



Course Syllabus: Advanced Excel

Dillard College of Business Administration

MIS 4173 Section X10

Fall 2026 | August 24-December 4, 2026

Contact Information

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Course Description

Covers advanced spreadsheet decision-making tools. Business problems from across the enterprise will be solved using Excel functions, pivot tables, scenario evaluation, and related tools.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Excel 365 Bible, by Michael Alexander, Richard Kusleika, and John Walkenbach, Wiley, 2022 (ISBN-13: 978-1119835103).

- Regular access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection and webcam capability. A Windows computer capable of running the desktop version of Microsoft Excel for Microsoft 365 is strongly recommended. Tablets and Chromebooks do not support all required Excel features and are not sufficient as a student's only device for this course.
- Additional readings are posted in D2L.
- Other reference books:
- Business Analytics: Data Analysis & Decision Making, 6th edition, by S. Christian Albright, Wayne Winston, Cengage Learning, 2016. (ISBN-13: 978-1-305-86647-8)
- Management Science: The Art of Modeling with Spreadsheets, 4th edition, by Stephen G. Powell and Kenneth R. Baker, Wiley. (ISBN-13: 978-1118582695)

Software Requirements

- Lab use: Microsoft Excel 365 is available in Dillard Building 335.
- Home use: Students may use the Microsoft 365 resources available through MSU Texas. Students should verify that their version supports the features required for each assignment.
- The supported environment for graded work is the Windows desktop version of Microsoft Excel for Microsoft 365. Excel for the web, Excel for Mac, tablets, and older Excel versions may not support all functions, macros, data connections, or other required features. Students using an alternative platform are responsible for completing incompatible work in the Dillard Building 335 computer lab.

Course Objectives

General Learning Goals

- Our students will be effective at problem solving and decision making.
- Objective: Our graduates will demonstrate problem solving and decision making abilities through the critical analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of business information.
- Our students will be effective communicators.
- Objective: Our graduates will be able to demonstrate a competency in speaking and writing for common business scenarios.
 - 2a: Our graduates will be able to demonstrate a competency in speaking for common business scenarios.
 - 2b: Our graduates will be able to demonstrate a competency in writing for common business scenarios.
- Our students will be technologically prepared.
- Objective: Our graduates will be able to utilize available technology for business applications.
- Our students will be ethical decision makers.
- Objective: Our graduates will demonstrate ethical reasoning skills within a business environment.
- Our students will possess broad-based knowledge to the core functional areas of business.
- Objective: Our graduates will demonstrate knowledge of key concepts, theories, and practices in major business disciplines.
- Our students will understand issues related to globalization and international business.
- Objective: Our graduates will understand issues that are related to globalization and international business activities.
- These general learning goals are among those established by the Dillard College of Business Administration. They represent skills graduates will carry into their careers and support the college's ongoing assessment and improvement of curriculum and delivery.

Course-Specific Learning Goals

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Analyze data across different dimensions using pivot tables and charts.
- Look up and compare records efficiently.
- Import and clean data from external sources.
- Evaluate different outcomes by changing assumptions.
- Automate routines with macros.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each course component

Course Component	Points
Class Participation	60
Assignments	240
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Total Points	500

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	450 or higher
B	400 to less than 450
C	350 to less than 400
D	300 to less than 350
F	Less than 300

Assignments

Because the course focuses on practical tools, hands-on experience is essential. Students will complete 12 assignments worth 20 points each (240 points total), applying concepts from the lecture videos to Excel tasks. Each completed Excel workbook and any other requested materials must be uploaded to the designated D2L submission folder by the posted deadline. Students are responsible for confirming that the correct file was uploaded successfully.

Class Participation

Class participation is measured through 12 discussion activities in D2L, worth 5 points each (60 points total). For each topic, students must post a substantive question related to the course material and/or provide a substantive response to another student's question by the deadline listed in D2L. Missed discussion activities affect only the Class Participation grade and may be made up only when the absence qualifies under the Make Up Work/Tests policy and supporting documentation is provided.

Exams

The course includes two individual online examinations, each worth 100 points. Exam 1 covers Course Topics 1–6. Exam 2 is cumulative; however, more than 90% of its content will focus on material introduced after Exam 1. Both examinations are administered through D2L and consist primarily of hands-on Excel tasks similar to the course assignments.

Students will follow the questions and instructions provided in D2L, download any required data files, and use Microsoft Excel to complete the assigned tasks. Depending on the material covered, students may be required to create or modify formulas, functions, tables, charts, PivotTables, data analyses, scenario models, or other Excel workbook components. Grading may consider the accuracy of the results, use of the required Excel methods, functionality of formulas and workbook features, organization of the workbook, and completion of all requested tasks.

- **Time limit:** Students must complete the examination within the time limit displayed in D2L. The submission area will close when the examination period ends, so students should reserve sufficient time to save and upload their work.

- **Excel files:** Students must submit the completed Excel workbook file or files in the format specified in the examination instructions, normally .xlsx or .xlsm. PDF files, screenshots, copied values, or written descriptions are not substitutes for the required Excel workbooks.
- **Workbook requirements:** Students must preserve required filenames, worksheet names, source data, and workbook organization. Formulas and other Excel features must remain functional and visible for grading. Students should not replace formulas with calculated values unless specifically instructed to do so.
- **Submission:** All required Excel files must be uploaded to the designated D2L examination submission area before the deadline. Students are responsible for verifying that the correct files were attached, uploaded successfully, and can be opened. An attempted upload, an incorrect file, or a corrupted workbook does not constitute a completed submission.
- **Individual work:** Examinations are open-book, open-notes, and open-Internet unless otherwise stated in the examination instructions. However, each student must complete all work independently. Communication, collaboration, answer sharing, or receiving assistance from another person during an examination is prohibited.
- **Use of AI:** Generative AI tools are not permitted during examinations unless the instructor explicitly authorizes their use. Students must be able to explain the formulas, methods, workbook features, analytical decisions, and results contained in their submitted Excel files.

Students are responsible for using a computer and version of Microsoft Excel that support the required examination features. Limitations of Excel for the web, Excel for Mac, tablets, Chromebooks, or older Excel versions do not normally justify additional time or an alternative submission.

Late Work

Unless prior arrangements are approved or an excused absence applies, an assignment submitted after the deadline receives a deduction of 5% of the assignment's possible points for each calendar day late. Late assignments are accepted for up to seven calendar days, with a maximum deduction of 35%. Assignments submitted more than seven calendar days late are not accepted.

Make Up Work/Tests

Students with excused absences may make up missed examinations and course activities when supporting documentation is provided. Arrangements should be made in advance when possible. The instructor must be contacted no later than the day of the scheduled exam; otherwise, no make-up will be allowed. At the instructor's discretion, a deduction may be assessed for a late exam.

Excused absences include active military, police, or firefighter assignment; jury duty; university-authorized absences; and a medical emergency involving the student or an immediate family member. See the [MSU Catalog](#) for additional university policy information.

Experimental AI-Supported Oral Follow-Up

Following selected examinations, students may be required to complete an experimental AI-supported oral follow-up lasting approximately 10 minutes. The follow-up is considered part of the examination process and is intended to verify that students understand and can explain the work they submitted, including, as applicable, Excel formulas and workbooks, Tableau worksheets, visualizations and dashboards, Python code, analytical methods and decisions, results, observations, and written responses. Students should also be prepared to describe how any permitted AI assistance was used and how its output was reviewed, tested, or modified.

Students may be selected as part of a class-wide pilot, through random selection, or when clarification of submitted work is needed. The instructor may use the student's oral responses to confirm or adjust the score for the related question(s) or portion(s) of the examination. A student's inability to explain, interpret, reproduce, or verify essential elements of submitted work may result in a reduction of the corresponding examination score. Evidence of unauthorized assistance, prohibited collaboration, or misrepresentation of submitted work may also be addressed under the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Detailed procedures, scheduling information, evaluation criteria, technology requirements, and practice opportunities will be provided in D2L before the first oral follow-up. Approved accommodations and make-up arrangements will be provided in accordance with University policy.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: August 24-27, 2026
- Deadline to file for graduation: September 21, 2026
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Online Attendance and Participation

MIS 4173 Section X10 is an online course and does not require regular face-to-face class attendance. Students are expected to engage with the course in D2L regularly, review announcements and course materials, and meet all posted deadlines. Participation is documented through the 12 graded D2L discussion activities described above. Failure to complete a discussion activity affects only the Class Participation category; it does not directly reduce assignment or exam scores. Students remain responsible for course announcements and required work when they do not log in or participate.

Online Computer Requirements

Students must have regular access to a reliable computer and Internet connection capable of running the supported desktop version of Microsoft Excel. Assignments, exams, and discussion activities are due as scheduled. Personal computer or connectivity problems do not normally justify an extension, so students should maintain backup access through campus computer labs or another reliable location. Contact the instructor promptly and, if technical difficulties occur, use the student help resources available through [D2L](#).

Recording Classes

Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission. Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

AI-Tool Policy

Outside of exams, students may use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT for the following limited purposes:

- Conceptual support: Explaining Excel concepts, functions, and terminology.
- Troubleshooting: Helping identify possible causes of formula errors or unexpected results.
- Planning and writing support: Brainstorming an approach to a problem or improving grammar in a written explanation.

The following requirements apply to every use of AI tools:

- Independent work: Students must create and submit their own workbooks, formulas, analyses, and written responses and must be able to explain their work.
- Verification, disclosure, and privacy: Students are responsible for checking AI output for accuracy, disclosing substantive AI assistance when required by the instructor, and avoiding the upload of confidential, proprietary, or personally identifiable information to public AI tools.

Generative AI tools are not permitted during exams unless the instructor explicitly authorizes their use. Unauthorized AI use or misrepresentation of AI-generated work may be treated as academic misconduct.

Change of Schedule

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule, procedures, assignments, and deadlines when necessary. Changes will be announced through D2L, and students are responsible for consulting the most current course information.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees, and room and board charges paid to MSU for the semester. However, if the student received financial aid, including federal, state, or institutional grants, loans, or scholarships, all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. Federal and state formulas are used to determine the amount of the refund. Examples of each refund calculation are available upon request.

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs:

Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@msutexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

MSU Texas is a tobacco-free campus. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, and other tobacco-derived products are prohibited in all University-owned or leased indoor and outdoor areas, University vehicles, and private vehicles parked on University property. The policy applies to everyone, with no exceptions.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State University are informed that strictly enforced policies prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs, including alcohol, on University property or as part of any University-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state, and federal law for offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Keep this syllabus as a reference. Students are responsible for its contents and for announced changes. The schedule below follows the Fall 2026 weekly cadence and may be adjusted by the instructor.

Topic	Assignment	Assignment deadlines & exam dates	Class Participation	Recommended Readings (Chapters in Excel 365 Bible)
Introduction	Survey	08/31/2026		1, 2, 3
Formula Basics	1	09/07/2026	Participation 1	4, 20, 25, 32
Text & Date	2	09/14/2026	Participation 2	11, 12
Array & Table	3	09/21/2026	Participation 3	13, 16
Lookup	4	09/28/2026	Participation 4	14
Reference	5	10/05/2026	Participation 5	14, 17
What-If Analysis	6	10/12/2026	Participation 6	36
Exam 1		10/19/2026		
Pivot Table	7	10/26/2026	Participation 7	34, 35
Pivot Chart	8	11/02/2026	Participation 8	34, 35
Statistical Functions	9	11/09/2026	Participation 9	38
Financial Functions	10	11/16/2026	Participation 10	15
External Data	11	11/23/2026	Participation 11	
Macro	12	11/30/2026	Participation 12	39
Exam 2		12/07/2026		