



FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER
UNIVERSITÄT
ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG

PHILOSOPHISCHE FAKULTÄT
UND FACHBEREICH THEOLOGIE

Institute of Economics and Business

Prof. Dr. Matthias Fifka, Chair for
Strategic and Values Oriented
Management

Kochstr. 4 (17), 91054 Erlangen
Tel.: +49 (0)9131/85-22376
Fax.: +49 (0)9131/85-22060

Master Program Development Economics and International Studies

Developmental Corporate Social Responsibility

Winter Term 2023/24

CONTACT

Milena Störmer: milena.m.stoermer@fau.de

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In a time characterized by unrestricted and unregulated markets, complex and intertwined supply chains, widespread and systematic human rights violations, the pressing issues of climate change and environmental degradation, as well as prevalent corruption, confidence in the business world has been steadily declining. Through media presence, digital communication as well as the transparency of corporate sustainability reporting's, the public is ever more skeptical about the private sector and its contribution to societal welfare.

As a reaction, corporations have begun adopting a strategic approach towards corporate social responsibility (CSR), establishing a range of commitments, practices, and procedures to ensure that their operations align with social and environmental practices, political approaches and ethical standards. CSR has essentially become a prevalent practice that demands careful consideration and attention from corporations. The theoretical multiplicity tries to explain how the perception of business's role in society has changed, considering businesses also as a contributor to sustainable development.

Recent attention to the particularities of CSR activities carried on in developing countries has put in evidence the necessity to evaluate the role of business as an

(intentional and unintentional) development agent and the possibilities of CSR activities to support (or hinder) development processes. Moreover, with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 by the country members of the United Nations organization, an increasing number of corporations have explicitly demonstrated a commitment to the SDGs.

This seminar is designed to discuss and evaluate the role of business as a development agent and its contribution to sustainable development. It focuses on obtaining theoretically-informed and practically-relevant knowledge on key CSR themes, including the conceptual boundaries of CSR, motives why corporations strategically engage in CSR, how CSR is implemented in strategies and organizational processes. We will examine CSR activities in developing countries from a development-oriented approach, i.e., CSR activities' reach and scope and their impacts and outcomes for business and society. We will critically examine current forms of corporate social irresponsibility (CSIR) and greenwashing, i.e., cases in which corporations do not live up to their promises made under the name of CSR.

VENUE AND TIME

Lecture:	Thursdays	11.11.23 – 30.11.23 and 11.01.24
	Time	13:00 – 17:00
	Room	01.055

Please be aware that the session on January 11th, 2024 will take place from 13:00 until **18:00** o'clock.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the course is to enhance skills in critically evaluating and contemplating different perspectives on important themes related to CSR. Moreover, the course encourages students to explore the practical application of these theoretical concepts, thereby highlighting the dilemmas, tensions, paradoxes, and controversies that are inherent in CSR. By doing so, it aims to foster a deeper comprehension of CSR and its strategic significance within today's corporations. In addition, our objective will be:

- To understand, describe and explain key debates in corporate social responsibility and its relevance for corporations in developing countries.
- To critically analyze, reflect and evaluate various CSR themes, using academic articles and hands-on practical examples.
- To connect CSR themes to analyze the dilemmas and tensions of managing CSR and to communicate them.
- To recognize and evaluate evolving CSR-themes that might become strategically relevant for corporations.
- To understand and communicate personal values in thinking about the role of business in society.

REGISTRATION AND ACCESS TO MATERIAL

Registration for the StudOn course will be available from Friday, **September 15th, 2023** until Sunday, **October 15th, 2023** via the following link:

https://www.studon.fau.de/crs4943311_join.html

Password: DevCSR_WS23

COURSE DESIGN AND ASSIGNMENTS

During the first four seminar sessions, students will learn the theoretical foundation of CSR, stakeholder theory, and sustainable development. We will analyze academic research articles that conceptually and empirically examine CSR, particularly in the context of developing countries.

If class size permits, groups will be formed in the first seminar session. These groups will choose and define their topic within the first two weeks of the seminar. The chosen topic will be presented on **January 11th, 2024**. With the input and discussion received during the presentation, students will prepare a seminar paper which will be handed in by **February 15th, 2024**.

Students will be assessed in groups for the presentation as well as for the written assignment.

- Presentation: 40%
- Written Assignment: 60%

The presentation will be based on the case study of choice discussed during the seminar sessions which will lay the foundation of the written assignment. The aim of

the written assignment is to develop a CSR strategy for a multinational corporation operating in a developing country. Further information on the presentation and written assignment will be provided in the first session of the seminar.

The presentation should not exceed 30 minutes and contains a maximum of 20 slides. The presentations will take place on **January 11th, 2024**, from 13:00 until 18:00 in Room 1.055 in Erlangen. The seminar paper should follow the DEIS Guidelines (*Guidelines for Seminar Papers and Final Papers*) which is provided on the Institute Homepage or in the DEIS Information StudOn folder. Submission deadline for the seminar paper is **February 15th, 2024**.

Students are encouraged to search for suitable literature themselves, as this is an important part of scientific work. The starting point can be that of the textbooks and papers recommended below. However, sources beyond these are expected.

REQUIREMENTS

Only students that are in the **3rd semester** of the DEIS program are eligible for attending the seminar. Students should have attended the lecture on **International Business Ethics I**. Basic knowledge of economics and business administration is required. In order to achieve the learning objectives, attendance will be compulsory.

RELEVANT LITERATURE:

- Wickert, C. and Risi, D. (2019). *Corporate Social Responsibility*, Cambridge University Press
- Jamali, D., Karam, C & Blowfield, M. (2015) *Development-Oriented Corporate Social Responsibility. Volume 1: Multinational corporations and the global context*. Greenleaf. Sheffield.
- Saebi, T., Foss, N. J., & Linder, S. (2019). Social entrepreneurship research: Past achievements and future promises. *Journal of Management*, 45(1), 70-95.
- Hambrick, D. C., & Wowak, A. (2019). CEO Sociopolitical Activism: A Stakeholder Alignment Model. *Academy of Management Review*.
- Burbano, V. (2019). The Demotivating Effects of Communicating a Social-Political Stance: Field Experimental Evidence from an Online Labor Market Platform.
- Habel, J., Schons, L. M., Alavi, S., & Wieseke, J. (2016). Warm glow or extra charge? The ambivalent effect of corporate social responsibility activities on customers' perceived price fairness. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(1): 84-105.
- Dmytryiev, S. D., Freeman, E. & Hörisch, J. (2021). The Relationship between Stakeholder Theory and Corporate Social Responsibility: Differences, Similarities,

and Implications for Social Issues in Management. *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(6), 1441-1470.

- Freeman, E. and Freeman, B. (2023). Business in a Post-COVID World: The Move to Stakeholder Capitalism.
- Scherer, A.G. and Palazzo, G. (2011). The new political role of business in a globalized world: A review of a new perspective on CSR and its implications for the firm, governance, and democracy. *Journal of Management Studies*, 48, 899–931.
- Reinecke, J., & Donaghey, J. (2021). Political CSR at the Coalface – The Roles and Contradictions of Multinational Corporations in Developing Workplace Dialogue. *Journal of Management Studies*, 58(2), 457-486.
- Blowfield, M. & Dolan, C. (2014) Business as a development agent: evidence of possibility and improbability. *Third World Quarterly*, 35(1), pp. 22-42.
- Riera, M., and Iborra, M. (2017) Corporate social irresponsibility: review and conceptual boundaries. *European Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 26(2), 146-162.
- Iborra, M., and Riera, M., (2022). Corporate social irresponsibility: What we know and what we need to know. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 30(3), 1421-1439

RELEVANT LINKS

Homepage of the Institute of Economics: <http://www.economics.phil.uni-erlangen.de>

Library of the Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU):

www.ub.uni-erlangen.de