

Course Title	:	Corporate Social Responsibility
Course Code	:	MGT253/GEB253
Proposed GE Category	:	Management and Society
No of Credits	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture-Tutorial
Teaching Hours	:	42
Places to be offered for GE	:	30
Frequency of the Offering	:	As required
Category	:	Free Elective and General Education
Prerequisites	:	Nil

### **Brief Course Description**

A range of perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), such as ownership theory and stewardship theory, which derive from various disciplines such as law, economics, political science and systems thinking, will be introduced early in the course. The concept of stakeholders will be explained, and the process of stakeholder analysis, involving the identification of the expectations and concerns of stakeholder groups, such as consumers, NGOs, activist groups, employee unions, labour movement organizations, and legislators, will be explained and illustrated, with reference to contemporary public and social issues that are directly associated with the actions of one or more business enterprises. The course will thus examine stakeholder perspectives on selected issues such as: harmful additives in food; cigarette advertising; the slimming, fitness and body image industries; ‘phishing’ and identity theft; resource depletion; air, sea and land pollution; development of underprivileged communities; child labour; and employee health and safety. Actual and potential governmental policies concerning selected public and social issues involving business will be debated. Examples of the CSR policies and practices of various local and international companies will be examined, and the course will envisage possible directions for CSR.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Weigh the claims of corporate public relations material with the concerns of a range of stakeholder groups, such as consumer and activist groups, employee unions, and NGOs, when examining a range of public and social issues involving the social and environmental performance of business enterprises.

2. Identify a number of contemporary applications of CSR, and indicate some possible future directions for CSR.
3. Understand the role of CSR as a complementary approach to that of formal legislation and regulation.
4. Adopt an informed stance on CSR as a consumer, citizen, and employee.

### **Measurement of Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will participate in in-class exercises throughout the semester, especially in the tutorial classes. These exercises will be designed to facilitate an understanding of concepts, theories and principles of CSR. They will require group discussion, case analysis and creative problem solving. Student performance on these tasks will be continuously assessed, based on the quality of ideas and analysis shared orally with the whole class by group representatives, and/or written down on handed in worksheets, along with peer review by fellow team members.
2. Toward the middle of the semester, there will be a quiz to test comprehension of the material covered in the earlier part of the semester.
3. Students will undertake a team project. This project may involve service-learning, undertaken in conjunction with the Office of Service-Learning, or alternatively it will involve analysis of a public and social issue, with reference to the activities of one or more Hong Kong based business enterprises. Based on the project, each team of students will make one oral presentation (with PowerPoint) and display their findings on a notice board. The presentation and display will be assessed on the basis of depth of analysis, collaborative team effort, clarity, and credibility.
4. The final examination will include a case study about CSR and/or a public and social issue involving business, which will test diagnostic and analytical skills. There will also be a choice of essay based questions, testing familiarity with CSR concepts addressed on the course.

### **Indicative Content**

Perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Legal and economic perspectives on CSR and ownership theory, e.g. Friedman's and Sternberg's advocacy of property rights. Views on what CSR is from systems theory and political science perspectives. CSR as charity and philanthropy; CSR as public relations; CSR as green marketing; CSR as more than this. Does CSR enhance or suppress profits? Is CSR a luxury that small and medium enterprises cannot afford?

Stakeholders and Stakeholder Analysis. Identifying market stakeholders, such as suppliers, consumers, employees, lenders, and investors. Identifying non-market

stakeholders, which can include NGOs, activist groups, educational institutions, media organizations, and legislators. Stakeholder rights and stakeholder power as constraints on the policies and actions of business enterprises, as exercised in consumer boycotts, public protests, labour strikes, etc.

Contemporary Public and Social Issues Involving Business. Defining public and social issues. Power in numbers: stakeholder movements, such as consumerism and environmentalism. Examination of stakeholder expectations regarding a variety of aspects of the social and environmental performance of business enterprises, such as: food safety and hygiene; body image in advertising and entertainment media; deceptive marketing; consumption of scarce mineral resources; environmental pollution; sudden restaurant closures leaving employees uncompensated; off-shoring, outsourcing and basic standards regarding labour rights in developing economies.

Relationships between CSR and Government Regulation Arguments about the respective roles of governments and businesses in the resolution and regulation of public and social issues involving business. Pros and cons of government regulation and of industry self-regulation. Can government regulation discourage CSR (e.g., the scheme of control for Hong Kong power generating companies)? CSR as a substitute for government regulation where legislation is weak or non-existent (e.g. the underwriting by a major property development company of wage payments to employees of sub-contractor companies). Market-based incentives for CSR, such as trading in quotas for pollutant emissions. CSR as a lever for the development of legislation.

Monitoring the Quality and Integrity of CSR. The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in performing independent audits of corporate social and environmental performance.

Socially Responsible Consumption and Career Choice. Social responsibility as a consumer lifestyle choice and as a guide for career choice. Socially responsible investing.

### **Teaching Methods/Class Activities**

Lectures will set out conceptual ideas and issues regarding CSR, and students will be expected to join in related discussions. An abundance of newspaper clippings will be made available to illustrate conceptual points and to stimulate discussion. Students will be encouraged to monitor the English and Chinese news media for public and social issues involving the conduct of business. Tutorial classes in the early part of the semester will typically involve in-class exercises in small groups based on case analysis and problem solving, with groups sharing their possible solutions with the rest of the class. Tutorial sessions during the latter part of the semester will be based on more formal case presentations by groups.

### **CSR Project and Display**

Teams of four or five students will each carry out a project. Teams will be given the

option of conducting their project by means of Service-Learning, in conjunction with the Office of Service-Learning. Alternatively, the team project will involve analysis of a public and social issue that is directly associated with the activities of one or more Hong Kong based organizations. Students will identify and suggest relevant government and/or corporate policies and actions by other stakeholders. In doing their CSR project, students may conduct interviews or surveys with key stakeholders. Each project team will give an oral presentation of their findings and recommendation, as well as displaying their materials on a notice board for exhibition.

### **Assessment**

The assessment will comprise marks based on five elements. These comprise: (a) an in-class quiz; (b) an in-class team presentation on the experience and findings of the project; (c) a written team report relating to the project; (d) participation in a series of in-class exercises; and (e) a final written examination.

In-class quiz	10%
Team in-class presentation of the team project and display	25%
Class participation and in-class exercises	25%
Final examination	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

### **Required Text**

Werther, W. B., Jr. and Chandler, D. *Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility*. Sage Publications. 2005. ISBN: 1412913721

### **Reference Texts**

Allouche, J. (Ed.) (2006), *Corporate Social Responsibility*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (In Lingnan library).

Henriques, A. and Richardson, J., (Eds.) (2004), *The Triple Bottom Line: Does it All Add Up?* London: Earthscan.

Kotler, P., and Lee, N. (2004), *Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause*. John Wiley & Sons.

Hopkins, M. (2003), *The Planetary Bargain: Corporate Social Responsibility Comes of Age*. London: Earthscan. (In Lingnan library).

Hawkins, D. E. (2006), *Corporate Social Responsibility: Balancing Tomorrow's Sustainability and Today's Profitability*. Palgrave Macmillan. (In Lingnan library).

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. *OECD Risk Awareness Tool for Multinational Enterprises in Weak Governance Zones*. OECD Publications, Paris.

Prahalad, C. and Porter, M. (2003), *Harvard Business Review on Corporate*

*Responsibility*, Harvard Business School Press.

van Tulder, R and van der Zwart, A. (2006), *International Business-Society Management: Linking Corporate Responsibility and Globalization*. London. New York: Routledge. (In Lingnan library).

**Reference Journal**

*Business and Society*. (In Lingnan library).