

**MGPO 440: Strategies for Sustainability**

Winter 2015

Bronfman 001, Tue/Thur 4:00 to 5:25pm

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**Course Description**

Over the past century, technological and economic development have significantly elevated the living standards of many peoples; yet many still remain in abject poverty and different metrics show how inequity amongst populations is widening. The scope and scale of the ecological impacts of human activity have increased at an even more rapid and evidenced pace, and a reliance on technological fixes alone is no longer seen as a viable option. Humankind increasingly recognizes itself to be a truly global force with impact on the whole biosphere. As recent (and ongoing) ecological and financial crises shockingly demonstrate, globalization has significantly increased the inter-relatedness of the world's communities. Concern for these impacts – for ecologically sustainable and socially responsible economic development – has become a matter of survival for nations, industries and firms, as well as for individuals. In this context, industries and firms are reacting in different ways to these challenges, choosing to resist, comply, compete or lead in the global sustainability agenda. The aim of this course is to equip future leaders, entrepreneurs, managers, citizens, and parents to access and make use of up-to-date knowledge and conceptual tools for addressing the difficult issues that surround the formulation and implementation of organizational (and personal) strategies for sustainable development.

***Class Materials:*** Course pack (available at Dave's in Bronfman Basement)

**Evaluation Overview**

1. Participation (class participation, reading & discussion outlines, presentation feedback)	20%
2. Mid-term take-home examination	25%
3. Corporate accountability review (individual assignment)	25%
4. Corporate strategy review (group deliverable)	30%

**Evaluation Details**

***1. Participation***

### **1.1 Participation: General in class discussion (10%)**

Students are expected to do all the required reading and to come to class prepared to actively participate, with evidence, in discussions of the ideas and cases found therein. Learning will not be passive; thinking and creativity are expected. At times, questions will be given in class, to be answered on paper (or submitted online) by the end of the class. Questions and support of others' points with new evidence can be as important as direct contributions. Brevity, tact and staying on topic are also signs of quality participation. Punctuality, adherence to timetables and mutual respect are important facets of professional behavior. It is impossible to participate without attending class, including the final presentation sessions. After one allowable absence, further absences can be made up with a two-page brief on the readings for each class missed.

### **1.2 Participation: Reading and discussion outline (10%)**

You will be assigned to a discussion group (about five people per group). Prior to class marked "Group discussion" (there are 15 in total), one person per group will be responsible for creating/gathering a one-page outline for each reading due for that class.

This person should also outline, in half a page (bullets are fine) the discussion provoked by the readings. Group discussions should be useful and interesting – the point is not to talk for a specified amount of time, but to gather different perspectives and supporting information. This will be a useful exercise to highlight links between topics discussed in class and real world events. The summary pages are helpful study tools.

Each member of the group will be responsible for two sessions. To be counted, the summaries (one page per reading + half a page for the group discussion) should be submitted before the beginning of the following class. Please choose amongst yourselves the readings and sessions you will be responsible for.

### **2. Midterm take-home exam (25%) INDIVIDUAL**

You will have 12 days to complete the midterm once it is distributed at the end of the class on February 26. The midterm will cover the readings, discussions and presentations up to the class in which it is delivered. It is to be submitted individually in .pdf format via MyCourse before the March 10<sup>th</sup> class and represent your own thinking and reflection on the themes and topics of the course.

### **3. Corporate accountability review (25%) (Due April 14th, 5pm) INDIVIDUAL**

More and more companies chose to report on their "non-financial" performance and come to cover a wide range of sustainability issues. They publish sustainability reports, CSR activity reviews, social citizenship website, or leverage social media to share their vision and actions for a more sustainable industry. This "Corporate accountability" or "sustainability accounting" is meant to present the organization's vision for and performance on sustainability, and attract a large share of the sustainability consulting themes. Using a framework explored in class, you will be asked to review and assess the reporting efforts of an organization.

Please choose a Fortune 500 corporation, a large international organization or a Canadian organization for your review (note that an "organization" does not have to be a listed corporation and can be an NGO, a multilateral organization, an industry group, etc). The organization selected must be cleared with me in advance (by **February 17th**). 5 to 10 pages, due on **March 26th**.

#### **4. Corporate strategy review (15% paper, 15% presentation) GROUP**

Working in groups of 4-5 (it is helpful but not mandatory to use the same groups as the reading and discussion groups), each team should conduct an analysis of the sustainability issues and strategy of an organization. Choose an organization (different from any of the group member's individual corporate accountability review) that has not been featured prominently in any of the required readings for the class. Each group is required to choose a different organization, permission will be granted on a first come first served basis. Validate your choice by March 17th.

##### **Group Paper (Due March 31st at 5pm)**

Write a paper (10 to 20 pages, not including references and appendices, submitted on MyCourses) exploring the following questions:

- What are the business model and the corporate strategy of the organization? (What context does it work in and how does it thrive?)
- What are the main sustainability themes and issues faced by this type of organization, and by this company specifically?
- What is the sustainability/CSR strategy of the organization?
- How are the corporate strategy and the sustainability strategy aligned?
- Is the CSR/sustainability strategy effective? To whom? Why? Why not?
- What other best practices and initiatives are seen in the industry?
- As an advisor to the long-term health of the organization, what recommendations would you have for improving the CSR/sustainability strategy?

##### **Group Presentation**

In front of the class, outline the key points of your analysis. Each group will have 15 minutes (10 minutes for presentation and at least 5 minutes for Q&A). Any presentation material is **due on the first day of presentations (March 31st, beginning of class)**. All group members have to be present, but the role each plays is up to you.

##### **Submission of assignments**

Assignments should be 1.5 spaced, 12 pt font, with standard 1" margins. Please submit via MyCourses in PDF format, including the full names of all the group members. The title of the file should include one of the team member's names (e.g. JPRenaut\_MGPO 440\_accountability review\_20March2015.pdf). 25% per day are deducted for late assignments. You have 7 days (from when you receive a grade) to raise any concerns.

### Course content and session descriptions

What follows is a description of the topics to be covered in each class, and the readings assigned for each session. They are subject to change, and all changes will be announced in advance (see MyCourses). The topics covered in these sessions overlap and are interconnected. Be aware of these connections in your group discussions and as we go through the course.

Class	Date	Topics	Readings
1	Jan 6	What is Sustainability part 1: Course overview and conceptual introduction	This course syllabus
2	Jan 8	What is Sustainability part 2: concepts and definitions	MDG 2014 report
3	Jan 13	Climate change part 1 <i>Group discussion</i>	The Economist: The Heat is on; Carlsson (Nowtopia, Contesting the evolution of science); Jackson (Virtues of Ignorance; Ignorance based view);
4	Jan 15	Climate change part 2 <i>Group discussion</i>	The Economist: Spin, Science and Climate change
5	Jan 20	Chemical pollution and the precautionary principle <i>Group discussion</i>	Summers (1991); Case: Toffel (Precautionary Principle); Groopman (Plastic panic); Green Chemistry California Cornerstone Report; Manley 2007
6	Jan 22	Industrial agriculture, water and soil <i>Group discussion</i>	Montgomery (Ch 2 and 8)
7	Jan 27	Water <i>Group discussion</i>	Case: Branzei and McKague (City Water Tanzania); London and Rondinelli 2003;
8	Jan 29	Energy <i>Group discussion</i>	Unruh (Carbon lock-in); Unruh 2008 Biosphere rules
9	Feb 3	Food: Local and remote part 1 <i>Group discussion</i>	Roberts (Ch 8 - In the long Run); The Economist: article voting with your trolley
10	Feb 5	Food: Local and remote part 2	Case: Branzei and Leithwood (Make Green Delicious)
11	Feb 10	Why should businesses care? <i>Group discussion</i>	Lovins et al. (1999)
12	Feb 12	Why should business care (Part 2) Business case for sustainability. <i>Group discussion</i>	Ambec and Lanoie 2008; Case: Larson (Method); Porter and Kramer, 2006

13	Feb 17	LCA and systems thinking <b>Due:</b> choice of organization for (individual) corporate accountability review	<i>Case:</i> Lee and Bony (Herman Miller)
14	Feb 19	Accountability & metrics? (Measuring sustainability part 1) <i>Group discussion</i>	Specter (Big Foot); GHG protocol, Global Compact (overview and principles)
15	Feb 24	Accountability & metrics (Measuring sustainability part 2)	GRI G4 (principles only); IIRC (intro only)
16	Feb 26	Group work and distribution of <b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
	March 3 – 5	<b>STUDY BREAK</b>	
17	Mar 10	Technology and Innovation part 1 <i>Group discussion</i> <b>Due:</b> Mid-term submission	Nidumolu 2009; <i>Case:</i> Read et al (TerraCycle)
18	Mar 12	Technology and Innovation part 2 <b>Due:</b> Composition of groups for corporate strategy review	Cases: McDaniels (Carbon Capture and Storage A and B); Greenpeace: Why carbon capture and storage won't save the planet (exec summary); Van Noorden: Buried Trouble, Huesmann: limits
19	Mar 17	Role of regulations <i>Group discussion</i> <b>Due:</b> Choice of organization for (group) corporate strategy review	<i>Case:</i> Reinhardt (Agricultural Biotech and regulation);
20	Mar 19	Working together: Partnerships and stakeholders <i>Group discussion</i>	<i>Case:</i> McMaster and Nowak (Fiji Water) <i>Case:</i> Steger (Monsanto); Bowen et al, 2010
21	Mar 24	Decoupling and degrowth? part 1 <i>Group discussion</i>	Lovins et all (1999); Jackson (Prosperity without growth)
22	Mar 26	Decoupling and degrowth? part 2 <b>Due:</b> Corporate Accountability Review (individual assignment)	McKibben (ch 5); <i>Case:</i> Reinhardt (Patagonia)
23	Mar 31	Student Presentations <b>Due:</b> all groups must submit Strategy Alignment Paper, AND presentation slides	
24	Apr 2	Student Presentations	
25	Apr 7	Student Presentations	
26	Apr 9	Student presentations <b>and wrap up</b>	LAST CLASS

## Readings

### **Cases**

Branzei, O. McKague, K. (2007). City Water Tanzania (A): Water Partnerships for Dar es Salaam. Ivey case # 907M25 (coursepack)

Branzei, O., Leithwood (2008) Make Green Delicious: Sustainability at Jamie Kennedy Kitchens. Ivey 9B07M073 (coursepack)

Larson, A., York, J. Method: Sustainable design for the Home as Corporate Strategy. Darden School of Business, UV0812-PDF-ENG (coursepack)

Lee, D., Bony, L (2009). Cradle-to-cradle Design at Herman Miller: Moving Toward Environmental Sustainability. HBS 9 607 003 (coursepack)

McDaniels, D. Bowen, F. (2011) Total's Carbon Capture and Storage Project at LACQ (A): Risk Opportunity in Public Engagement. Ivey 9B10M105 (coursepack)

McDaniels, D., Bowen, F. (2011) Total's Carbon Capture and Storage Project at LACQ (B): Gaining Public Acceptance of New Technology (coursepack)

McMaster and Nowak (2009) Fiji water and corporate social responsibility - Green makeover or Greenwashing? Ivey 9B09A008 (coursepack)

Read, S. Lepoutre, J. Margery, P. (2012) TerraCycle: Outsmarting waste. IMD710-PDF-ENG (coursepack)

Reinhardt, F. (2001) Agricultural Biotechnology and its Regulation. HBS 9-701-004. (coursepack)

Reinhardt, F. Casadesus-Masanell, R. F, Kim, H.J. (2010) Patagonia. HBS 9 711 020 (coursepack)

Steger, U. Ogunsulire, C., Ramus, C., Hum, C. (2001) Monsanto's Genetically Modified Organisms. The Battle for Hearts and Shopping Aisles IMD 137. (coursepack)

Toffel, M.W., Aragon, N.Z.U, (2010) The Precautionary Principle, HBS 9 610 043 (coursepack)

## Readings

Ambec, & Lanoie. (2008). Does it pay to be green? Academy of Management perspectives, 2008.

Available at: <http://amp.aom.org/content/22/4/45.short>

Bowen, F., Newenham-Kahindi, A., & Herremans, I. (2010). When Suits Meet Roots: The Antecedents and Consequences of Community Engagement Strategy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 95(2), 297–318.

Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy1.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/detail?sid=5c2200d5-e6b1-439b-9cfe-25dcc58bccf6%40sessionmgr10&vid=1&hid=12&bdata=>

Carlsson, C. (2008) Nowtopia. Chapter 4: “Contesting the Evolution of Science” (coursepack)

GHG protocols, available at: <http://www.ghgprotocol.org/standards>. Read the overall intro and the presentation pages of all 4 standards

Global Compact (last reviewed 2013). Available at <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/index.html>

Read the Overview and The Ten Principles.

Green Chemistry Cornerstone Report. Available at: [http://coeh.berkeley.edu/docs/news/green\\_chem\\_brief.pdf](http://coeh.berkeley.edu/docs/news/green_chem_brief.pdf)

Greenpeace: False hope why Carbon capture and storage won't save the planet (Executive Summary)

Available at: <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/Global/usa/report/2008/5/false-hope-why-carbon-capture.pdf>

GRI / Global Reporting Initiative (2014), Sustainability reporting guidelines – Reporting Principles and Standard Disclosure, pp 1 and 16-18. Available at <https://www.globalreporting.org/resourcelibrary/GRIG4-Part1-Reporting-Principles-and-Standard-Disclosures.pdf>

Groopman, (2010). Plastic Panic. *The New Yorker*. Available at:

[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/05/31/100531fa\\_fact\\_groopman?currentPage=all](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/05/31/100531fa_fact_groopman?currentPage=all)

Huesmann, M. H. (2003). The limits of technological solutions to sustainable development. *Clean Technologies and Environmental Policy*, 5(1), 21–34. Available at:

<http://link.springer.com.proxy2.library.mcgill.ca/article/10.1007/s10098-002-0173-8>

IIRC / International Integrated Reporting Council, The International <IR> Framework, 2014, pp 1-8. Available at

<http://www.theiirc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/13-12-08-THE-INTERNATIONAL-IR-FRAMEWORK-2-1.pdf>

Jackson, T. (2009). Prosperity without growth: The Transition to a sustainable Economy. Sustainable Development Commission. Read summary only, available at:

[http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/prosperity\\_without\\_growth\\_report.pdf](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications/downloads/prosperity_without_growth_report.pdf)

Jackson, W. (2008) Toward an Ignorance-based world view. In *The Virtues of Ignorance: Complexity, Sustainability, and the limits of knowledge* (Eds) Jackson, W., Vitek, W. (coursepack, ebook)

London, T., & Rondinelli, D. (2003). Partnerships for Learning. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 1(3), 28–35. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy2.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=655323d8-9062-46ea-9b92-d9fd47a597c6%40sessionmgr14&vid=2&hid=22>

Lovins, Lovins and Hawken. *A Roadmap for Natural Capitalism* (1999) Available at <http://www.natcap.org/images/other/HBR-RMINatCap.pdf>

Manley, J.B., Paul, T.A., Cue, B.W. 2007. *Frontiers in Green Chemistry: meeting the grand challenges for sustainability in R&D and manufacturing*

McKibben, B. (2007). *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. Chapter 5: The Durable Future (coursepack, ebook)

MDG / Millenium Development Goals report 2014 (read overview, and quick facts for each goal

Available at:

[http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2014\\_Gap\\_Report/MDG%20Gap%20Task%20Force%20Report%202014\\_fulfill%20report\\_English.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2014_Gap_Report/MDG%20Gap%20Task%20Force%20Report%202014_fulfill%20report_English.pdf)

Montgomery, D.R. (2007). *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations*. Chapter 2. Skin of the Earth, Chapter 8. Dirty Business. (coursepack, ebook)

Nidumolu, R., Prahalad, C. K., & Rangaswami, M. R. (2009). WHY SUSTAINABILITY IS NOW THE KEY DRIVER OF INNOVATION. (cover story). *Harvard Business Review*, 87(9), 56–64.

Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy2.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/detail?sid=47c7d0ea-eed9-47e2-a7fc-645b4921e9dc%40sessionmgr13&vid=1&hid=24&bdata=#db=bth&AN=43831035>

Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2006). *Strategy & Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility*. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(12), 78–92.

Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy2.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/detail?sid=2e59c8c4-24bf-4819-92d6-4cbc37df4554%40sessionmgr13&vid=1&hid=21&bdata=#db=bth&AN=23081414>

Roberts, P (2009). *The end of food*. Chapter 8: In the Long Run (coursepack)

Specter, M. (2008). Big Foot: In measuring carbon emissions, it's easy to confuse morality and science. *The New Yorker*. P44. Available at: <http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy1.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/results?sid=8ff8b23a-fc18-4501-8a44-1c40a81a9ee9%40sessionmgr15&vid=1&hid=25&bquery=%28SO+%28The+New+Yorker%29%29AND%28DT+2008%29AND%28TI+Big+foot%29&bdata=JmRiPWE5aCZ0eXBIPTe%3d>

Summers, L. (1991). Internal memo to the World Bank, available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summers\\_memo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summers_memo)



The Economist: The heat is on. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/21533360>

The Economist: Spin, Science and climate change. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/15720419>

The Economist: Voting with your trolley. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/node/8380592>

Unruh, G.C. 2008. The Biosphere Rules. Harvard Business Review. P1-8. Available at:  
<http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy2.library.mcgill.ca/ehost/detail?sid=b91d6ced-7747-4629-b5fd-4fe5e9617e72%40sessionmgr11&vid=1&hid=24&bdata=#db=bth&AN=28534342>

Van Nooden (2010). Buried Trouble. Nature. 871-873. Available at:  
<http://www.nature.com/news/2010/100217/full/463871a.html>