

# Syllabus for SMGT 410 Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability

**NOTE:** This syllabus document contains the basic information about this course. The most current syllabus is available in the course.

## Course Description

This course seeks to understand the goals and purpose of the for-profit firm. In particular, we will explore how the firm creates value, broadly defined, by investigating the concept of strategic corporate social responsibility (Strategic CSR). Strategic CSR draws on what we know about economic exchange and human psychology to explain how markets work (or don't) and how value is added (or subtracted) across the range of the firm's stakeholders. Understanding these processes allows managers to build a strategic competitive advantage for the firm. Thus, Strategic CSR is at the center of business success in the 21st century.

## Prerequisite(s)

None

## Course Outcomes

The main objective of this course is to introduce and understand the concept of strategic CSR.

Strategic CSR is related to, but is fundamentally different from, concepts such as sustainability and business ethics. While sustainability focuses on resource utilization and ecological preservation, and business ethics seeks to construct normative prescriptions of right and wrong, strategic CSR is a comprehensive, pragmatic philosophy grounded in the day-to-day operations of the firm. As such, strategic CSR is central to the firm's value-creating activities.

That is, in a dynamic environment that is defined by the actions and decisions of the firm's broad set of stakeholders, value is optimized when stakeholders convey and enforce their evolving needs, while the firm responds to those needs. Thus, these economic and social exchanges are essentially interactions formed around the collective set of values prevalent in society at any given point in time. These values determine the decisions we all make and, as a direct result, the success or failure of for-profit firms.

Strategic CSR draws on what we know about economic exchange and human psychology to explain how markets work and how value is created. Understanding these processes allows managers to build a strategic competitive advantage for the firm. In short, understanding, adopting, and implementing strategic CSR is the source of sustainable value creation in today's business environment.

## Course Requirements/Components

The course includes quizzes, discussions, group assignments, written assignments, case studies, and a term paper, including a video pitch.

### Discussions

The **two discussion assignments** follow the same format. A question will be posed by your instructor, typically a question meant to generate varying views and responses. The intention is for you to use the new concepts you are studying this semester and make a case regarding a particular issue or question.

Each discussion assignment requires you to make one initial post and respond to two of your classmates. A rubric will be provided in the course.

### Written Assignments

Your written assignments will be evaluated based on critical thinking and mechanics. A rubric will be provided in the course.

### Term Paper: Written Paper and Video Pitch

You are responsible for a substantive paper that demonstrates your ability to apply the ideas and concepts learned in the course.

Acting in the role of Sustainability Consultant of a Fortune 500 company of your choosing, you will prepare a report to the Board of Directors that critically evaluates existing CSR practices.

Your paper should clearly demonstrate a firm understanding of each of the drivers of CSR behavior of the company based around its existing strategy and identify which of the drivers are most important for the company. Your analysis should include how the company is addressing its stakeholders and how it could do a better job. Your list of provided recommendations **must be** realistic for the company to pursue.

The written paper will be tied to a video pitch assignment. In this video, you are expected to talk about your findings in your written term paper.

You will be graded based on your critique of the company's existing CSR practices and your recommendations on how to improve them.

## Grading Policy

Assignment	Percentage	Points
Quizzes (1 percent each, top ten of twelve scores)	10	200
Discussion Assignments 1 and 2 (5 percent each)	10	200
Group Assignment 1 and 2 (7.5 percent each)	15	200
Writing Assignments 1 and 2 (5 percent each)	10	200
Case Study Analysis 1 and 2 (7.5 percent each)	15	200
Written Term Paper	30	100
Video Pitch for Term Paper	10	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1150</b>

## Grading Scale

92.5 to 100.0	A
90.0 to 92.49	A-
87.5 to 89.9	B+
82.5 to 87.49	B
80.0 to 82.49	B-
77.5 to 79.9	C+
72.5 to 77.49	C
70.0 to 72.49	C-
67.5 to 69.9	D+
62.5 to 67.49	D

60.0 to 62.49	D-
Below 60.00	F