



Syllabus 2018
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES FOR SMEs

MSc. Christian Tiscornia Biaus
[UNSAM]

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday
Total Load: 96 hours

Course Description

The spotlight of the corporate sustainability debate has primarily been focused on large multinational corporations (MNCs). Practical sustainability initiatives are designed mainly for these large firms that have the human and financial resources to implement the required procedures into their business operations. Comparative little, however, is known about corporate sustainability in small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), despite the fact that in both developed and developing countries SMEs provide more than half of the employment and thus contribute to a significant share of the overall economic and social value creation.

The course explores how small companies can organize and implement sustainability strategies in their core operations and explain the main differences between MNCs and SMEs. The course offers students an opportunity to explore practical ways by which environmental and social responsibility can benefit the economic success of SMEs.

Through faculty presentations, small group discussions, real-world exercises, field trips and recent case studies, students will examine the practical ways small and medium size companies have created business and social value through their sustainability strategies.

Sustainability Strategies for SMEs corresponds to a second year on a bachelor degree of Argentina and can be included as part of any bachelor degree in the School of Business and Economics at the University of San Martín.

Objectives

KNOWLEDGE

- The students will learn about processes that can develop feasible and long-term sustainable business systems that will benefit small and medium size companies economically while having a positive impact on the environment and society.

SKILLS

- Incorporate a strategic model suitable for the deployment of sustainability strategies and initiatives within small and medium size business
- Prioritize investments that will incrementally improve SME's ability to deliver shared social and business value.



- Will help present and future sustainability leaders to develop skills to drive the sustainability agenda through their business and beyond.
- Students will learn how to set and achieve goals and how to communicate them with greater clarity.
- Incorporate processes, products and projects for corporate sustainability.
- Understand the sustainability challenges for SMEs, especially in an Argentinean context.
- Create positive, productive relationships with internal and external stakeholders

Required Textbooks:

No textbook required. All material for lectures and workshops will be provided in class.

CONTENT & COURSE CALENDAR

The course consists of these main components:

- *Sustainability for SME's: concepts and frameworks. Why is sustainability relevant for SMEs?*
- Ethical Leadership. The Role of Business Leaders in Sustainability.
- Sustainability challenges for SMEs: the Argentinean context.
- Small Business Strategy: Developing Effective Mission, Vision and Values Statements. The Role of Key Stakeholders.
- Government & Sustainability. Promoting SMEs Sustainable Development.
- How to measure, report and communicate sustainability in SME's. Balance Score Card (BSC).
- The Business Advantage of Transparency for SME's. The State of Sustainability reporting.
- Benefit Corporations: A new way to bring together business success?

WEEK I – Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Readings

Epstein, M. (2008) Chapter 1: "A new framework for implementing corporate sustainability" *Making Sustainability Work*. San Francisco, CA. pp 33-57

Werther, Jr.W. and Chandler, D. (2011) Chapter 1: "What is CSR?" *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility*. Sage Publications, London. pp 1-23



WEEK II – STRATEGIC THINKING . WORKSHOP 1 “VISION, MISSION & VALUES. FOUNDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY”

Readings

Werther, Jr.W. and Chandler, D. (2011) Chapter 2: “Corporate Strategy: A Stakeholder Perspective” *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility* Sage Publications, London. Pp27-48

Werther, Jr.W. and Chandler, D. (2011) Chapter 4: “The Strategic Context of CSR” *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility* Sage Publications, London. pp85-116

Mirvis, P., Googins, B., & Kinnicutt, S. (2010). *Vision, Mission, Values: Guideposts to Sustainability*. Boston: Boston College.

WEEK III – RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP. SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES FOR SMES.

Readings

Freeman, R & Stewart, L. (2006) “*Developing Ethical Leadership*”. Charlottesville, Virginia: Business Roundtable Institute for Corporate Ethics.
http://www.corporate-ethics.org/pdf/ethical_leadership.pdf

Material to be delivered in Buenos Aires

WEEK IV – WORKSHOP 2 “Stakeholder Management”. The United Nations Global Compact (The Argentinean case)

Readings

Harvard Business School. (2012). *Managing Stakeholders with Corporate Social Responsibility*. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing

WEEK V – DEVELOPING A CSR STRATEGY. CREATING SHARED VALUE.

Readings

Goldberg, R. and Fries, L (2013) “*Nestlé: Agricultural Material Sourcing Within the Concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV)*” Harvard Business School Case 9-913-406

Lubin, D.; Longworth, A. and Russell, R. (2011) *Sustainability Strategy Transforms the Enterprise*; Balanced Scorecard Report, November-December 2011 issue: Vol 3 N° 6, Article B1111A pp 3- 8



Epstein, M. (2008) Chapter 5: "Performance evaluation and reward systems" *Making Sustainability Work*. San Francisco, CA. pp 125-142

Porter, M. and Kramer, M. (2011) "Creating Shared Value". Harvard Business Review. Vol. 89 Issue 1/2.

WEEK VI – WORKSHOP 3 "Sustainability Scorecard"

Readings

Gminder, C. U., & Bieker, T. (2002). Managing Corporate Social Responsibility by using the "Sustainability-Balanced Scorecard". *The 10th international conference of the greening of industry network*. Göteborg: International conference of the greening of industry network.

WEEK VII – READING WEEK

WEEK VIII – BENEFIT CORPORATIONS. CORPORATE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM.

Readings

NBIS (2012) "B Corporations, Benefit Corporations and Social Purpose Corporations: Launching a New Era of Impact-Driven Companies" A white paper by NBIS.
http://nbis.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/ImpactDrivenCompanies_NBIS_Whitepaper_Oct2012.pdf

Volunteering Australia (2007) "Employee Volunteering. A guide for small to medium sized enterprises" Melbourne: Volunteering Australia Inc.

Hutchisson, R. (2014) "Creating an Employee Volunteer Program at Your Small Business" Charleston: Blackbaud Inc.

WEEK IX –CSR & COMMUNICATION. WORKSHOP 4 "HOW TO COMMUNICATE YOUR CSR STRATEGY"

Readings

Simcic Bronn P. (2013) "CSR and Communication" in Atle Midttun (ed): CSR and Beyond, A Nordic Perspective (ed) Oslo 2013 Cappelen Damm pp 63-83 (20p.)

D'Aprix, R. (1996) *Communicating for Change*. Challenges to Effective Strategic Communication. San Francisco. Jossey- Bass Publisher. pp 119-138 (19p)

D'Aprix, R. (1996) *Communicating for Change*. The Importance of Trust. San Francisco. Jossey- Bass Publisher. pp 138-152 (14p)



Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide. (2010). *Communicating corporate responsibility*. London: Cranfield School of Management.

WEEK X – ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT. WORKSHOP 5 “VALUE CHAIN”. WORKSHOP 6 “TOOLS FOR PRACTICAL SUSTAINABILITY INTEGRATION”

Readings

Madu, C. and Chua-hua, K., (2012) "Introduction to Sustainability Management" in handbook of *Sustainability Management*, Edited by Christian N. Madu and Chu-hua Kuei, World Scientific Company, pp. 1-21

Dalal-Clayton, B. and Bass, S. (2009). "Introduction: The case of environmental mainstreaming", in *The Challenges of Environmental Mainstreaming*. Experience integrating environment into development institutions. pp. 15-29

European Commission. (2012). Chapter 6 "*Minimizing Waste from accommodation*" in reference Document on Best Environmental Management Practice in the Tourism Sector, Final Draft June 2012. pp. 373-404

UN Global Compact Office; BSR. (2010). *Supply Chain Sustainability. A practical guide for continuous improvement*. New York: UN Global Compact Office.

Senge, P. et.al. (2010) *The Necessary Revolution*. New York: Broadway Books. Chapter 7 - Unconventional Allies - Coke and WWF Partner for Sustainable Water, Chapter 8 - Risks & Opportunities - the Business Rationale for Sustainability

Epstein, M. (2008) Chapter 8: "Improving corporate processes, products, and projects for corporate sustainability" *Making Sustainability Work*. San Francisco, CA. pp 198-222

WEEK XI – CSR & COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE. WORKSHOP 7 “How to make an effective oral presentation”

Readings

Porter, M. and Kramer, M. (2011) “*Creating Shared Value*”. Harvard Business Review. Vol. 89 Issue 1/2.

Porter, M. and Kramer, M. (2006) “*Strategy and Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility*”. Harvard Business Review. Vol. 84 Issue 12.

WEEK XII – PRESENTATION GROUP PAPER EXAM



Evaluation & Grading

A) Examinations, Evaluation Criteria and Requirements:

As part of the learning activity of the sustainability course, students have to write one group assignment; (i) "The Group Paper Exam"

The Group Paper Exam ties together the topics of the course as a whole. The main objective of the group paper exam is to develop a sustainability strategy of a given SME. Students will combine perspectives from the literature, case studies and lectures and link them with empirical cases from Argentina.

The Group Paper Exam will be orally presented by the group to the class at the end of the course.

It is expected that students read the assigned texts for each class and discuss them with their fellow classmates. Student participation throughout the course is very important and highly encouraged.

Group work is central to the course. In addition to studying the curriculum through lectures and individual reading, students are also expected to participate in workshops (the "Workshops"). Here you will have the opportunity to work in small groups to develop your Group Paper Exam. The groups will consist of 3-6 members, and will be formed at the beginning of the course.

Grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

40% Workshop participation

60% Group Paper Exam.

B) Attendance Policy:

The university policy is that more than six absences (equivalent to nine hours) implies an automatic "F." In this class, 0.5 points will be deducted from your Attendance grade for every unexcused absence. Students are responsible for getting all the material and work handed out during a class they missed. Unexcused absence on a workshop day will result in the deduction of 0.5 points on the next essay due.

Missed Exams: "Make-up" exams are a privilege, one to be extended only to students who have missed an exam with prior arrangement (one week notice) with the instructor or due to extenuating circumstances.

Participation: A high weight is placed on participation as a learning experience. A student's grade will suffer due to actions that disrupt the group experience. For this reason **all cell phones must be turned off before class begins**. If you have a unique circumstance for which you must leave the phone on, consent from the instructor is required beforehand. Students will have a significant point total deducted from their class grade if they do not adhere to this regulation.



C) Grading Scale

Description	Percentage
10 (A) Excellent	100-95
9 (A-) Very Good	94-89
8 (B) Good	88-83
7 (B-) Above Average	82-77
6 (C) Average	76-71
5 (C) Below Average	70-65
4 (D) Lowest Passing Grade	64-60
F Failure	59-0
W Officially withdrawn	Academic Advisor's approval
I Incomplete	Only with Academic Advisor's approval

Plagiarism: An important objective of this course is to get students to learn how to write essays. Students are expected to do their own written work. Plagiarism not only undermines this learning process but also represents a serious breach of College policy and of academic honesty.

Outside sources should always be referenced in the essay's bibliography. Plagiarized work will receive an automatic F. If you have any doubts on what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask the Instructor.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE

One year of prior studies (60 ECTS) or Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development course.