Advanced Academic Programs Zanvyl Kreiger School of Arts and Sciences
Johns Hopkins University
Sustainable Business AS 42061081
Spring 2019

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Email: dwatts19@jhu.edu
Office Hours:
By appointment via phone or ZOOM. Please contact the instructor by email to set up an appointment.

Course Description
This course provides an introduction to sustainable business strategies practiced by US companies. Students will examine the evolution of CSR and triple bottom line management in the context of competing stakeholder interests. Given that sustainability practices differ by sector, company and country, specific illustrations will be discussed. Attention will be placed on evolving regulatory regimes including compliance mechanisms such as certification and auditing as well as third party voluntary partnering with NGO’s. The discussion of sustainable business strategies will be approached as an ongoing policy debate that continues to be shaped at both the national and global levels.

Readings
Readings are listed in the Course Schedule below. Readings are available via the links below as well as on Johns Hopkins EReserves (ARES) link on the left menu in your Blackboard course.

Course Learning Outcomes
Knowledge Outcomes
- Describe the complex relationships across corporate, governmental and civil society in pursuit of economic growth framed by an expanded understanding of corporate social responsibility (CSR)
- Identify and evaluate existing models of regulatory regimes through government/ NGO/ corporate initiatives
- Analyze emerging models of the circular economy, sustainable business models and governance strategies
- Research policy cases of interest to the student to unravel the roles and relationships of various actors within a particular sector.
- Develop recommendations and points of intervention to support sustainable development and stewardship of the ecosystem
Assignments

• **Assignment #1: Weekly Discussion Boards and Participation (25%)**
  Five weekly discussion posts would highlight areas of competing viewpoints and issues of professional interest. Initial post would be due by Saturday (1st post required). Dialogue with classmates would be completed by Sunday (2nd post required). A final wrap-up summary of key learning points or questions to be pursued. (3rd post required by Tuesday.

  **Weeks, 1, 2, 6, 10, 14**

• **Assignment #2: Blog Postings (10%)**
  Blog posts (1) would require student to extend thinking beyond the readings and develop an original analysis of one key issue and post it in the format of a blog; Topics would be given but (3-5) additional sources would be original. This may include multi-media options, or more generally links to related materials.

  **Week 3**

• **Assignment #3: Reaction Memo (10%)**
  This is a short and concise paper written for other sustainability professionals. It will be assessed on clarity and use of concepts from the course to date. In addition to course readings, an additional 3-5 peer reviewed articles are to be included.

  **Week 4**

• **Assignment #4: Narrated PPT’s (10%)**
  Narrated PPT’s are intended to offer the opportunity to engage with colleagues in an interactive manner. This is also an opportunity to consider options for more effective communication with varied audiences. Assessment of the PPT’s will be based on content, clarity and analysis using concepts from the course.

  Students will develop two (2) Narrated PPT’s during the course. One is a stand-alone assignment (Week 9). The other one is a part of Assignment #6 (Week 14).

  Note: Discussion of the narrated PPT’s will occur in the discussion forum rather than directly on the narrated PPT site.

  **Weeks 9, 14**

• **Assignment #5: Change Maker Chats**
This assignment consists of two parts. Part I-Students will organize and participate in Change Maker Chats. These will be informal, interactive discussions with selected (early career) leaders contributing to sustainability solutions. Short introductory videos of the change makers will be available in the classroom by Week 3.

Students may sign-up for one or all four of these sessions to be held during Week 10. There will be (2 X 30 minute) evening sessions for April 3 and (2 X 30 minute) evening sessions April 4. Students will contact the “change maker” and guide the discussions. Participation will be voluntary but highly recommended!

Part II-Students will compare and contrast the approaches and insights gained from these interactive chats in the Discussion Forum. Additional information and finalized planning will be provided.

Week 10

• **Assignment #6: Mapping the System:** Choose one sector case to describe and analyze supply chain, governance setting and intervention points (15%) Develop a graphic (supply chain) and narrative that will map, describe and analyze current actions and emergent sustainability practices of either the fishing or coffee industry. Objective will be to recognize policy dilemmas but also potential for interventions.

  Student will choose three specific dilemmas to address. It is expected that a reference list of 5 additional sources will be developed. Description and diagram of graphic will be provided by instructor. Students may propose an alternative sector to the instructor.

  **Week 7 (Part 1) -Graphic Organizer – 5%**  
  **Week 8 (Part 2) – Paper- 10% (Rubric)**

• **Assignment #7: Sustainable Business Case Position Paper:** Assessments and Recommendations (30%)  
  Position paper (25%) will build on course materials to extend analysis of two of the sustainable business approaches. These will be compared/contrasted and assessed from the perspective of business, government and civil society. As environmental scientists, specific recommendations will be offered to business leaders from an ecosystem focus.

  **Week 12 (Part 1 – Graphic Organizer) – 5%**  
  **Week 13 (Part 2 – Paper) – 20% (Rubric)**  
  **Week 14 (Part 3 – Narrated PPT) – 5%**

**ADDITIONAL DATES OF NOTE**  
ZOOM class conference calls (voluntary but highly recommended)
Week 2: January 30, 2019 @ 8:00 PM -approximately 30 minute session
Week 9: March 27, 2019 @ 8:00 PM- approximately 30 minute session

Faculty Call-in Office Hours (individual consultation) 15 min. sessions
Week 4: TBA
Week 8: TBA

Webinar Week 10: Change Maker Chats: April 3 / April 4: Times/TBA

Late Policies
Deadlines are firm but in the event an issue arises, contact the instructor as early as possible. A revised deadline will be established only if known prior to the assignment deadline. Otherwise, one point will be deducted from the value of the assignment for each day that the submission is late. Please note that in the event of planned travel and related limited connectivity, assignments should be submitted in advance.

Feedback
Assessments will be provided throughout the course. Discussion posts based on timely participation and quality of post will receive initial grade after week 6; blog posts will be graded per assignment. For all other assignments, rubric will be made available with the assignment description.

GRADING POLICY

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 1 – Setting the Framework: Economic Growth and the Ecosystem

Week 1 – Introduction to the Debate
Discussion Post

• IPCC. (2018). Summary for policymakers. in: Global warming of 1.5°C. an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the


**Week Two  Globalization, Consumption and Governance**

**Discussion Post**


**Week Three  Eco-Business: Setting the Contours of the Policy Discussion**

**Blog Post**


**Module 2 – Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility**

**Week Four  Corporate Social Responsibility: an evolving concept**

**Reaction Memo**

Week Five  Global Value Chains and the Global Economy

Reading Week

• What is a Value Chain? [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9LWp9y2fMw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9LWp9y2fMw)

Module 3 – Regulatory Regimes

Week Six  Governance models: Approaches to Regulation

Discussion Post


Week Seven  Certification and Eco-labeling: Case- MSC and the Global Fishing Industry

Assignment #5 (Part 1)

• IMD Case: [https://wwz.unibas.ch/fileadmin/wwz/redaktion/Summer_School/2012/Marine_Stewards hip_Council_A__10.pdf](https://wwz.unibas.ch/fileadmin/wwz/redaktion/Summer_School/2012/Marine_Stewards hip_Council_A__10.pdf)


Week Eight  Certification and Fair Trade: Coffee Industry

Assignment #5 (Part 2)


**Module 4 – Is there a Business Case for Sustainable Business?**

**(SPRING BREAK)**

**Week Nine  Hybrid Corporation: combining value creation with values**

**Assignment #4 - Narrated PPT**


**Week Ten  B-Lab (Changemaker Chats)**

**Discussion Post/ Webinar plus Participation**

• B-Lab: [http://www.bcorporation.net/blog](http://www.bcorporation.net/blog)

• Skim [http://bftw.bthechange.com/](http://bftw.bthechange.com/)

• Skim website: [https://bimpactassessment.net/about-b-impact](https://bimpactassessment.net/about-b-impact)


• Kim, S., Karlesky, M., Myers, C., Schifeling, T., (June 17, 2016) Why companies are becoming B Corporations. *Harvard Business Review*.

**Week Eleven  Value Chain Transparency**

**Reading Week**


**Week Twelve  Business as Usual or Signs of a Paradigm Shift?**

**Assignment #6 (Part 1)**


• Ellen Macarthur Foundation (skim website)
  https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/infographic

**Module 5 – Sustainable Futures, Sustainable Development**

**Week Thirteen  Sustainable Development and the Future(s) of the Global Economy**

**Assignment #6 (Part 2)**


**Week Fourteen  Final Presentations & Discussions: Final Comments**

**Assignment #6 (Part 3)**
Narrating PPT & Discussion

Narrated PPT presentations from individual students

(Syllabus to be revised at the discretion of the instructor.)

COURSE COMMUNICATION POLICY & PROTOCOLS

Contacting the Instructor

• For questions about course content, assignments, etc. that would be of interest to other students, please post your questions on the Syllabus and Assignment Question forum.
• For other questions or to set up an appointment for office hours, contact the instructor via email. You will receive a response within 24-48 hours.
• All email messages will be sent to you via your JHU email account, so you should be in the habit of checking that account each day or you should ensure that your JHU email account forwards messages to another account of your choice.

Network Etiquette (i.e. “Netiquette”)

In this course, online discussion will be primarily take place in our online discussion board. In all textual online communication, it’s important to follow proper rules of netiquette. What is netiquette? Simply stated, it’s network etiquette – that is, the etiquette of cyberspace. And "etiquette" means the social and cultural norms of communicating with others in a proper and respectful way. In other words, netiquette is a set of rules for behaving and interacting properly online.

The Netiquette “Core Rules” are a set of general guidelines for cyberspace behavior. They probably won’t cover all situations, but they should give you some basic principles to use in communicating online.

Course Protocols

How will I know about changes to the course?

Frequently, you will find new announcements posted in the Announcements, which contain information about current course activities that you are working on and any changes to the course. Please check announcements every time that you log into your online course.

How should I communicate with others in this course?

You should communicate often with your classmates and with your instructor. The majority of communication will take place within the Discussion forums. When you have a question about an assignment or a question about the course, please contact your instructor, or post your question in the course’s “Syllabus & Assignment Question” forum.
Are there any requirements for sending e-mail messages?
When you send an e-mail message to the instructor or to another participant in the course, please observe the following guidelines:
• Include the title of the course in the subject field.
• Keep messages concise, and check spelling and grammar.
• Send longer messages as attachments.
• Sign your full name (the sender’s email is not always obvious).

Specific Technology Requirements & Skills for this Course
This course requires the use of a computer that complies with the following hardware specifications. For specifics, please see the recommendations of the Information Technology Office at Johns Hopkins.

Learning online requires some basic knowledge of computer technology. At a minimum, you need to be able to:
• Navigate in and use Blackboard; the Blackboard Student Orientation course on your “My Institution” page
• Create and save MS Word documents; see MS Word training and tutorials for PC users (all versions); Word Help for Mac users
• Find basic resources on the Internet
• Create and organize files & folders on your computer
• Send, receive, and manage email

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

General

This course adheres to all University policies described in the academic catalog. Please pay close attention to the following policies:

Students with Disabilities

Johns Hopkins University is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities should contact the coordinator listed on the Disability Accommodations page. Further information and a link to the Student Request for Accommodation form can also be found on the Disability Accommodations page.

Ethics & Plagiarism

JHU Ethics Statement: The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Report any violations you witness to the instructor.
Read and adhere to JHU’s Notice on Plagiarism.

Dropping the Course

You are responsible for understanding the university’s policies and procedures regarding withdrawing from courses found in the current catalog. You should be aware of the current deadlines according to the Academic Calendar.

Getting Help

You have a variety of methods to get help on Blackboard. Please consult the resource listed in the "Blackboard Help" link for important information. If you encounter technical difficulty in completing or submitting any online assessment, please immediately contact the designated help desk listed on the AAP online support page. Also, contact your instructor at the email address listed in the syllabus.

Copyright Policy

All course material are the property of JHU and are to be used for the student's individual academic purpose only. Any dissemination, copying, reproducing, modification, displaying, or transmitting of any course material content for any other purpose is prohibited, will be considered misconduct under the JHU Copyright Compliance Policy, and may be cause for disciplinary action. In addition, encouraging academic dishonesty or cheating by distributing information about course materials or assignments which would give an unfair advantage to others may violate AAP's Code of Conduct and the University's Student Conduct Code. Specifically, recordings, course materials, and lecture notes may not be exchanged or distributed for commercial purposes, for compensation, or for any purpose other than use by students enrolled in the class. Other distributions of such materials by students may be deemed to violate the above University policies and be subject to disciplinary action.

Code of Conduct

To better support all students, the Johns Hopkins University non-academic Student Conduct Code has been integrated and updated to include all divisions of the University. In addition, it is important to note that all AAP students are still accountable for the Code of Conduct for Advanced Academic Programs.

Title IX

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe and inclusive learning environment on our campus. I also have mandatory reporting responsibilities related to my role as a Responsible Employee under the Sexual Misconduct Policy & Procedures (which prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking), as well as the General Anti-Harassment Policy (which prohibits all types of protected status based discrimination and harassment). It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information that I learn of regarding sexual misconduct, as well as protected status based harassment and discrimination, with the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE). For a list of individuals/offices who can speak with you confidentially, please see Appendix B of the JHU Sexual Misconduct Policies and Laws.
For more information on both policies mentioned above, please see: JHU Relevant Policies, Codes, Statements and Principles. Please also note that certain faculty and other University community members also have a duty as a designated Campus Safety Authority under the Clery Act to notify campus security of certain crimes, as well as a duty under State law and University policy to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

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