**Course Description**

The proliferation of the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) represents one of the most significant trends in business management and governance over the past decades. It has gained steady momentum in national and international public policy, and is increasingly adopted as a benchmark for good business practice by the private sector worldwide. While the traditional notion of corporate responsibility was limited to regulatory compliance and the generation of profits, companies are now expected to address a much wider range of responsibilities, and to mainstream social, ethical and environmental concerns into their core business operations.

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the CSR debate, and gives the student a thorough understanding of why to integrate CSR into corporate strategies and decision-making, to add both financial and non-financial value to the company and society in which it operates. CSR is taught through an interdisciplinary social science/humanistic approach.

The CSR & Sustainable Development course 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 Martin.

**Objectives**

The course objectives are:

- Provide students with a high level of understanding of the concept of CSR and how CSR can contribute to sustainable development.
- Enable students to understand CSR in an international and national context.
- Expose students to the principles of CSR and the impact these have on the economic, social/cultural & legal/political environment.
- Have insight into central academic questions regarding stakeholder theory, responsible consumption and business ethics.
- Understand how CSR directly affects current and future regulatory practices.
- Understand and contextualize society’s expectations of a socially responsible organization.
Required Textbooks:


Material from lectures and seminars.

CONTENT & COURSE CALENDAR

The course is divided into 3 main sections.

1. The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Governance for Sustainable Development

This section aims to give the student a thorough understanding of the societal context in which the concept of corporate social responsibility has emerged. In doing so, different approaches to understanding CSR will be debated, and various political and socio-economic drivers for the increasing proliferation of CSR related activities will be examined. There will also be a review of the development of CSR governance initiatives, and an evaluation of the limits and potentials of CSR as a device for promoting sustainable development.

2. CSR: The southern and northern context

In this section we will examine the way in which CSR is being managed within companies, comparing the experiences of different countries, industries and regions, and also identifying the common lessons.

3. Key areas for Corporate Social Responsibility implementation

This section will consider key arenas were the philosophy and practice of CSR can be meaningfully applied. It will examine specific fields of practice in which the interests of particular stakeholder groups can be usefully considered.

This calendar may be subject to changes. The instructor will announce changes in class and distribute updated versions.


Readings


WEEK II – Evolution of the most relevant CSR theories. The Business Case of CSR. Critical perspectives.

Readings


WEEK III - CSR & the transition to a sustainable economy. A global perspective. Seminar “The Business case for CSR”

Readings
http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/2010_lpr/


WEEK IV – The development, role and impact of voluntary regulation through international initiatives and codes of conduct. The United Nations Global Compact in Argentina.

Readings


https://www.globalcompact.de/sites/default/files/jahr/publikation/un_global_compact_management_model.pdf

WEEK V - CSR in the Community. An examination of the role of CSR in poverty reduction. Seminar “CSR & Poverty”

Readings

WEEK VI - Responsible Consumption and Fair Trade. Circular Economy.

Readings


http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/about_us/2010_03_NRI_Full_Literature_Review.pdf

WEEK VII – READING WEEK

WEEK VIII - CSR & sustainability in Latin America. The Argentinean case. The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Process: why to measure and report the economic, social and environmental impact of the companies? Seminar “Responsible Consumption”

Readings


**WEEK IX – CSR, development & human rights. Seminar “CSR & Regulation”**

**Readings**


**WEEK X – CSR and the Environment: concepts, methodologies and obstacles.**

**Readings**


Mihalic, T. (2014) *Sustainable-responsible tourism discourse - Towards ‘responsistable’ Tourism*. University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics, Slovenia, Journal of Cleaner Production


approach, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, The University of Western Ontario, 1151 Richmond Street, London, ON N6A 5B9, Canada. pp. 100-105.


**WEEK XI – Organizational behaviour and norming CSR. CSR in the north. Comparative perspectives. Seminar “How to write an academic paper”**

**Readings**

Dembach, J.C. (2012) “Acting As If Tomorrow Matters: Accelerating the Transition to Sustainability” Chapters 2, 5, 8


**WEEK XII – Future perspectives of CSR. Seminar “The Future of CSR”**

**Readings**


Evaluation & Grading

A) Examinations, Evaluation Criteria and Requirements:

As part of the learning activity of the CSR course, students have to write 2 assignments; (i) self study introductory assignment (the “Short Paper”) and (ii) a term paper (the “Term Paper Exam”)

The Short Paper will be assessed by your seminar leader and must qualify as “approved”. If it fails, you will be given the possibility to improve your paper within the third week 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.

In addition to studying the curriculum through lectures and individual reading, students are also expected to participate in seminars (the “Seminars”). Here you will have the opportunity to work in small groups to fulfill the seminar assignments. The groups will consist of 3-5 members, and will be formed at the beginning of the course.

Grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

40% Seminar participation.
60% Term 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 which 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 and Percentage

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