

[STRATS] Strategy and Sustainability

Introduction

Over the last few years there has emerged an unprecedented interest in sustainability on the part of governments, business, and civil society. With respect to the natural environment, it seems that we may have reached a tipping point in terms of industry beginning to address the urgent issues of climate change, air and water pollution, desertification and other critical issues. On the social side, the 17 sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations have become a language that many companies are using to engage with their traditional stakeholders as well as civil society as a whole.

Strategy & Sustainability is a 6-session course that looks at how companies are dealing sustainability and the strategic issues they face when doing so.

Objectives

The course is positioned as a baseline course giving graduates of the Global Executive MBA a minimal understanding of the issues involved so that they may dig deeper into how sustainability impacts their professional future in specific industries and locations.

Content

The course will cover an introduction to the topic and Professor's Rosenberg's own framework that he introduced in his book, *Strategy and Sustainability* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). The course will also explore the nature of the climate emergency via MIT's En-Road's simulation. Two sessions will involve a deep dive into packaging and consumer goods as an example and the last session will look at a more radical approach as defined by Gunter Pauli in the *Blue Economy* (Xlibris Au, 2017).

As part of the course students are expected to read and watch the assigned materials, actively participate in class discussion, and record a 2–3-minute video blog given their thoughts on sustainability at the end of the module.

Methodology

The course uses cases, simulations, exercises, and readings to generate an enriching in-class discussion of the topics outlined above (around 25hrs student work).

Evaluation

60% of the grade is based on each student's comments in class with 40% based on the depth and coherence of the comments given in the video blog.

Competences

Basic

CB6. Possess and understand knowledge that provides a basis or opportunity to be original in the development and / or application of ideas, often in a research context.

CB7. The students know how to apply the knowledge acquired and their ability to solve problems in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their area of study CB8. The students can integrate knowledge and face the complexity of formulating judgments based on information that, being incomplete or limited, includes reflections on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments.

CB9. Students know how to communicate their conclusions and the knowledge and ultimate reasons that support them to specialized and non-specialized audiences in a clear and unambiguous way.

CB10. Students possess the learning skills that allow them to continue studying in a way that will be largely self-directed or autonomous.

General

CG3 – To work on a team in multicultural business environments, inspiring trust in colleagues and partners, commitment to achieving the objectives, and delegating tasks and decisions.

CG9 – To interpret the global context in order to analyze and judge the threats and opportunities facing the organization.

CG10 – To acquire the vision of a global citizen when dealing with the multicultural aspects present in the international market.

Specific

CE12 – To devise a personal ethical framework for decision making in the organization through reflection and critical discussion of the traditional ethical thought systems.

CE13 – To understand the opportunities associated with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and be capable of developing a CSR management system.