Corporate Social Responsibility: Defining Models and Understanding Partnerships in Social Finance (PADM-GP 2127)  ➢ “Corporate Social Innovation”

Instructor: Bulbul Gupta (bgupta@nyu.edu)

Class Date and Time: Fridays, 1-5pm

Course Duration: 5/26/2017 – 6/30/2017

Office Hours: Fridays before class 9-11:30am @ Puck 3rd floor (tentative) OR reach out by email to schedule call.

Course Location: Building: 7E12, Room 125
Location: 7 East 12th Street, New York; Room 125.

Course Description: Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an evolving practice of organizations of varying size and purpose to integrate business activities with models that produce social and environmental outcomes. The course will rigorously explore the evolution and modalities of corporate social responsibility, with particular attention to cross-sector collaboration, the utility of social finance and financial institutions relationship with corporate responsibility, impact measurement, and other relevant emergent trends. This course looks specifically at how CSR is practiced today with particular attention to how models of cross-sector partnerships have advanced the field.

Through selected academic, practitioner and current news articles, lectures, case studies, guest presentations, written assignments, and facilitated discussion students engage with relevant theory, practice, challenges, opportunities, and other trends relevant to business’ role in addressing public problems.

Course Learning Objectives: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Understand the evolution, modalities, incentives, and motivations for CSR
- Identify and analyze key components of a CSR strategy, within larger corporate strategy and C-suite/leadership considerations
- Understand and explain the role of cross-sector collaboration in CSR, particularly in the financial services industry
- Critically and carefully discuss emergent trends and practices (e.g. cross-sector partnerships, social finance) relevant to the modalities of corporate social responsibility
- Identify strategies and techniques to navigate typical management challenges and opportunities relevant to a broad range of CSR issues relevant to government, business and the non-profit sector

Course Outline: Classes will include a lecture component, facilitated discussion, brief breaks, class debate, and an occasional guest speaker. Active, consistent class participation is expected
throughout the course and there will be many opportunities in every class for students to participate. If students do not feel like they are able to participate in a class, please provide advance notice. A review of session preparatory materials is expected for each class. These materials will reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the topic and diverse interests; including academic and practitioner-friendly publications, public and private manager resources, and exposure to current and historically significant developments.

**Course Requirements:** Class will begin promptly at 1pm. Regular attendance is expected with the understanding that occasional absences may occur. Students are expected to actively and thoughtfully participate in each session’s discussion questions. The syllabus includes a list of required preparatory reading to be completed prior to class. Assignments must be completed on time as late submissions will not be accepted.

**Guest Speakers:**
Professor will reach out to contacts in the CSR and sustainable investing field to come in as guest speakers from time to time including the following as possible for the content below:
- Andrea Armeni, Transform Finance (Dakota Access Pipeline)
- Nicole Grillon, Project JUST (Fair Fashion)
- Acumen – partnership with Unilever
- Paula Luff, former HESS Oil, now sustainable investor

**Grading and Assessment:**
This course will abide by the Wagner School’s general policy guidelines on incomplete grades, academic honesty, and plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with these policies. All students are expected to pursue and meet the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Grading for the course will consist of:

**Attendance, Informed Participation and Class Contribution:** (20 percent of grade) There are two components to the grade:

- **Classroom Engagement (20 percent of grade)**

  Consistent participation in class is expected of all students. Contributions to the class should reflect a strong understanding of the readings and thoughtful questions.

  Attendance is a necessary, but insufficient contribution for a high class engagement grade.

  It’s understandable that on occasion students may not complete the readings or be able to attend class. Students should notify the instructor when they are expected to be late or miss class.

**Mid-term assignment:** *Individual 2-page Memo – Corporate Social Impact Pitch* (30% of grade)

- By session three, students are exposed to several primary modalities of CSR and various approaches to the design of CSR programs. Students will pick a company, and examine their mission statement for what kind of CSR strategy from Class 1 you think they’re practicing (1 paragraph); does their PR or CSR match it (1 paragraph); then (1 paragraph plus few bullets – second page) recommend a CSR/social impact partnership pitch for the company, acting as an advisor to the leadership of that company. This should be complementary to the company’s strategy. Students will be expected to ‘make the business case’ by using appropriate metrics like costs, new partner values, risk mitigation, etc.
Students will present this strategy in a 2-minute pitch presentation to the class; followed by a 2-page written memo describing the strategy uploaded in Classes.

The class will vote on which presentation and new partnership idea should be funded/support that fits that company best.

Additional information and guidance will be provided in class.

Final assignment: **Team Partnership Presentation and Short Memo** (50% of grade)

- Students will self-select or be placed into teams to design a multi-stakeholder partnership engaging a CSR pitch: a Corporate, an NGO, Government, Impact Investor, Intermediary, etc.

- Students will be expected to jointly present for 10 minutes in class. The presentation should include pros and cons, considerations, costs, etc for each of different players.

- Students will also submit a 2-page memo individually on how they arrived at the decision for their own organization, challenges that they faced and issues that they collectively agreed upon, what readings or resources they pulled ideas from, cost considerations, etc.

- Class participation counts separately from team presentation grade

- Additional information will be provided in class.

**Expectations:**

- Late Papers:
- Syllabus as Contract
- Groundrules below
- Format/grammar, etc.
- Critical thinking
- Respect is a two-way street
- LinkedIn policy

**Academic Integrity:** As permitted under New York University by-laws and disciplinary procedures, the faculty of the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service adopts procedures for informal resolution of complaints and for cases of formal student discipline. The procedures described in the [Academic Oath](#).
Groundrules:
- See something, say something
- Tolerance, practice what you preach. Open ended questions. NYU Bias Hotline if needed
- Need help? Access the Wellness Center – don’t wait.
- Writing Center as needed – great resource
- Moses Center for Students with Disabilities.

Please Remember These Safety Tips:
- Be aware of your surroundings, especially when walking alone.
- Using a smartphone or other device, especially with ear buds, can be distracting and may make you a vulnerable target for an assailant.
- Trust your instincts. If you feel that you are being followed or may be in danger, seek out others - a store, or an open NYU facility that has Security Officers posted.
- If you are a victim of a crime, call 911 and then report it to the Department of Public Safety immediately at (212) 998-2222.
- NYU's Student Health Center, Wellness Exchange, and Sexual Misconduct Prevention, Assistance, Counseling & Education, all have services to assist and support victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct.

Students with Disabilities: New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. It is the University's policy that no qualified student with a disability be excluded from participating in any University program or activity, denied the benefits of any University program or activity, or otherwise subjected to discrimination with regard to any University program or activity. More on the Disability Policy can be found here.
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Detailed Class Descriptions: The following section describes each session’s core components and the materials required to prepare for class discussion.

Class 1: May 26, 2017
Evolution, Intentions, Incentives for a Path Forward

- Discuss learning objectives and expectations for the course
- Detailed review of course syllabus and assignments
- Understanding the changes in language of CSR – from pure risk mitigation and compliance to innovation and purpose-driven orientations
- Review corporate social responsibility’s history, evolution, intentions, and incentives – in order to understand its motivations and potential paths forward
  a. when is it used to procure a license to operate in a country, region, or local community?
  b. When is it used for blue-washing, green-washing, now “impact-washing” the company’s corporate practices?
- Review pushback from pro-CSR to anti-CSR, shareholder primacy, as well as what corporations can learn from emerging markets, non-profits, and policymakers

Required Class Preparation Materials:

- C.K. Prahalad, Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid, Chapter 1: http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/the-fortune-at-the-bottom-of-the-pyramid-eradicating-poverty-through-profits/
- Benefit Corporation Impact Assessment Case Studies, read one (Etsy, Patagonia, Ben & Jerrys) - http://www.bimpactassessment.net/

OPTIONAL:

- SSIR, Roger Martin, Sally Osberg – Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_entrepreneurship_the_case_for_definition
Submit company name for midterm CSR pitch presentation & memo; and start to propose team members & company for final assignment

Critically examine what companies say in Mission Statements against their CSR strategies, core business approaches, spending, hiring practices, etc. → does it align? Does it seem genuine?

Discuss the design, implementation and evaluation of CSR programs – where does it fit?

Explore how public movements, policy, and international agreements influence key modalities of CSR – especially in CPG, apparel, extractives (often largest dichotomy in sourcing and extractive practices vs livelihoods of those they source from)

What evidence does one have to examine to see if a company is talking the talk vs walking the walk?

Guest Speaker (confirmed): Paula Luff, former Executive Director, Hess Oil Foundation; former Pfizer Foundation; now sustainable finance investor

Required Class Preparation Materials:


OPTIONAL:

- Chobani (BCorp): http://www.hbs.edu/faculty/Pages/item.aspx?num=43842


NOTE: A review of pages 16-40 is adequate


GAP Inc. http://www.gapincsustainability.com/
Finding Purpose: Engaging Employees as a Core Asset

- Review common managerial and leadership problems relevant to CSR
- How does a company value its core asset – its people?
- Explore Volunteer Engagement v. Skills Based Volunteering v. Core Business Engagement for Employees (designing products & services differently)
- Diversity & Inclusion – what prevents companies in the West from being more diverse in their makeup, and inclusive in participation of voices, perspectives?
  - How do we drive towards improved D&I on Boards, C-Suite, Managers?
  - Apprenticeships, Returnships, Externships…
- Distributed teams – best practices for employee engagement?
- How do we prove ROI for hiring more diverse teams, improving management, improving employee engagement?

Guest Speaker (invited): Natalie Grillon, Project JUST

Class Preparation Materials:


- LRN – Dov Seidman, Principle Prophet: [http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2091589_2092033_2101686,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2091589_2092033_2101686,00.html)


OPTIONAL:


- Kim Scott, Change Management: [http://firstround.com/review/warning-this-is-not-your-grandfathers-talent-planning/](http://firstround.com/review/warning-this-is-not-your-grandfathers-talent-planning/)

- Leadership is a Conversation: [https://hbr.org/2012/06/leadership-is-a-conversation](https://hbr.org/2012/06/leadership-is-a-conversation)

People, Planet, Profit for Sustainability & Social Impact

- Introduction to social finance and its connection to financial institutions and CSR.
- Engage in discourse relevant to the financial significance of CSR programming: SASB – how to read a 10K disclosure statement for corporate materiality
- Explore the spectrum of CSR measure what CSR measurement entails, and discussing existing opportunities and challenges in measurement
- Review reputable and frequently used methods and tools: Ceres - how to incorporate KPIs to measure what matters re sustainability from boardroom to copy room to ensure it’s managed

*Guest Speaker (invited): Andrea Armeni, Transform Finance*

**Required Class Preparation Materials:**

  - Dakota Access Pipeline, Wells Fargo CSR - [https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/corporate-responsibility/dakota-access-pipeline/](https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/corporate-responsibility/dakota-access-pipeline/)
  - 17 Banks that fund the DAPL: [http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/how-to-contact-the-17-banks-funding-the-dakota-access-pipeline-20160929](http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/how-to-contact-the-17-banks-funding-the-dakota-access-pipeline-20160929)
  - American Sustainable Business Council
  OR
  - Unilever in Vietnam: The “Perfect Village” Initiative - [https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/product/IN1167-PDF-ENG](https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/product/IN1167-PDF-ENG)
  - NOTE: Familiarity with the key structure and components of the CSR report is sufficient. The entire report does not need to be read.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how companies are reporting against these goals. Links: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300)
- B-Corp companies and B-Corp assessments - example assessment & case study from the website: [http://bimpactassessment.net/case-studies/ruth-muiruri](http://bimpactassessment.net/case-studies/ruth-muiruri)
OPTIONAL:
Partnerships: Collaborate or Die

- Discuss the trends and implications of cross-sector partnerships, particularly business-NGO relationships for the future of the non-profit sector
- Review taxonomies and typologies of government, business, non-profit sector partnerships
- Discuss the value proposition, public issues, and increasing relevance of partnerships: when to partner, and when NOT to partner? What makes a good partner for your work?
- How to speak the language of each other’s sector?
- Guest presentation: TBD

Required Class Preparation Materials:


- Peter Singer, Effective Altruism: [https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism](https://www.ted.com/talks/peter_singer_the_why_and_how_of_effective_altruism)


Optional:


- Bryson, J., Crosby B., & Stone, M. *Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Needed and Challenging*. Public Administration Review. 75(5), 647-663. NOTE: Please only review the appendix (page 17)

- BCtA has an overview on companies working with small holder farmers and financing for them. Details are: [http://www.businesscalltoaction.org/sites/default/files/resources/SmallholderFarmingAndFinanceReport_0.pdf](http://www.businesscalltoaction.org/sites/default/files/resources/SmallholderFarmingAndFinanceReport_0.pdf)

Class 6 - LAST: June 30, 2017

**FINAL TEAM PRESENTATIONS OF BUSINESS CASE FOR CSR**

**Next Generation Partnerships for CSR**

- Explore the role of thought leadership and convening in influencing the CSR agenda for public and private organizations
- Baking innovation & social responsibility into social models: the case for diversity & inclusion, and leadership planning
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of initiatives that assemble public and private interests.
- Identify and analyze local, state, national, and international initiatives to advance CSR
- Explore the next frontier for social finance, cross-sector partnerships, and corporate responsibility
- Class evaluation
- Guest Speaker TBD

**Required Class Preparation Materials:**

  - A review of pages 5-38 is adequate.
- 1% Pledge – Salesforce model – new generation of tech companies modeling after [http://pledge1percent.org/overview.html](http://pledge1percent.org/overview.html)
  - www.box.org

**OPTIONAL:**

OTHER SUGGESTED FUTURE CSR READINGS:

CSR:


  NOTE: The Methodological: Technical Aspects section is not necessary to review.


  NOTE: A review of pages 2-37 is sufficient.


  NOTE: A review of pages 74-86 is adequate


- RobecoSAM. (2016). DJSI 2016 review results [PowerPoint Slides]

Impact Investing Resources:

  - NOTE: Please prioritize familiarizing yourself with the “How it Works” section.
  NOTE: A review of lllpages 2-19 is sufficient.
  Note: Please review Executive Summary, Chapter 4 and 5 from the report.