



**NYU**

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

## **Corporate Social Responsibility: Defining Models and Understanding Partnerships**

**Spring 2022 PADM-GP 2127**

### **Course Information**

**Instructor:** Neil Britto (neil.britto@nyu.edu)

**Class Date and Time:** Tuesdays, 6:45pm – 8:25pm

**Course Location:** The Global Center (Room 288)

**Course Duration:** 01/26/2022 – 05/04/2022

**Office Hours:** By appointment

### **Course Description**

The course will rigorously explore the evolution and modalities of corporate social responsibility (CSR), with attention to cross-sector partnerships, the utility of social finance and its relationship with corporate responsibility, and other relevant trends. This course examines how CSR is currently practiced with consideration for interaction with government and the non-profit sector.

Through selected academic, practitioner and current news articles, lectures, case studies, guest presentations, written assignments, and facilitated discussion students will engage with relevant theory, and practice to better understand business' role in addressing public problems.

### **Course Learning Objectives (CLO)**

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- ❑ CLO 1 - Identify and analyze key components of an organization's CSR strategy
- ❑ CLO 2 - Articulate the role of cross-sector collaboration and partnerships in CSR
- ❑ CLO 3 - Critically discuss emergent trends and practices to the modalities of CSR
- ❑ CLO 4 - Understand typical management challenges and opportunities relevant to a broad range of CSR issues involving government, business and the non-profit sector

## Course Outline

Classes will include a lecture component, a brief break and facilitated discussion. Active, consistent class participation is encouraged throughout the course and there will be many opportunities in every class for students to participate. If students are unable 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 consideration for current events.

## Course Requirements

Class will begin promptly at 6:45pm. 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.

## Use of NYU Classes

Announcements, resources, and assignments will be delivered through the NYU Classes site. Modifications to assignments, readings, due dates, and other aspects of the course will be provided with advance notice as soon as possible through the course website.

## Student Support Resources

NYU offers many [quantitative](#) and [writing](#) resources as well as [skills workshops](#). The library offers a variety of [data services](#) to students.

## Grading Scale and Rubric

Students will receive grades according to the following scale:

*A = 4.0 points*

*A- = 3.7 points*

*B+ = 3.3 points*

*B = 3.0 points*

*B- = 2.7 points*

*C+ = 2.3 points*

*C = 2.0 points*

*C- = 1.7 points*

*(fail) = 0.0 points*

## Grading Criteria

Student grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:

(A) *Excellent*: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.

(A-) *Very good*: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.

(B+) *Good*: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. This is the graduate student grade that indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives of the course.

(B) *Adequate*: Competent work for a graduate student even though some weaknesses are evident. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but shows some indication that understanding of some important issues is less than complete. Methodological or analytical approaches used are adequate but student has not been thorough or has shown other weaknesses or limitations.

(B-) *Borderline*: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate. Overall performance, if consistent in graduate courses, would not suffice to sustain graduate status in “good standing.”

(C/-/+) *Deficient*: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.

(F) *Fail*: Work fails to meet even minimal expectations for course credit for a graduate student. Performance has been consistently weak in methodology and understanding, with serious limits in many areas. Weaknesses or limits are pervasive.

## Grading and Assessment

This course will abide by NYU Wagner’s general policy guidelines on incomplete grades, academic honesty, and plagiarism. Academic integrity is a vital component of the course and graduate program. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [NYU Wagner’s Academic Code](#). All NYU Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](#). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations. 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 Contributions: (20 percent of grade)**
  - o There are two components to the grade:
    - **Class Engagement (15 percent of grade)**
      - Consistent participation in class is expected of all students.

- Contributions to the class should reflect awareness of the readings and thoughtfulness.
- Attendance is a necessary but insufficient for an above average classroom engagement grade.
- Students should notify the instructor when they are expected to miss class.
- **Written Reflection on Discourse and Practice (15 percent of grade)**
  - Students should reference at least 7 readings from the semester to address a predictive question that reflects achievement of the course learning objectives.
  - The written reflection is not a formal essay, but rather thoughtful communication on the readings that reflect personal insights informed by the course material.
  - Sample Questions:
    - What distinguishes the future of CSR in X industry from today's practices?
    - What are the prospects and perils for cross-sector collaboration as a relied upon tool for CSR?
    - What is the future of government engagement in company's CSR practices?
    - What is the future of non-profit sector engagement in company's CSR practices?
  - Alternative questions can be proposed by the student subject to their approval.
  - Additional information and guidance will be provided in class.
- **Mid-term assignment: Industry Considerations: Strategy Identification and Justification (30 percent of overall grade)**
  - By session eight, students are exposed to several primary modalities of CSR and various approaches to the design of CSR programs.
  - The assignment can be completed in teams of two OR individually.
  - In a 5-7 page double spaced essay, students will explore the following question:
  - *What are the best strategies for companies in X industry to address relevant public problems?*
  - Students can choose any industry of interest. Essays should thoughtfully justify their answers, consider and evaluate counterpoints, comment on the role of partnerships, reference examples, highlight conditions that may influence the conclusion, and comment on how the strategy supports the management of organizational risks and value creation.
  - The assignment should be completed in groups of 2-3 students
  - Additional information and guidance will be provided in class.

- **Final assignment: *Strategy Analysis and Recommendation Memo* (40 percent of overall grade)**
  - Students will select a publicly traded corporation, analyze their existing CSR strategy, and make recommendations for improvement in the form of a properly cited memo. The analysis should reflect knowledge of lecture content, class discussions, and readings. The paper should identify key strategies, articulate challenges and opportunities, demonstrate comprehension of company's approach, and recommend improvements and refinements to the strategy.
  - Students must submit the company they wish to evaluate in advance. Only one student can choose a company.
  - The 7-10 double-spaced submission must meet the standards expected of thoughtful graduate students: a well-reasoned analysis, systematically organized, methodologically sophisticated, and reader-friendly structure is recommended.
  - Additional information will be provided in class.

## 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](#).

## 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](#).

## Course Overview

<u>Session #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Session Title</u>
1	January 26 <sup>th</sup> 2022	<b>The Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility: Philanthropy to Sustainability</b>
2	February 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2022	<b>The Current Landscape: An Introduction to CSR Modalities, Discourse, &amp; Strategies</b>
3	February 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>The Importance of Context: Industry, Geographic, and Political Considerations for Practice</b>
4	February 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>Operational Realities and Evolving Expectations: Challenges and Limitations to Corporate Social Responsibility</b>
5	February 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2022	<b>An Introduction to Cross-sector Partnerships</b>

6	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2022	<b>The Financial Services Industry and CSR: From Traditional Philanthropy to Social Finance</b>
7	March 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>The Concept, Practice, and Proliferation of Social Finance</b>
8	March 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>CSR Operations in Practice: Functions, Metrics, Evaluation and Quantification Efforts</b> Midterm assignment due on March 26 at 9am EST
9	March 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2022	<b>Indicating Impact: Analytical and Reporting Practices</b>
10	March 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>Public Sector Perspectives and Engagement</b> Company selection for final assignment due
11	April 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>Management Experiences</b>
12	April 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>Non-profit Sector Perspectives and Engagement</b>
13	April 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>The Future of Corporate Responsibility and Cross-sector Partnerships</b> Written Reflections Due
14	April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	<b>Advance Thinking and Practice: Next Steps for the Field</b> Final Assignment Due

## Detailed Class Descriptions

The following section describes each session's core components and the materials required to prepare for class discussion.

### Class 1

#### **The Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility: Philanthropy to Sustainability**

- Detailed review of course syllabus, assignments, learning objectives and expectations
- Articulate personal learning objectives and discuss initial impressions of CSR □ Review corporate social responsibility's recent history, evolution, and related concepts

#### **Class Preparation Materials:**

- Latapí Agudelo, M.A., Jóhannsdóttir, L. & Davídsdóttir, B. *A literature review of the history and evolution of corporate social responsibility*. Int J Corporate Soc Responsibility (2019) 4: 1. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-018-0039-y>

## Class 2

### The Current Landscape: An Introduction to CSR Modalities, Discourse, & Strategies

- Analyze and identify the case for CSR for different types of organizations
- Understand the spectrum of programming and strategies relevant to corporate social responsibility
- Engage with relevant frameworks and apply them to case examples of CSR

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. Rangan, K., Chase, L. A., & Karim, S. (2012). [Why every company needs a CSR strategy and how to build it](#) (Working Paper No. 12-088). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.
2. [BSR/GlobeScan. \(2019\). The state of sustainable business 2019 \(Rep.\)](#).
3. Maon, Lindgreen, and Swaen. (2009). [Designing and Implementing Corporate Social Responsibility: An Integrative Framework Grounded in Theory and Practice](#). Journal of Business Ethics (2009) 87:71–89.
4. BCG / MIT Sloan Management Review (2017). [Corporate Sustainability at a Crossroads](#). MIT Sloan Management Review.
5. Andrew Winston (2019). [The Top Sustainability Stories of 2019](#). Harvard Business Review
6. Kramer, M. R., & Porter, M. (2011). [Creating shared value](#). Harvard Business Review, 89(1/2), 62-77.

## Class 3

### The Importance of Context: Industry, Geographic, and Political Considerations for Practice

- Investigate how CSR programming differs across issue areas and industries
- Review relevant factors for CSR in local, state, regional, national and international contexts and assess the implications for management
- Explore how public policy and international agreements influence key modalities of CSR

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. **Case Study:** [Purchase Required] Toffel, Michael., Chatterji, Aaron., & Kelley, Julia. [CEO Activism \(A\)](#). Harvard Business School Publishing.
2. Matten, D. & Moon, J. (2008). ["Implicit and Explicit CSR: A Conceptual Framework for Comparative Understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility."](#) Academy of Management Review, 33(2), 404-424.
3. [SASB Industry Classification](#) . A useful taxonomy of industries
4. [Current SASB Industry Standards](#) . Download standards for at least two industries of personal interest or that you are considering for your mid-term assignment and compare metrics

5. [SASB Materiality Map](#) . *A useful tool for comparing industry metrics*
6. Gjølborg, M. (2009). [Measuring the immeasurable?: Constructing an index of CSR practices and CSR performance in 20 countries](#). *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 25(1), 10-22.
  - a. NOTE: The *Methodological: Technical Aspects* section is not necessary to review.

## Class 4

### **Operational Realities and Evolving Expectations: Challenges and Limitations to Corporate Social Responsibility**

- Review critiques of corporate social responsibility
- Discuss the types of common organization problems and challenges to CSR
- Identify and discuss micro and macro factors that influence an organization's ability to design and implement a CSR program

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. Friedman, M. (1970). [The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase its Profits](#). *The New York Times Magazine*. 1970.
2. Karnani, A. (2010). [The case against corporate social responsibility](#). *The Wall Street Journal*, 23, 1-5.
3. Beschorner, T. (2013). [Creating shared value: The one-trick pony approach](#). *Business Ethics Journal Review*, 1(17), 106-112.
4. Rangan, V. K., Chase, L., & Karim, S. (2015). [The truth about CSR](#). *Harvard Business Review*, 93(1/2), 40-49.
5. Rim, Hyejoon. (2018). [Skepticism Towards CSR: A Cross-Cultural Perspective](#). *Public Relations Journal*, 11(4).

## Class 5

### **An Introduction to Cross-sector Partnerships**

- Review taxonomies and typologies of government, business, non-profit sector partnerships
- Discuss management practices relevant to cross-sector partnership □ Review opportunities and challenges for cross-sector collaboration

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. **Case Study:** The Intersector Project. [P-TECH Case Study](#). 2014., Kamenetz, A. (2016). , [Turmoil behind the scenes at a nationally lauded high school](#). *NPR*
2. Gray, B., & Stites, J.P. 2013. [Sustainability through partnerships: Capitalizing on collaboration](#) (Rep.). Network for Business Sustainability
  - a. NOTE: A review of Chapter 2 and 3 is adequate



3. Bryson, J., Crosby B., & Stone, M. [\*Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Needed and Challenging\*](#) . *Public Administration Review*. 75(5), 647-663.
  - a. NOTE: A review of the appendix (page 17) is adequate

## **Class 6**

### **The Financial Services Industry and CSR: From Traditional Philanthropy to Social Finance**

- Review historical practices and current trends of the financial services industry and foundations relevant to CSR
- Discuss how cross-sector partnerships have been used through social finance strategies
- Introduction to specific applications of social finance relevant to corporate social responsibility.

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. **Case Study:** Citigroup. (2015). [\*2015 Citi global citizenship report\*](#) (Rep.). Citigroup.  
NOTE: Familiarity with the key structure and components of the CSR report is essential.
2. Hughes, J., & Scherer, J. (2014). [\*Foundations for social impact bonds: How and why philanthropy is catalyzing the development of a new market\*](#). Social Finance.
  - a. Note: Please prioritize pages 16-40 of the report.
3. BSR. (2012). [\*Trends in ESG integration in investments\*](#). BSR.

## **Class 7**

### **The Concept, Practice and Proliferation of Responsible Investment and Social Finance**

- Preliminary class evaluation
- Introduction to the concept of social finance, examples, and its connection to CSR.
- An overview of models, metrics, strategies and management practices relevant to social finance.

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. **Case Study:** Third Sector Capital Partners. (2013). [\*Preparing for a Pay for Success Opportunity\*](#). *Third Sector Capital Partners*.
2. Social Finance, Bank of America Merrill Lynch. (2014). [\*Pay-for-success financing playbook\*](#) (Rep.). Nonprofit Finance Fund.
3. Pluess, J. D., Govan, S., & Pelaez, P. (2015). [\*Conditions for scaling investment in social finance\*](#) (Rep.). BSR.
4. Caplan, L., Griswold, J.S., & Jarvis, W.F. (2013). [\*From SRI to ESG: The changing world of responsible investing\*](#) (Rep.)

## Class 8

### **CSR Operations in Practice: Functions, Metrics, Evaluation and Quantification Efforts**

- Discuss recent trends in CSR operations measurement, relevant techniques and standards.
- Explore the opportunities and challenges with measurement and quantification of CSR.

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. Saltuk, Y., & Idrissi, A. E. (2015). [Impact assessment in practice](#) (Rep.). Social Finance, J.P. Morgan.
2. Wood, D. J. (2010). [Measuring corporate social performance: A review](#). *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 50-84
3. Lemon, K. N., Roberts, J. H., Raghubir, P., & Winer, R. S. (2011). [Measuring the effects of corporate social responsibility](#). *Director Notes*, 3(7). The Conference Board.

## Class 9

### **Indicating Impact II: Rankings and Reporting Non-Financial Performance**

- An introduction to relevant measurement and reporting initiatives
- Review reputable and frequently used methods and tools
- Discuss the limitations and the next frontier for measurement methodology

#### Class Preparation Materials:

1. **Case study:** Battilana, J. and Norris, M. (2015). [The Sustainability Accounting Standards Board](#). Harvard Business School Publishing.
2. Lydenberg, S., Rogers, J., & Wood, D. (2010). [From transparency to performance: Industry-based sustainability reporting on key issues](#) (Rep.). Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations.
  - a. NOTE: A review of pages 2-37 is sufficient.
3. Dunstan., A. (2016). [Triangles, numbers, and narratives: A proposal for the future of sustainability reporting](#) (Rep.). San Francisco, CA: BSR.
4. RobecoSAM. (2016). [DJSI 2016 review results](#) [PowerPoint Slides]

## Class 10

### **Public Sector Perspectives and Engagement**

- Explore the factors that influence public sector engagement with CSR
- Explore how public policy and international agreements influence key modalities of CSR

- Examine how city and national governments interact with industry and company specific CSR programs.

Class Preparation Materials:

- **Case Study:** [Purchase Required] [Parks and Partnership in New York City: The Spectrum of Engagement](#). Harvard Kennedy School.
- Moon, J., Kang, N., & Gond, J. (2010). [Corporate social responsibility and government](#). *Oxford Handbooks Online*.
- Nelson, J. (2008). [CSR and public policy: New forms of engagement between business and government](#) (Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative. Working paper No. 45). Cambridge, MA: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.
- Peters, A., & Röß, D. (2010). [The role of governments in promoting corporate responsibility and private sector engagement in development](#) (Rep.). Bertelsmann Stiftung & United Nations Global Compact.
  - NOTE: A review of pages 16-40 is adequate ○

## Class 11

### Management Experiences in Corporate Social Responsibility and Cross-sector Partnerships

- **Guest Presentation: Rachel Alkon**– *Management Realities in Corporate Social Responsibility*
- Discuss typical processes, protocols, opportunities and challenges
- Discuss the design, implementation and evaluation of CSR programs □ Review common managerial and leadership problems relevant to CSR Class Preparation Materials:
- Maon, F., Lindgreen, A., & Swaen, V. (2008). [Designing and implementing corporate social responsibility: An integrative framework grounded in theory and practice](#). *Journal of Business Ethics*, 87(S1), 71-89.

NOTE: A review of pages 74-86 is adequate

## Class 12

### Non-Profit Sector Perspectives and Engagement

- Explore the different mechanisms influential on non-profit sector involvement in CSR
- Discuss the implications of cross-sector partnerships, particularly business NGO relationships for the future of the non-profit sector
- Discuss management practices within the non-profit sector for working with companies

Class Preparation Materials:

- **Case study:** [Purchase Required] Brownlee II, Richard E. (2014). [World Wildlife Fund and The Coca-Cola Company: A Global Partnership for Freshwater Conservation](#) . Harvard Business School Publishing.

- Seitanidi, M. & Crane, A. (2009). [Implementing CSR Through Partnerships: Understanding the Selection, Design and Institutionalization of Nonprofit-Business Partnerships](#)
- Moon, J., & Vogel, D. (2009). [Corporate social responsibility, government, and civil society](#). *Oxford Handbooks Online*.

## **Class 13**

### **The Future of Corporate Responsibility and Cross-sector Partnerships**

- Explore the role of thought leadership and convening in influencing the CSR agenda for public and private organizations
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of initiatives that assemble public and private interests.
- Identify and analyze local, state, national, and international initiatives influencing CSR ☐  
Discuss future possibilities for social finance, cross-sector partnerships, and CSR

#### **Class Preparation Materials:**

- **Case Study:** *[Purchase May Be Required]* Smith, Craig. & McCormick, Erin. (2017) [Uber and the Ethics of Sharing: Exploring The Societal Promises and Responsibilities of The Sharing Economy](#). INSEAD.
- The Global Impact Investing Network. (2016). [Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of Impact Investing](#). GIIN.
- Torres-Rahman, Z., Baxter, G., Rivera, A., & Nelson, J. (2015). [Business and the United Nations: Working together towards the sustainable development goals: A framework for action](#) (Rep.). SDG Fund, Harvard Kennedy School CSR Initiative and Inspiris Limited ☐  
A review of pages 5-38 is adequate.

## **Class 14**

### **Advance Thinking and Practice: Next Steps for the Field**

- Review of learning objectives
- Discuss the prospects and perils for cross-sector partnerships in public problem solving