



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/2017

GRA 6837 CSR, Innovation and Strategy for Sustainable Business

Programme

Free electives/minors, Master of Science in Business

Responsible for the course

Caroline D Ditlev-Simonsen, Atle Midttun

Department

Department of Law

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

3

Language of instruction

English

Introduction

Interest in and the scope of sustainable management and corporate social responsibility (CSR) have increased greatly over the past 20 years. It is now widely recognized in business, media and governments that companies should look beyond short-term profit toward a broader goal of long-term sustainable value creation.

The risk of sustainability and CSR failures is well-illustrated through many CSR-related scandals. The purpose of CSR engagement, however, is not only to reduce risk. Addressed appropriately, CSR and sustainability provide opportunities to improve day-to-day business, develop a competitive advantage, and improve reputation and brand. Sustainability and CSR are strong drivers of profitable innovation which will be a key element in this course.

The course specialization addresses how to approach CSR and sustainability issues in day-to-day business – and align these considerations with overall business strategy. Some of the issues that will be addressed are climate and environment, human rights, ethics, sustainability, corruption, supplier relations, community involvement, relevant international laws and regulations, interaction with stakeholders like government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and media, as well as reputation and branding. Innovation, implementation and communication issues related to CSR will have a central role in the course.

Learning outcome

This course is designed to provide:

- Basic knowledge of the CSR and sustainability concept from different perspectives – stakeholder theory
- Knowledge of relevant tools (UN Global Compact and GRI), laws and regulations, national and international
- Knowledge of the concept and role of CSR in the settings of employees, media, risk and reputation
- Insights into innovation and business models for turning CSR and sustainability into a value driver
- Analytical thinking and problem-solving – including dilemma training

Skills developed upon completion of the course include the abilities to:

- Develop a strategy, work plan, implementation, report and evaluation of CSR
- Identify profitable ideas for sustainability-based innovation and value creation
- Address reputation and branding from a CSR perspective
- Forge a cooperative dialogue with different stakeholders (including employees, suppliers customers, governments, media and NGOs)
- Design a communication plan – how to convey the good and bad news internally and in media

Prerequisites

All courses in the Masters programme will assume that students have fulfilled the admission requirements for the programme. In addition, courses in second, third and/or fourth semester can have specific prerequisites and will assume that students have followed normal study progression. For double degree and exchange students, please note that equivalent courses are accepted.

Compulsory reading

Book extract:

Ditlev-Simonsen. Organization and Leadership. (Book in progress), Chapter 18 Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Midttun, Atle (ed.). 2013. CSR and Beyond. Cappelen Damm Akademisk. Selected chapters

Articles:

2009. Let the Response Fit the Scandal, Tybout & Roehm. Harvard Business Review
 Midttun. 2008. Global governance and the interface with business: new institution, processes and partnership.

Other:

During the course there may be hand-outs and other material on additional topics relevant for the course and the examination.

Recommended reading**Books:**

D Chandler and WB Werther. 2014. Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility: Stakeholders, Globalization, and Sustainable Value Creation. Sage. Selected chapters

Articles:

Ditlev-Simonsen, C.D. 2010. From CSR awareness to action?. Social Responsibility Journal
 ME Porter and MR Kramer. 2011. Creating Shared Value. Harvard Business Review
 M. Friedman. 2010. The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits. The New York Times

Course outline

The course will be divided into the following eight sections:

1. Corporate stakeholder engagement (media, regulators, non-governmental organizations, governmental organizations, investors and employees)
2. CSR innovation and sustainable value creation
3. Responsible procurement and supply-chain management
4. CSR reporting tools and regulations (UN Global Compact, GRI, OECD Guidelines, ISO14001, etc.)
5. The climate challenge; business hurdles and solutions
6. Principles and development in the field of Social Responsible Investments (SRI)
7. Ethical dilemmas and corruption
8. Media training associated with success and crisis

Computer-based tools

Not applicable

Learning process and workload

A course of 3 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 80-90 hours.

The teaching will be based on lectures, cases, group work and multimedia tools.

Examination

The course grade will be based on the following activities and weights:

30 % Class Participation and activities

70 % Written Assignment

Form of assessment	Weight	Group size
Class participation	30%	
Assignment	70%	

Specific information regarding student assessment will be provided in class. This information may be relevant to requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several components of the overall assessment. This is a course with continuous assessment (several exam components) and one final exam code. Each exam component is graded using points on a scale from 0-100. The final grade for the course is based on the aggregated mark of the course components. Each component is weighted as detailed in the course description. Students who fail to participate in one/some/all exam components will get a lower grade or may fail the course. You will find detailed information about the points system and the mapping scale in the student portal @bi. Candidates may be called in for an oral hearing as a verification/control of written assignments.

Examination code(s)

GRA 68371 continuous assessment accounts for 100 % of the grade in the course GRA 6837.

Examination support materials

Not applicable

Permitted examination support materials for written examinations are detailed under examination information in the student portal @bi. The section on support materials and the use of calculators and dictionaries should be paid special attention to.

Re-sit examination

It is only possible to retake an examination when the course is next taught. The assessment in some courses is based on more than one exam code. Where this is the case, you may retake only the assessed components of one of these exam codes. All retaken examinations will incur an additional fee. Please note that you need to retake the latest version of the course with updated course literature and assessment. Please make sure that you have familiarised yourself with the latest course description.

Additional information

Honour code. Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and are values that are integral to BI's honour code system. Students are responsible for familiarising themselves with the honour code system, to which the faculty is deeply committed. Any violation of the honour code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for academic misconduct. Issues of academic integrity are taken seriously by everyone associated with the programmes at BI and are at the heart of the honour code. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honour code, please ask. The learning platform itslearning is used in the teaching of all courses at BI. All students are expected to make use of itslearning.