

Course Outline

Course Code	RSM 495 H1 F
Course Name	Management Consulting
Term, Year	Fall 2025
Course Meets	Mondays, 9 – 11AM/ WO
Web page URL	https://q.utoronto.ca

Instructor Details

Name	Email	Office Hours	Virtual Office Link
Paul Jan	paul.jan@rotman.utoronto.ca	416.273.8498	By appointments only. Email to schedule a time.

Course Description

This course examines the role of the management consultant and how the consulting industry serves to enhance the effectiveness of the organizations it serves. From an internal perspective, the course examines what it means to act as an external advisor, what skills are necessary to develop a successful consulting business model, and how to professionally engage clients to assist them in successfully reaching their goals through design/implementation of novel approaches for competitive advantage. These skills are not just learned through theory and texts but using an experiential pedagogy uniquely developed and delivered by Professor Jan. The Management Consulting Project (MCP) is an opportunity to work with real executives in solving real business issues.

This course emulates the skills necessary to be a successful consultant. It will help develop problem-solving, communication, and influencing abilities and introduce a project-based management mindset. These components lead to success in the consulting marketplace by balancing formal processes, methodologies, and models with the spontaneous creativity of a high-performance team, manifesting as true innovation for clients and firms alike.

By following the consulting lifecycle, course participants will learn the nuances of the consulting business from uncovering issues to framing problems, analyzing issues, presenting recommendations, and planning for the ever-important “Phase 2”. Students will see the industry from both perspectives, both as future consultants on a career path to partner and as future industry managers maximizing the use of external resources. The course’s 50:50 mix of lecture and in-depth case analysis will put to practice traditional strategic, process, & functional analyses with taking on the role of innovative consultant.

This course covers the actions of the consultant, consulting competencies, the profession of consulting, consulting careers, interactions with clients, and professional services firm management. It is *NOT* a consulting survey course but rather more analogous to the multi-course offerings of more traditional business disciplines “rolled into one.”

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *Execute an assessment project on a company's management functions*
- *Determine the effectiveness of an organization's process*
- *Possess the ability to start a management consulting project*
- *Demonstrate the ability to work with large amounts of data from different areas of a company's operation*

Course Prerequisites

RSM392H Strategic Management

Course Materials

Required Readings

All materials will be provided through the lectures and the guest speakers. There are no materials to purchase this semester.

Evaluation and Grades

Grades are a measure of the knowledge and skills developed by a student within individual courses. Each student will receive a grade on the basis of how well they have command of the course materials, skills and learning objectives of the course.

Work	Percentage of grade	Due Date
Class Participation	15%	Ongoing
Management Topic Reports	20%	See schedule
Office Hour Participation	15%	See schedule
Management Consulting Project	50%	Ongoing; final presentation due November 31, 2025

Performance in the course will be evaluated using various methods that support the objectives identified above. Success in this course rests on your dedication to the MCP of your client and learning the consulting process. This a unique opportunity crafted and delivered by Professor Jan. The MCP is not a field project where you find your client and self-direct. Nor do I use outsourcers as providers of clients, such as is done with organizations such as Riipen. Neither of these experiences mirrors true consulting work at large firms. The MCP is a true consulting engagement with all the rigor requiring your dedication throughout the term. You will meet individuals that you aspire to work for, with, and emulate in your upcoming career. Many students have garnered consulting firm jobs post-graduation as a direct result of my course. In addition to the MCP, a combination of individual participation, critical book review, group presentation(s), and case/simulation assignments will be used to evaluate participants on several different levels.

The criteria for success, in no particular order, are:

- Comprehension of the material
- Demonstration of an ability to think cross-functionally
- A willingness to participate for the benefit of oneself and fellow participants
- Strong work ethic to "pull your weight" in group assignments

These criteria will be applied to written and verbal work throughout the term.

Participants will be evaluated on the following activities, as listed in the table below:

<i>Activity</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>	<i>Description</i>
Participation – in-class	15%	Preparation for class case discussion, as demonstrated by; • willingness to lead and actively participate class discussions in a professional manner • providing valuable insights and analysis • responding to “cold-calls” • Using the blackboard / PowerPoint / Excel spreadsheets to present analyses and findings
Management Topic Write-Up	20%	Prepare a professional report on a management topic we will go through this semester (project management and client management, change management). Use the assigned cases, contents and materials from the guest speakers, lecture contents, and MCP experience as the basis for the write-up. You may choose to do additional research on the company(ies) or topic at your discretion. The write-up needs to address the questions posted for each topic using the contents mentioned above. You may use graphs, charts, and any other visual/text aid to assist. Length min 3 pages, max 5 pages, double spaced.
Office Hour Participation	15%	Complete the tasks assigned through the responsibility matrix, attend the office hour to update, answer questions, and receive feedback from the instructional team. Please see responsibility matrix and the lecture slides for the deliverables and the due dates for each milestone. Aside from the final presentation, there will be three milestones throughout the semester that students must have deliverables ready to hand in and present. The milestone dates correspond to the three office hours with the instructional team.
Management Consulting Project[©]	50%	Taking on the role of external consultants, a limited number of groups of 4 to 5 students (or as determined by the professor in conjunction with the client requirements) will propose, manage, and execute a “real-life”, pro-bono (non-paid) consulting project with a company in North America. Students will be responsible for understanding the need, engaging the client representative, scoping the requirements, conducting analyses, providing client status updates, preparing their recommendations and developing an implementation plan. The final student outputs (deliverables) for the MCP are the client presentation. Please expect to deliver the final presentation to a group of client executives, subject to their availability. The client may provide input towards your final mark. No Facebook, Instagram, or sharing of client-specific documents through any messaging platform is allowed, although students may use it for planning meetings. There are two (2) types of deliverables in the MCP; (1) the final presentation to the Client, called “Client Deliverables”, and; (2) the

other materials that are required to be submitted to your Professor, listed below under the section “Components of Assignment”, and referred to a “Professor Deliverables”.

To simulate a real consulting engagement, students must provide several other hand-ins, some signed by the client sponsor, as identified below;

- (1) A Project Work Plan
- (2) Responsibility Matrix
- (3) A Weekly Status Report
- (4) A Data Gathering Approach, including Research Plan, and/or Interviewee Listing, Approach & Interview Guide, and/or Template samples, and/or focus group approach
- (5) Analyses Files and Research Notes

Groups will be selected by the Professor. Students are required to complete a survey to assist the Professor choose the team. Teams will work together on their own time, allocating the work effort evenly to each of the team members. The time commitment for the MCP is approximately 5 - 7 hours/week per student.

By taking on this MCP Assignment, all team members are giving their express implicit agreement to contribute effectively and evenly in the best interest of the client, and to respect each other, the client, and the reputation of the University of Toronto, Rotman, your Instructor, and the broader consulting profession.

N.B. The MCP is the core of the course. It is not a field project where the scope is purely self-defined by students. The project scopes will be well-defined by the client. Students are to validate the requirement with the client.

The assignment details are as follows:

Objective: To provide the client organization with the most beneficial analyses, recommendations and modes of operationalization, based on the agreed client-organization requirements (could be strategy, operations, IT, etc.)

Tools: Groups should utilize learnings from the text, related PowerPoint slides, and any additional books on consulting, project management and/or strategy to structure the written assignment parts and presentation. Students should be prepared to apply a variety of models learned both in this and other classes.

Grading: Each team will use the responsibility matrix to keep track of the deliverable owners for each milestone. At the end of each milestone, the individual grades will be published to allow students to gauge their MCP performance.

- MCP Readiness (Project Plan, Weekly Status Report, Interview Guide) 25%
- MCP Analysis (Analysis and Research Insights) 40%
- MCP Presentation (Final Presentation Draft) 35%

- Non-Disclosure Agreement (professor, students, and client sign) should be an appendix to the Proposal
- Working papers (various models, spreadsheets, analyses, research results, transcripts of interviews/meetings, etc. given to client; should be an appendix to Deliverable Write-Up)

Course Format and Expectations

This is a 50:50, lecture:case-based course that will draw upon real-world applied learnings highlighted in the text and PowerPoint slides each week, shared insights from students, instructor-led facilitation, and active individual/group participation each week to achieve the following measurable learning objectives:

1. Demonstrate understanding of management consulting concepts, as articulated in the weekly slides, and text, through group & individual assignments that mimic those activities performed daily by real-world professionals
2. Provide valuable insights to business case discussions in class, on a regular basis, through active class participation and attendance at each class session
3. Exhibit an ability to plan and execute a long-term, group assignment, including development of a proposal, analyses, spreadsheet modeling, report, and group presentation.
4. Highlight personal analytical, deduction, presentation and writing skills through a single, individual case interview guide assignment selected by the student from among those in the course timetable below

Grades will be a function of student's success on the activities noted above (and described below in more detail) to ensure a fair and objective assessment of performance.

It is expected that successful participants will have also achieved the following learning milestones by completion of this course:

- Applied cross-functional skills to make real-world-type decisions as they set and plan for the execution of engagements for several well-known organizations highlighted in cases
- Learned a number of new analytical techniques utilized by professionals in the practice of strategy consulting and business advisory services
- Analyzed and evaluated various aspects of several case organizations, their competition, their business issues, their context, and related tactical options
- Developed client issue responses, decide among alternatives, and created implementation plans to ensure project success, client satisfaction, and firm profitability
- Created innovative "visions for the future" of each industry space in which case organizations play, including how the marketplace might evolve, what products/services will be like, what the consultant can do to assist to prepare for that future, and what can they do to "shape their destiny", drive thoughtware development, and gain market eminence
- Presented the results of their analyses and decision-making to their peers in a executive-style client summary
- Understand the use of these techniques in real-life settings, as demonstrated by consulting guest speaker(s)

- Enhanced communication skills by clearly and concisely sharing of complex information with their peers

Achieving the additional learning milestones will be evaluated as part of the participation grade and the overall quality of case analyses and recommendations made during class cases, quizzes, final exam, and the assignments.

A proposal and project work plan are due to the Professor and submitted to the appropriate assignment on Quercus by Sunday, September 28, 2025. At the end of the term, the final client and professor deliverables described below determine the remaining 50% of the MCP grade. Peer evaluation will also be used to assign grades to individual participants.

Participation: To maximize your participation grades – and overall learning – students should attend all classes to maximize opportunities to speak to their colleagues and concentrate on providing class comments, which:

- Move the analysis along and/or take it to a “higher” level
- Provide insight that others may not have seen
- Are relevant to the class discussion
- Leverage prior learnings and other references, of your choice, in the context of the case
- Add clarity to course PowerPoint slides (required reading) in the context of the case
- Challenge colleagues in a professional and logical manner
- Drawn similarities to previous learnings
- Demonstrates their relation to the current case scenario being discussed

Grade review: The instructor does not discuss grades without a substantive reason. Substantive reasons include errors made during grading. If you would like a re-evaluation of your grade in any component of the course, you should follow the proscribed procedures as set out in the document Student Guidelines for Requesting Grade Reviews available on the Rotman Commerce portal

(https://portal.rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/myAccount/academics/information/Guidelines_for_Grade_Reviews.htm)

The instructor is responsible for your grade in RSM495H but not responsible for any administrative decisions that may make use of your grade in RSM495H. If you believe that your grade requires review, please follow the procedure above.

Preparing a Business Case Study: To prepare students for consulting careers and/or further graduate study in business (e.g. an MBA degree) and/or for the rigour of professional work in strategic consulting or related roles, business cases will be utilized each week to challenge students to link theory with practice. Students will be provided with two source guides (one PPT deck and one DOC file) describing approaches to prepare business cases. These course guides will be available on the course Quercus site prior to the start of classes. Students should refer to these guides prior to the start of term, as they get acquainted with case analysis, and revisit throughout term.

Writing Assignments or Presentations

Management topic reports and case reading write-ups, and the weekly status reports are intended to help you develop your communication skills. How well you communicate your ideas, in writing or orally, will be considered in the evaluation of the assignment. In your written assignments, you should aim for clarity, strong organization, concision, professionalism, and

correct grammar. Your presentations should reflect strong planning and organization, clarity of speech, and an engaging demeanor. Sources, whether in written or presentation assignments, should always be correctly attributed.

Support is available through the RC Centre for Professional Skills (CPS) for students who would like help or feedback on their writing or speaking (presentations). CPS offers both individual and group appointments with trained writing instructors and presentation coaches who are familiar with the RC program and common types of business assignments. You can also access your college Writing Centres for help with written assignments.

You can book an appointment with a writing or presentation coach through the RC Centre for Professional Skills Writing Centre. For more information about writing centres, student supports, and study resources, see the [Writing and Presentation Coaching academic support page](#).

Team or Group Assignments

The Management Consulting Project requires students to work in teams of 4 - 5. Learning to work together in teams is a crucial transferrable skill you will use not only in your coursework, but also in your future careers. Support is available if you encounter common teamwork challenges such as:

- Team members feeling left out of the team.
- Team members not responding in a timely manner to communication.
- Division or quality of work among team members being unequal or unfair.

Consult the [Centre for Professional Skills Teamwork Resources page](#) for tips, strategies, and best practices. You can also [book an appointment with a teamwork mentor](#) through the RC Centre for Professional Skills Writing Centre. Teamwork mentors can help you resolve or mitigate conflict, strategize on planning, or improve team communication.

If you are a student registered with Accessibility Services, and extensions are one of your academic accommodations, consult with your Accessibility Advisor about the teamwork in this course.

Class Participation

The Professor will utilize various engagement techniques to give students the chance to participate, but this is only helpful when students have **read and analyzed cases and other materials thoroughly in advance of class**. Students will be evaluated based on the following:

- Thoughtful responses
- Understanding and analysis of the topic
- Idea generation
- Promoting further discussion
- Respectful active listening
- Attentiveness

While attendance is necessary for students to participate in class discussions, attendance alone will not result in a high participation grade. Students must actively contribute and participate by exhibiting the components listed above.

Rotman Commerce Attendance Policy

Rotman Commerce students are expected to make every effort to attend each class. Infrequently, students may miss term work, e.g., quizzes, assignments, etc., due to unplanned and extenuating circumstances and must follow the Request for Special Consideration process as outlined in their course outlines. However, Rotman Commerce will not approve any Request for Special Consideration for participation marks for missed classes. Any such request will be denied.

Missed Tests and Assignments

Students who miss a term test or assignment for reasons entirely beyond their control (e.g. illness) may request special consideration **within 2 business days** of the missed midterm/test/assignment due date.

In such cases, students must:

1. Complete the Request for Special Consideration form: <https://uoft.me/RSMConsideration>
2. Provide documentation to support the request, eg. Absence Declaration from [ACORN](#), medical note etc.

Please note: As of September 2023, students may use the Absence Declaration on ACORN ***one time per term*** to report an absence and request consideration. **Any subsequent absence will require a [Verification of Illness form](#) or other similar relevant documentation.**

Students who do not submit their requests and documentation within 2 days may receive a grade of 0 (zero) on the missed course deliverable.

Late Assignments

All assignments are due on the date and at the time specified in Quercus. Late submissions will normally be penalized by 5% if the assignment is not received on the specified date, at the specified time. A further penalty of 5% will be applied to each subsequent day.

Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Commitment to Accessibility

The University is committed to inclusivity and accessibility, and strives to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of, individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities and activities offered at the University.

If you require accommodations for a temporary or ongoing disability or health concern, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please [email Accessibility Services](#) or visit the [Accessibility Services website](#) for more information as soon as possible. Obtaining your accommodation letter may take up to several weeks, so get in touch with them as soon as possible. If you have general questions or concerns about the accessibility of this course, you are encouraged to reach out to your instructor, course coordinator, or Accessibility Services.

Plagiarism Detection

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the [University's Plagiarism Detection Tool FAQ](#) page from Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation.

Generative AI / ChatGPT

You are welcome to use generative AI to assist you in your research. However, please do everything possible to verify the facts and numbers you gathered from online sources, including generative AI. Please **DO NOT REPEAT WHAT YOU READ ON GENERATIVE AI BACK TO THE CLIENT VERBATIM**. You may look foolish for doing so, as the client may pick apart your analysis or argument if you do not have a solid understanding or foundation of the analysis and information presented.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will continue to be valued and respected as a true signifier of a student's individual work and academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously.

[The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the process for addressing academic offences and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes collaborating with others on assignments that are supposed to be completed individually).

On test and exams

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) medical notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated by the procedures outlined in the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#). If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in the course, please do not hesitate to contact the course instructor. If you have any questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from the instructor or other U of T or RC resources such as the RC Centre for Professional Skills, the College Writing Centres or the Academic Success Centre.

Email

At times, the course instructor may decide to communicate important course information by email. As such, all U of T students are required to have a valid UTmail+ email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UTmail+ email address is set up and properly entered on ACORN. For more information visit the [Information Commons Help Desk](#).

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Gmail or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Gmail accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that important messages from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Recording Lectures

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record a lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted. Students who have been previously granted permission to record lectures as an accommodation for a disability are excepted. This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Quercus materials, etc.

If permission for recording is granted by the instructor (or via Accessibility Services), it is intended for the individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in any other form without formal permission.

Weekly Schedule

Session	Date	Topic	Readings & Tasks
1	Sep 8, 2025	Overview and Introduction to Management Consulting	• Complete team formation questionnaire
2	Sep 15, 2025	Project Plan, Status Report, and Scheduling Meetings	• Complete questionnaire • Announce project team by end of the week • Summary report on project and status report due Sunday, Sept 21, 2025 (count towards participation grade)
3	Sep 22, 2025	Office Visit (Topic: Client Management)	• Schedule kick-off meeting with client • Project plan, interview guide, and responsibility matrix due Sept. 28
4	Sep 29, 2025	Office Hour Session #1 by team	• Management Topic #1 (Project and Client Engagement) due Sunday Oct. 5, 2025 • Conduct interviews • Perform data analysis
5	Oct 6, 2025	Data Analysis and Research Expectations (Descriptive Statistics and the Expected Outcome of External Research)	• Continue interviews and data analysis
	Oct 13, 2025	Thanksgiving – No class	• Refine/update data analysis and research • Data analysis and research summary draft due Sunday, Oct 19, 2025
6	Oct 20, 2025	Office Hour Session #2 by team	• Refine/update data analysis and research
	Oct 27, 2025	Reading Week	
7	Nov 3, 2025	Change Management (Guest Speaker)	• Management Topic #2 (Change Management + Data Analysis and Research Expectations) due Sunday November 9, 2025
8	Nov 10, 2025	Final Presentation – Lecture	• Draft final presentation deck due Sunday, Nov 16, 2025 • Final presentation presenter list by team due Sunday, Nov. 16, 2025
9	Nov 17, 2025	Office Hour # 3 by team	• Combined final presentation draft deck due Sunday, Nov. 23, 2025
10	Nov 24, 2025	Final Presentation – Practice	• Revised combined final presentation draft deck due Sunday, Nov. 30, 2025
11	Dec 1, 2025	Final Presentation & Wrap UP	

Please note that the last day you can drop this course without academic penalty is November 11, 2025.



Other Useful Links

- [Become a volunteer note taker](#)
- [Accessibility Services Note Taking Support](#)
- [Credit / No-Credit in RSM courses](#)
- [Rotman Commerce Academic Support](#)
- [Where to find teaching assistant opportunities](#)

URL links for print

- ACORN: <http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca/>
- Email Accessibility Services: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca
- Accessibility Services website: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>
- University's Plagiarism Detection Tool FAQ: <https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>
- The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>
- Information Commons Help Desk: <http://help.ic.utoronto.ca/category/3/utmail.html>
- Become a volunteer note taker: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/volunteer-note-taking/>
- Accessibility Services Note Taking Support: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/note-taking-support/>
- Credit / No-Credit in RSM courses: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/degree-requirements/credit-no-credit-option/>
- Rotman Commerce Academic Support: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-support/>
- Book an appointment with a writing or presentation coach: <http://uoft.me/writingcentres>
- Writing and Presentation Coaching academic support page: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-support/writing-and-presentation-coaching/>
- Centre for Professional Skills Teamwork Resources page: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/teamwork-resources>
- Book an appointment with a Teamwork Mentor: <http://uoft.me/writingcentres>