be permitted for medical or compassionate reasons. Ideally, students will notify their instructor or the GA by email prior to the due date, or

within 3 days of the due date if feasible. Students must submit appropriate documentation according to University policy. For religious observance, a request must be submitted to your instructor within the first two weeks of the course.

Students will be asked to sign in for each class. Academic consideration for assignment deferral will be dependent on class attendance and participation.

University Policies

You are reminded that you are required to adhere to all relevant university policies found in their online course shell in D2L and/or on [the Senate website](#). Please refer to the [Course Outline Appendix](#) for more details.

Important Resources Available at Toronto Metropolitan University

- [The University Libraries](#) provide research [workshops](#) and individual consultation appointments. There is a drop-in Research Help desk on the second floor of the library, and students can use the [Library's virtual research help service](#) to speak with a librarian, or [book an appointment](#) to meet in person or online.
- [Student Life and Learning Support](#) offers group-based and individual help with writing, math, study skills, and transition support, as well as [resources and checklists to support students as online learners](#).
- You can submit an [Academic Consideration Request](#) when an extenuating circumstance has occurred that has significantly impacted your ability to fulfill an academic requirement. You may always visit the [Senate website](#) and select the blue radio button on the top right-hand side entitled: Academic Consideration Request (ACR) to submit this request.
- For Extenuating Circumstances, [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#) allows for a once per semester ACR request without supporting documentation if the absence is less than 3 days in duration and is not for a final exam/final assessment. Absences more than 3 days in duration and those that involve a final exam/final assessment, always require documentation. Students must notify their faculty/contract lecturer once a request for academic consideration is submitted. See Senate [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#). Note: the faculty/contract lecturer decides whether or not to grant the Consideration; it is not automatic.
- Longer absences are not addressed through Policy 167 and should be discussed with your Chair/Director/Program to be advised on next steps.
- [FAQs Academic Considerations and Appeals](#)
- Information on Copyright for [Faculty/Contract Lecturers](#) and [students](#).
- Information on Academic Integrity for [Faculty/Contract Lecturers](#) and [students](#).

Accessibility

- Similar to an [accessibility statement](#), use this section to describe your commitment to making this course accessible to students with disabilities. Improving the accessibility of your course helps minimize the need for accommodation.
- Outline any technologies used in this course and any known accessibility features or barriers (if applicable).
- Describe how a student should contact you if they discover an accessibility barrier with any course materials or technologies.
- **Academic Accommodation Support**
- Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) is the university's disability services office. AAS works directly with incoming and returning students looking for help with their academic accommodations. AAS works with any student who requires academic accommodation regardless of program or course load.
- Learn more about [Academic Accommodation Support](#).
- Learn [how to register with AAS](#).
- Learn about [Policy 159: Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#)
- Academic Accommodations (for students with disabilities) and Academic Consideration (for students faced with extenuating circumstances that can include short-term health issues) are governed by two different university policies. Learn more about [Academic Accommodations versus Academic Consideration](#) and how to access each.

Wellbeing Support

- At Toronto Metropolitan University, we recognize that things can come up throughout the term that may interfere with a student's ability to succeed in their coursework. These circumstances are outside of one's control and can have a serious impact on physical and mental well-being. Seeking help can be a challenge, especially in those times of crisis.
- If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call 911 and go to the nearest hospital emergency room. You can also access these outside resources at anytime:
- **Distress Line:** 24/7 line for if you are in crisis, feeling suicidal or in need of emotional support (phone: 416-408-4357)
- **Good2Talk:** 24/7-hour line for postsecondary students (phone: 1-866-925-5454)
- **Keep.meSAFE:** 24/7 access to confidential support through counsellors via [My SSP app](#) or 1-844-451-9700
- If non-crisis support is needed, you can access these campus resources:
- **[Centre for Student Development and Counselling:](#)** 416-979-5195 or email csdc@torontomu.ca
- **[Consent Comes First – Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education:](#)** 416-919-5000 ext 3596 or email osvse@torontomu.ca
- **[Medical Centre:](#)** call (416) 979-5070 to book an appointment

- We encourage all Toronto Metropolitan University community members to access available resources to ensure support is reachable. You can find more resources available through the [Toronto Metropolitan University's Wellbeing Central](#) website.