



**JINDAL GLOBAL
BUSINESS SCHOOL**
INDIA'S FIRST MULTI-DISCIPLINARY GLOBAL BUSINESS SCHOOL



O.P. Jindal Global University
A Private University Promoting Public Service
NAAC Accreditation - 'A' Grade

Jindal Global Business School
Course Outline

Course Title	Digital Platform Ecosystems: Architecture, Governance, and Strategy
Core or Elective	Elective
Program and Batch	MBA-2025, IBM-2022, IBM-2023
Semester & Academic Year	Fall 2026
Credits	1.5
Discipline/Area	IS and Analytics
Name of the Faculty Member/Course Instructor	Abza Bharadwaj
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Faculty Member's Open Office Day/s & Time	TBD

Introduction to the Course

Digital platforms have transformed the structure of modern industries by enabling multi-sided markets and facilitating interactions between diverse groups of users, producers, and complementors. Unlike traditional “pipeline” businesses that create and deliver products through linear value chains, platform firms create value by orchestrating ecosystems in which multiple participants interact and co-create value. Examples include Uber, Swiggy, Urban Company, and many others. This course introduces students to the foundations of digital platform ecosystems and the strategic, technological, and governance mechanisms that sustain them. The course examines how platforms are designed, how they evolve, and how they generate and capture value through ecosystem participation. Particular emphasis is placed on the relationship between platform architecture, governance rules, and ecosystem dynamics, and how these shape innovation and competition. Students will analyse real-world platform cases and engage with contemporary policy debates surrounding gig work, digital markets, and platform regulation.

Overall, the course equips students with conceptual tools to critically analyse digital platform ecosystems and evaluate strategic choices related to platform design, governance, and participation. It also encourages students to identify opportunities to build or participate in digital platforms across industries.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

CLO1 – Identify and explain the key characteristics of digital platforms and how they differ from traditional pipeline businesses.

CLO2 – Analyse the architecture of platform ecosystems, and the relationship between platform cores and complementary apps.

CLO3 – Evaluate platform governance structures and their role in shaping ecosystem participation, innovation, and competitive dynamics.

CLO4 – Apply frameworks for platform strategy to assess value creation, network effects, pricing, and ecosystem evolution.

CLO5 – Examine real-world platform cases to generate evidence-based strategic recommendations for platform design and participation.

Programme Competency Goals

MBA Programme Competency Goals (PCGs)		MBA Programme Learning Objectives (PLOs)
		Students will be able to
1	Technological Agility: Ability to adopt relevant technologies for better business decision making.	1. Understand relevant business technologies
		2. Understand future technologies in business domain
2	Responsible Global Citizenship: Ability to understand the interplay between local and global issues and to act with sensitivity towards ethical and social issues	3. Understand the interplay between local and global business issues
		4. Demonstrate sensitivity towards ethical issues
		5. Demonstrate sensitivity towards social issues
		6. Address societal issues
3	Effective communication: Ability to effectively exchange ideas and information	7. Present their ideas with clarity
		8. Prepare an organized and logical business document
		9. Use technology for effective communication
4	Critical Thinking: Ability to identify, analyze	10. Identify main issues of business problems

	business problems and propose effective solutions	11. Examine information from different sources
		12. Draw inferences from analysis
		13. Evaluate alternatives
		14. Summarize and conclude
5	Leadership: Ability to take initiative, inspire and collaborate with others	15. Take initiative
		16. Contribute effectively in groups

PLO-PCG Assessments Mapping Matrix

Program Learning Objectives (PLOs)	Program Competency Goals (PCGs)	Course Assessment Item
This course helps you to develop the following Program Learning Outcomes:	This course helps you to develop the following Program Competency Goals:	This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items
PCG1-PLO1 PCG1-PLO2 PCG2-PLO4 PCG2-PLO6	PCG1, PCG2	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5
PCG3- PLO7 PCG4- PLO10 PCG4- PLO12 PCG4- PLO13 PCG4- PLO14	PCG3, PCG4	A1, A2, A4

Evaluation Schema

The course grade will be determined based on:

Assessment Task	Weightage (%)	Nature (Individual/Group)	Week of Assessment	PLOs to be Assessed
A1: Class Participation	10%	Individual	Continuous	PLO-01, PLO-02, PLO-10
A2: Case Analysis	30%	Individual	Weekly	PLO-01, PLO-02, PLO-04, PLO-06, PLO-07, PLO-10, PLO-12, PLO-13, PLO-14
A3: Quiz	10%	Individual	3rd–4th Week	PLO-01, PLO-02, PLO-10
A4: Group Project	20%	Group	6th Week	PLO-01, PLO-02, PLO-04, PLO-06, PLO-07, PLO-10, PLO-12, PLO-13, PLO-14

A5: End-Term Examination	30%	Individual	End-Term Examination Week	PLO-01, PLO-02, PLO-04, PLO-06, PLO-07, PLO-10, PLO-12, PLO-13, PLO-14
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Description of Assessments

A1 – Class Participation (10%): The participation of students in class discussions, case presentations, and guest lectures will be evaluated on a continuous basis throughout the semester.

A2 – Case Analysis (30%): Students are expected to critically discuss the assigned cases/readings in class through in-class presentations and case analysis. The non-presenting group is required to prepare counter-arguments and pose probing questions. Students are also expected to contribute to social learning by offering feedback on peers’ analyses and engaging in platform-based discussions.

A3 – Quiz (10%): An in-class, closed-book quiz of 10 marks covering foundational concepts and frameworks from the first four sessions, to be conducted during the 3rd–4th week.

A4 – Group Project (20%): Groups will conduct an assessment of a specific digital platform — whether it has experienced failure or success — using relevant course content. An analysis of the platform’s ecosystem will be required, and findings will be presented to the class. Grades will be assigned based on group contributions and overall performance.

A5 – End-Term Examination (30%): The end term examination will be of **30 marks of 1.5 hours duration**. This will be an invigilated exam according to the mode, modalities and process as decided by CoE.

Assessment Rubrics A2 – Case Analysis

Criteria	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (75-89%)	Satisfactory (60-74%)	Needs Improvement (>59)
Conceptual Understanding	Strong application of course theories	Adequate application	Limited conceptual linkage	No theoretical grounding
Analytical Depth	Critical, original, and well-argued	Some analysis, not fully developed	Mostly descriptive	Superficial
Presentation Quality	Clear, structured, and engaging	Generally clear	Some lack of clarity	Disorganised
Counter-Argument (Non-Presenting Group)	Strong critique and probing questions	Some critique	Basic questioning	No engagement
Individual Contribution	Clear and active role	Moderate contribution	Minimal contribution	No visible contribution

A4 – Group Project

Criteria	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (75-89%)	Satisfactory (60-74%)	Needs Improvement (>59)
Problem Definition	Clear, focused,	Mostly clear	Some ambiguity	Unclear

	and relevant platform issue			
Platform Ecosystem Analysis	Comprehensive, multi-dimensional (users, algorithms, governance, etc.)	Adequate coverage	Limited scope	Superficial
Use of Course Concepts	Strong integration of theories	Some integration	Minimal use	No use
Critical Insight	Original, critical evaluation of success or failure	Some critique	Mostly descriptive	No critical insight
Data and Evidence Use	Strong evidence and examples	Some evidence	Limited evidence	No evidence
Presentation and Structure	Clear, professional, and well-organised	Mostly clear	Some issues	Disorganised
Group Collaboration	Balanced contributions	Minor imbalance	Unequal participation	Poor coordination

Teaching Method

The course will offer a blend of lectures, discussions, reflections, problem-solving exercises, and experiential learning to create an engaging academic environment. The goal is to cultivate a setting in which students derive their analyses from diverse course materials and real-life case analysis, guided by the instructor as a facilitator. Students are expected to engage critically with both conceptual frameworks and real-world cases.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

- Tiwana, A. (2014). Platform Ecosystems: Aligning Architecture, Governance, and Strategy. Morgan Kaufmann. (TB)
- Gupta, S. and Godwin, C. (2020). Michelin: Building a Digital Service Platform. Harvard Business School Case Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing. (Revised January 2022).
- Zhu, F. and Acocella, A. (2016). Fasten: Challenging Uber and Lyft with a New Business Model. Harvard Business School Case 616-062. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing. (Revised March 2020).
- Piskorski, M.J., Chen, D.T. and Knoop, C.-I. (2008). MySpace. Harvard Business School Case 708-499. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing. (Revised June 2011).
- Palepu, K.G. (2020). Urban Company. Harvard Business School Case 121-041. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing.

Supplementary Readings

- Gibson, K. (2024). What is a digital platform? Harvard Business School Online. Available at: <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-a-digital-platform>
- Gibson, K. (2024). 5 ways digital platforms can transform your business. Harvard Business School Online. Available at: <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/transform-your-business>

- Bryce, D.J., Dyer, J. and Van Alstyne, M.W. (2025). Are you missing growth opportunities for your platform? Harvard Business Review.
- Yoffie, D.B., Gawer, A. and Cusumano, M.A. (2019). A study of more than 250 platforms reveals why most fail. Harvard Business Review.
- Pulignano, V., Grimshaw, D., Domecka, M., & Vermeerbergen, L. (2024). Why does unpaid labour vary among digital labour platforms? Exploring socio-technical platform regimes of worker autonomy. *Human Relations*, 77(9), 1243-1271.
- Faik, I., Gwee, M., Tan, F. T. C., Leong, C., & Hastiadi, F. F. (2026). When digital platforms enter informal sectors: Work formalization and institutional change. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 35(1), 101941. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2025.101941>
- Zhang, X., Wei, Z., Du, Q., & Zhang, Z. (2026). Social Media Moderation and Content Generation: Evidence From User Bans¹. *MIS Quarterly* 1 March 2026; 50 (1): 211–242.
- Verma, R. K., Ilavarasan, P. V., & Kar, A. K. (2024). Evolution of ride-hailing platforms regulations in India: a multi-level perspective. *Digital Policy, Regulation and Governance*, 26(3), 337-356.

Guest Speakers

Session	Faculty Name	Guest Speaker	Title of the Session
10 th	Abza Bharadwaj	Mr. Saksham Malik	Ethical Challenges and Platform Policies in India

Session Plan

Session Details	Topics	PLOs Covered
Session 1	Introduction to Digital Platforms	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To understand digital platforms and how they differ from traditional product and service businesses. Explore the key drivers behind the global shift to platform ecosystems.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining platforms: software platforms, multi-sided markets, and ecosystem participants • Five drivers of migration to platform models 	
Readings	Chapter 1 (TB): The Rise of Platform Ecosystems	
Case Title & Number	Gibson, K. (2024). What is a digital platform? HBS Online. Gibson, K. (2024). 5 ways digital platforms can transform your business. HBS Online.	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 2	Core Concepts and Principles of Platform Ecosystems	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To analyse core platform terminology, platform owner, app developer, end-user, and complementors, and distinguish between platform cores, interfaces, and complementary apps	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform lifecycles using dominant designs, 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its properties (multisidedness, network effects, multihoming, architecture, and governance) • Platform dynamics: tipping, lock-in, competitive durability, 	
Readings	Chapter 2 (TB): Core Concepts and Principles	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 3	Platforms and Business Strategy	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To understand how platform businesses differ from traditional models, adopt a platform-oriented mindset, explore platform transformation pathways, and identify platform opportunities using structured frameworks.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique aspects of platform businesses • Platform and Business Strategy • Identifying Platform opportunities 	
Readings	Chapter 4(TB): Why Platform Businesses Are Unlike Product or Service Businesses	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 4	The Value Proposition of Platforms	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To Analyse how platforms create and capture value differently from traditional businesses.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value creation in multi-sided markets • Platform pricing • Monetisation models: transaction fees, subscriptions, advertising, data • Customer lifetime value in platform contexts 	
Readings	Chapter 4(TB): The Value Proposition of Platforms	
Case Title & Number	Palepu, K.G. (2020). Urban Company. HBS Case 121-041.	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 5	Platform Architecture	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To understand how architectural choices shape a platform's evolvability and competitive durability.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of platform architecture • Core functionality. peripheral functionality 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) as ecosystem connectors • Architectural choices and long-run competitive advantage 	
Readings	Chapter 5(TB) Platform Architecture	
Case Title & Number	Gupta & Godwin (2020). Michelin: Building a Digital Service Platform. HBS Case 520-061.	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 6	Platform Governance	PLO1, PLO2, PLO4, PLO6
Objective of the session	To explore what platform governance is and explain its role in managing ecosystem participation.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform governance and its functions • Three facets of platform governance: Decision rights, control, and pricing policies • Decision rights, functions of control, platform pricing policies • Aligning governance with platform architecture, business models, and lifecycle stages 	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6(TB): Platform Governance • Gawer, A., & Harracá, M. (2025). Inconsistent platform governance and social contagion of misconduct in digital ecosystems: A complementors perspective. <i>Research Policy</i>, 54(8), 105300. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2025.105300 	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 7	Platforms, Algorithms, and Management	PLO4 and PLO5
Objective of the session	To critically examine how digital platforms reshape labour dynamics and institutional structures by analyzing variations in worker autonomy, unpaid labour, and governance mechanisms.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform governance as control & coordination Systems • Institutional change and formalization through Platform • Perception, legitimacy, and value creation in platform ecosystems 	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6(TB): Platform Governance • van Zoonen, W., von Bonsdorff, M. E., & van der Heijden, B. I. J. M. (2025). Algorithmic surveillance 	

	<p>and workers' compliance: The role of trust, privacy concerns, and fairness in online crowdwork. <i>Human Relations</i>, 0(0).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heiland, H. (2022). Neither timeless, nor placeless: Control of food delivery gig work via place-based working time regimes. <i>Human Relations</i>, 75(9), 1824-1848. • Shafiei Gol, E., Stein, M.-K., & Avital, M. (2019). Crowdwork platform governance toward organizational value creation. <i>Journal of Strategic Information Systems</i>, 28(2), 175–195. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2019.01.001 	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 8	Platform Evolution	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To understand how digital platforms evolve over time by orchestrating innovation, aligning architecture and governance, and leveraging mechanisms such as resilience, scalability, and ecosystem coordination.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework of innovation stocks and flows • Creating and sustaining a competitive advantage: • Aligning architecture and governance • Ensuring platform resilience, scalability, and composability 	
Readings	Chapter 10(TB): Evolving a Platform	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 9	Digital Platforms and Informal Work	PLO1, PLO2, PLO4, PLO6
Objective of the session	To analyze how on-demand platforms use algorithmic surveillance and governance systems to shape worker behavior, compliance, and value creation.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-technical nature of platform governance (integration of algorithms, rules, and human behaviour) • Tensions in platform labour: autonomy vs control, flexibility vs discipline, efficiency vs worker well-being 	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulignano, V., Grimshaw, D., Domecka, M., & Vermeerbergen, L. (2024). Why does unpaid labour 	

	<p>vary among digital labour platforms? Exploring socio-technical platform regimes of worker autonomy. <i>Human Relations</i>, 77(9), 1243-1271.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faik, I., Gwee, M., Tan, F. T. C., Leong, C., & Hastiadi, F. F. (2026). When digital platforms enter informal sectors: Work formalization and institutional change. <i>Journal of Strategic Information Systems</i>, 35(1), 101941. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2025.101941 	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 10	Guest Lecture	PCG1- PLO1
Objective of the session	To understand platform operationalization in a real-world context	PCG1- PLO2
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and socio-political ecosystem of emerging technologies in India • Business strategy and role of the state in implementation 	PCG4- PLO10 PCG4- PLO12
Readings	NA	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lecture-based discussion	
Session 11	Policy and Regulation Landscape of Platforms in India	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To examine emerging regulatory frameworks governing digital platform markets globally and nationally	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian and global regulatory developments in platform markets • Ethical challenges and best practice models • Different Indian legal frameworks relevant for the platform ecosystem 	
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zhang, X., Wei, Z., Du, Q., & Zhang, Z. (2026). Social Media Moderation and Content Generation: Evidence From User Bans. <i>MIS Quarterly</i> 1 March 2026; 50(1): 211–242. • Verma, R. K., Ilavarasan, P. V., & Kar, A. K. (2024). Evolution of ride-hailing platforms regulations in India: a multi-level perspective. <i>Digital Policy, Regulation and Governance</i>, 26(3), 337-356. 	
Case Title & Number		
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 12	Platform App	PLO1 and PLO2

Objective of the session	To understand how platform dynamics interact to shape platform evolution, by examining how app design, microarchitecture, and ecosystem interactions influence platform scalability, stickiness, and overall synergy.	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamics of the platform market • Dynamics of apps in platform markets • App's microarchitecture and platform evolvability • App stickiness and platform synergy 	
Readings	Chapter 10(TB): Evolving an app	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 13	Developing Ecosystem-based thinking and strategy	PLO1 and PLO2
Objective of the session	To translate software ecosystem concepts into broader business ecosystems	
Subtopics to be covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem competition • Interdependence among ecosystem participants and value co-creation • Interplay between ecosystem architecture and governance in orchestrating evolution 	
Readings	Chapter 12 (TB): Every Product Is a Platform Waiting to Happen	
Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	Lectures, cases, and class discussions	
Session 14	Group presentation	PCG1- PLO1
Objective of the session	Group assignments presentations and course wrap-up	PCG1- PLO2
Subtopics to be covered	NA	PCG2- PLO4
Readings	NA	PCG2- PLO6
Case Title & Number	NA	PCG3- PLO7
Pedagogy	Reflection and student group presentation	PCG4- PLO10 PCG4- PLO12 PCG4- PLO13 PCG4- PLO14
Session 15	Reading & Revision Week/ Examination Week*	PLO1, PLO2, PLO4, PLO6
Objective of the session	NA	
Subtopics to be covered	NA	
Readings	NA	

Case Title & Number	NA	
Pedagogy	NA	

Disability Support

JGU endeavours to make all its courses accessible to students. The Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility-related difficulties, visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental health conditions, and intellectual/learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the DSC by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee/>

Students who need support may register at any time during the semester up until a month before the end-of-semester exam begins. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester must re-register within the first month of the new semester. Last-minute registrations and support may not be possible, as sufficient time is required to make the necessary arrangements.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of students and the nature of their disabilities, and the same is requested from faculty members and staff. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent, and against disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability.

All general queries: disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in

*Disclaimer: This course outline, including assessments, sessions, and/or readings, may be revised during the semester if such need arises.