

IBEHS 4A03

Biomedical Control Systems

Winter 2026 Course Outline VERSION 1

FORMAL CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

IBEHS 4A03 focuses on the modelling of control systems in the continuous-time domain; state space representations; model linearization; performance of control systems in time and frequency domains; stability; control design. Particular emphasis will be given to biomedical and engineering applications.

INFORMAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Control systems are everywhere, from the furnace in your home, to cruise control in a commercial airliner, to the pressure and temperature regulation of a pharmaceutical bioreactor, to the many control systems working to achieve homeostasis in the human body. This course will investigate how these systems work, and how this will allow us to engineer solutions for industries, patients, and everything in-between.

PRE-REQUISITES AND ANTI-REQUISITES

Prerequisite(s): IBEHS 3A03

Antirequisite(s): ELECENG 3CL4, MECHENG 4R03, CHEMENG 3P04

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION AND COURSE SCHEDULE

Dr. Jake Nease

JHE 373

neasej@mcmaster.ca

+ 1 (905) 599-3165

Office Hours:

Mondays 12:30 – 15:30

LEC: See A2L

[See A2L]

T01: See A2L

[See A2L]

T02: See A2L

[See A2L]

T03: See A2L

[See A2L]

TEACHING ASSISTANT OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Adrian DiPietro MS Teams Email on A2L	Liam Fitzhenry MS Teams Email on A2L	Riley Dowd MS Teams Email on A2L	Shamera Chatheechan MS Teams Email on A2L	Lauren McLennan MS Teams Email on A2L	Rooaa Shanshal MS Teams Email on A2L	Ryan Liu MS Teams Email on A2L
Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week	Hours: off-week

COURSE WEBSITE

IBEHS 4A03 will use Avenue to Learn as the primary repository for notes, assignments, tutorial activities, and grades. Grades posted on Avenue to Learn are unofficial until posted on MOSAIC. Students can log in via the link: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- LO.1. Identify the fundamental components of linear and nonlinear dynamic models with biomedical and industrial applications.
- LO.2. Apply linearization methods to achieve locally linear dynamic models.
- LO.3. Apply Laplace and Inverse-Laplace transforms to convert between time-domain and frequency-domain models as appropriate.
- LO.4. Perform fundamental open-loop analyses of dynamic systems to assess stability, damping effects, disturbances, and time delays.
- LO.5. Build closed-loop block diagrams of dynamic systems.
- LO.6. Design feedback controllers for linear systems, including proportional, proportional-integral, and proportional-integral-derivative and comment on their appropriateness given the application.
- LO.7. Simulate and tune closed- and open-loop systems using simulation software such as MATLAB Simulink.
- LO.8. Perform various stability analyses on closed-loop systems and comment on an appropriate control structure to optimize performance.
- LO.9. Convert a linear(ized) time-domain model to state-space representation.
- LO.10. Identify the parameters of linear models in state-space form using appropriate model fitting techniques.

ACCREDITATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Learning Outcomes defined in this section are measured for Accreditation purposes only and will not be directly taken into consideration in determining a student's actual grade in the course. IBEHS 4A03 will measure the following graduate attribute indicators through the indicated learning outcomes below.

Indicators	Mapped Learning Outcomes
1.1: Competence in Mathematics	LO1, LO2, LO3, LO9, LO10
1.3: Competence in Engineering Fundamentals	LO1, LO3, LO4, LO5, LO8
5.1: Evaluates engineering tools, identifies their limitations, and selects, adapts, or extends them appropriately.	LO6, LO7, LO10
5.2: Successfully uses engineering tools	LO7, LO8

For more information on Accreditation, please visit: <https://www.engineerscanada.ca>

MATERIALS AND FEES
Required Texts:

There is no required textbook for this course.

Calculator:

Students are welcome to use any calculator desired.

Other Materials:

This course will require the use of MATLAB and SIMULINK. A full version of MATLAB with SIMULINK is available to McMaster students from the Mathworks website: <https://www.mathworks.com/products/matlab/student.html>

ASSESSMENT

The Grading for this course will be broken down according to the following components.

Component	Weight	Notes
Application Exercises	28%	4 application-centric exercise sets worth 7% each
Midterm Tests	36%	2 tests. 18% each, automatically deferred to exam in your favour
Final Exam	36%	A final exam scheduled during the exam period
Participation	0%	Attendance in tutorials (0% each, but have answers to exercises)
Total	100%	

APPLICATION EXERCISES

Application exercise sets will be released throughout the term and will cover the most up to date relevant lecture material. They can be completed in groups of **up to two students**. You are entitled to choose your own groups for every set of exercises. Groups may be changed between exercise sets. Submissions are expected to be electronic and take the form of a professional short form report and will be graded as such. **All assignments receive a 72-hour grace period with no late penalties applied after the due date.** Assignments not submitted by the expiry of the grace period will receive an automatic grade of zero.

NOTE: Due to the applied nature of these problems and the importance of the student demonstrating their ability to use course content in open-ended scenarios, the weight from these assessments **cannot be transferred to tests or the final examination**. The grace period is meant to prevent the need for MSAFs, which would result in a 72-hour extension for the problem set.

Application exercise sets will require you to submit 1-2 tutorial exercise solutions, as described below.

MID-TERM TESTS

Midterm 1 date and location available on course schedule on A2L.

Midterm 2 date and location available on course schedule on A2L.

Each midterm will be proceeded by an OPTIONAL in-class group re-write of the same exam in the next lecture hour. If you participate in the re-write, your official midterm grade will be weighted as 85% your individual result and 15% the group's result, **if your group result is higher**. Your midterm will be weighted as 100% your individual result otherwise.

Test weight will automatically be transferred to the final exam if your exam score is higher than your test score.

All tests and the final exam will permit three pages of notes or study aids, double-sided (six pages total).

TUTORIALS

Tutorials will typically include a short lesson (15-30 minutes) from the TAs, followed by an activity. Tutorial activities will cover the most recent lecture material via applied problems. They will typically contain some combination of derivations, MATLAB simulations, creating plots, and analyzing system outputs. Tutorials can be completed in teams. Your tutorial team does NOT need to be the same group as your application submissions.

Tutorials will be provided with “answers” but not “solutions.” During the last 20-30 minutes of tutorial, the TAs will facilitate a take-up session where full solutions can be shared among participants. You will be required to submit your fully worked-out solution for tutorial exercises as a graded component of the application exercise sets.

COURSE OVERVIEW

IBEHS 4A03 will follow the following list of topics as closely as possible. Note that the instructor reserves the right to change the order and coverage of topics as they feel appropriate and possibly even at the request of the class.

Date/Week	Topics covered (subject to change!)
Week 01	Introduction; Review of biomedical control applications; math review
Week 02	Model building from first principles; Linearization; Introduction to Laplace transforms
Week 03	Laplace transforms; Transfer functions; Inverse Laplace Transforms; Partial fractions review
Week 04	Transfer function characteristics; Damping; Stability analyses; Poles and zeros
Week 05	Block diagram representations; Block diagram algebra; Closed loop systems
Week 06	Stability of closed loops; Introduction to feedback control
Week 07	Feedback controller performance; P, PI, and PID control
Week 08	Closed loop stability of controlled systems; Routh-Hurwitz test; Pole placement
Week 09	Controller tuning and performance; Introduction to feed-forward control
Week 10	Feedforward control; Model identification
Week 11	State space representation; Multi-input/Multi-output systems
Week 12	Model identification using state space notation; Loop pairing; Interacting systems
Week 13	Review and wrap-up

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](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **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 any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

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.**

~ Generative AI may be used in 4A03 for text only and must be cited when used in a problem ~

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](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

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. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) 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** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

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.

INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT STATEMENT

We consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect, and we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability – and other visible and non-visible differences. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every other member of the class. We will gladly honour your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise us of this preference early in the semester.

The instructor is certified with the McMaster Professor Hippo on Campus Program for mental health awareness and aid to students in need. My office (or online video portal) is a **safe space** to discuss issues both academic and otherwise, and you are welcome to contact me at any time to chat. If I reach out to you at any time, be aware that it is not to embarrass or penalize you; it is because I care.



COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). 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 the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): 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”.

NOTE: McMaster policy does NOT require that course weight for work missed via an MSAF will be transferred to another assessment, although that is a possibility. Any missed exercise set will be granted a 72-hour extension **from the original due date (NOT the extended due date for UDL purposes)**. Midterms are automatically weighted to the final in your favour. **There is thus no use case for an MSAF in IBEHS 4A03.**

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.

REFERENCE TO RESEARCH ETHICS

The two principles underlying integrity in research in a university setting are these: a researcher must be honest in proposing, seeking support for, conducting, and reporting research; a researcher must respect the rights of others in these activities. Any departure from these principles will diminish the integrity of the research enterprise. This policy applies to all those conducting research at or under the aegis of McMaster University. It is incumbent upon all members of the university community to practice and to promote ethical behaviour. To see the Policy on Research Ethics at McMaster University, please go to <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/>.

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, A2L and/or McMaster email.

NOTICE REGARDING POSSIBLE COURSE MODIFICATION

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.