



NYU

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

PADM-GP 2127

**Corporate Social Responsibility:
Defining Models and Understanding Partnerships
Spring 2023**

Course Information

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

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

Course Location: Tisch Hall, Room LC11

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.

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

F (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:

- **Component A: Class Attendance and Engagement (10% of overall 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.

- **Component B: Weekly Discussion Leadership (15% of overall grade)**
 - **Discussion prompts submitted by 7pm Tuesday (the night before class)**
 - Each week a select group of students will submit three discussion prompts 24 hours before class and offer concise written summaries of the readings

- The 2-3 individuals signed up for the weekly discussion should collaborate to complete the written summary (one summary per week)
- This will inform a portion of the class and students should be prepared to present their ideas

- **Component C: Reading Application and Industry Reflections (15% of overall grade)**
 - **Due 4pm EST before class on the respective week**
 - Submit 1-2 paragraph response or analysis in response to the weekly discussion question suited to prepare you for the midterm and final assignment

- **Component D: Mid-term assignment: *Industry Considerations: Strategy Identification and Justification* (25% percent of overall grade)**
 - **Due March 27th at 9am EST**
 - Students will submit a paper arguing for the best strategies for companies from X industry to address the industry's most relevant public problems

- **Component E: Final assignment: *Company Analysis and Recommendation Memo* (35% percent of overall grade)**
 - **Due May 5th, 2023 at 9pm EST**
 - 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.

Course Overview

<u>Session #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Session Title</u>
1	January 25th, 2023	The Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility: Philanthropy to Sustainability
2	February 1st, 2023	The Current Landscape: An Introduction to CSR Modalities, Discourse, & Strategies
3	February 8th, 2023 * NOTE: Class may be held on Zoom and will be confirmed one week in advance	The Importance of Context: Industry, Geographic, and Political Considerations for Practice
4	February 15th, 2023	Operational Realities and Evolving Expectations: Challenges and Limitations to Corporate Social Responsibility
5	February 22nd, 2023	An Introduction to Cross-sector Partnerships
6	March 1st, 2023	CSR Operations in Practice: Functions, Metrics, Evaluation and Quantification Efforts
7	March 8th, 2023	Indicating Impact: Analytical and Reporting Practices
8	March 22nd, 2023	The Financial Services Industry and CSR: From Traditional Philanthropy to Social Finance
9	March 29th, 2023	The Concept, Practice, and Proliferation of Social Finance
10	April 5 th , 2023	Public Sector Perspectives and Engagement
11	April 12 th , 2023	Management Experiences
12	April 19 th , 2023	Non-profit Sector Perspectives and Engagement
13	April 26 th , 2023	The Future of Corporate Responsibility and Cross-sector Partnerships
14	May 3rd, 2023	Advance Thinking and Practice: Next Steps for the Field

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](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-018-0039-y). 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. Siltaloppi, J., Rajala, R. & Hietala, H. Integrating CSR with Business Strategy: A Tension Management Perspective. *J Bus Ethics* 174, 507–527 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04569-3>
3. [BSR: Five Step Approach to Stakeholder Engagement](#)
4. [GlobeScan / SustainAbility Survey: 2022 Sustainability Leadership](#)
5. McKinsey & Company: [Organizing for sustainability success: Where, and how, leaders can start](#) (2021)
6. Andrew Winston (2022). [2022: A Tumultuous Year in ESG and Sustainability](#). *Harvard Business Review*

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. [SASB Industry Classification](#). *A useful taxonomy of industries*
3. [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*
4. [SASB Materiality Map](#). *A useful tool for comparing industry metrics*

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. Siltaloppi, J., Rajala, R. & Hietala, H. [Integrating CSR with Business Strategy: A Tension Management Perspective](#). *J Bus Ethics* 174, 507–527 (2021).
4. Beschorner, T. (2013). [Creating shared value: The one-trick pony approach](#). *Business Ethics Journal Review*, 1(17), 106-112.
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. The Intersector Project. [Intersector Toolkit](#).
3. 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
4. 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

CSR Operations in Practice: Functions, Metrics, and Evaluation Efforts

- Explore the purpose and practice of the sustainability function
- 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. Strategy & Business. [Positioning your chief sustainability officer for success](#) (2022)
2. [What a Mature CSR Team Looks Like](#). *Harvard Business Review*. (2022)
3. McKinsey & Company. [Organizing for sustainability success: Where, and how, leaders can start](#) (2021)
4. Tim Rogmans and Karim El-Jisr. [Designing Your Company's Sustainability Report](#). *Harvard Business Review*. (2022)
5. Saltuk, Y., & Idrissi, A. E. (2015). [Impact assessment in practice](#) (Rep.). Social Finance, J.P. Morgan.

Class 7

Indicating Impact: 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. Diez-Cañamero, B.; Bishara, T.; Otegi-Olaso, J.R.; Minguez, R.; Fernández, J.M. [*Measurement of Corporate Social Responsibility: A Review of Corporate Sustainability Indexes, Rankings and Ratings*](#). Sustainability 2020, 12, 2153. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12052153>
3. Dunstan., A. (2016). [*Triangles, numbers, and narratives: A proposal for the future of sustainability reporting*](#) (Rep.). San Francisco, CA: BSR.

Class 8

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.) and [*2021 Citi ESG Report*](#).

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 9

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 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.
- Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship [The State of Corporate Citizenship - 2022](#)

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

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner's Academic Code](#). All 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 to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, you should consult with me.

Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Student Accessibility

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\) website](#) and click the "Get Started" button. You can also call or email CSD (212-998-4980 or mosecsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

NYU's Wellness Exchange

[NYU's Wellness Exchange](#) has extensive student health and mental health resources. A private hotline (212-443-9999) is available 24/7 that connects students with a professional who can help them address day-to-day challenges as well as other health-related concerns.