NEW ELECTIVE COURSE

SOCIAL CHALLENGES TO GLOBAL BUSINESS

How Business Manages Social & Environmental Risks

How does business deal with today's challenges of corruption, environmental disasters, poverty and terrorism – and make a profit?

In many industries today a sustainable return on investment requires taking risks – exploring new markets and dealing with complex social and environmental challenges. Unfortunately many modern business leaders and executives are ill equipped to face this new and ever-changing environment.

In this elective you will hear directly from successful business leaders and experts in international trade about how they deal with the complex problems of labour disputes, the environment, corruption, consumer complaints, dire poverty and global security issues in the post September 11 world.

You will hear from business leaders from industries as diverse as mining, banking, manufacturing and retail along with experienced consultants on the risks associated with importing and exporting into new markets. Underpinning the course is an understanding of trade opportunities and obligations with special sessions on the important role of the World Trade Organisation. There will also be the opportunity to discuss ethical issues with leading environmentalists and experts on labour rights and global poverty as you discover the importance of triple bottom line accounting – financial, social and environmental.

Quotes from Past Students

"As a mature aged student working in business at a managerial level, I found the course particularly useful for understanding locational risk issues and how to do business in a developing country. I also appreciated learning about how to manage child labour issues, corruption and issues to do with environmental sustainability."  
Master of Business Law student from Adelaide

"As a marketing student, I found this course to be a breath of fresh air in my studies. It has provided me with the required tools and knowledge to work in today's global village in such a way that respects more than just the commercial side of things. Its practical relevance makes this course a must to anyone who want to work in the business world."  
Master of Commerce student from Israel

Course Objective

This course is designed to explore contemporary social challenges for international business. The course aims to enhance business acumen in dealing with the practical, ethical and strategic implications of these challenges.

The course begins with an introduction to the economics and politics of globalisation and the emergence of what is now termed "corporate social responsibility". Five seminars are then devoted to internal corporate governance issues – how a company identifies new markets, manages risks, overcomes exporting and importing challenges, deals with trade law, the WTO and with change management. There is one full session looking at issues of corporate transparency and corruption. The course then focuses in on some of the key external social challenges concerning legal obligations and consumer rights, labour and human rights issues, poverty, sustainable development and environmental issues. Final seminars draw together overall observations and allow time for student project presentations.

Features of the Course

There are two main lecturers throughout the course who between them have a wealth of experience in the business of exporting to and importing from developing countries, identifying new markets and managing risk, dealing with government and civil society groups on international trade and social issues and experience working with global corporations on poverty and environmental issues.

Throughout the 12 week course there are guest lecturers from global corporations such as Mitsubishi, Newmont Mining and Beach Petroleum, ANZ and others as well as representatives from private businesses, trade unions and NGOs who work on issues to do with overseas aid, labour rights, corruption and sustainable environmental issues.

There are two special lectures on international trade issues for global business, including one from the former Deputy Director-General of the WTO.

Lectures follow a logical framework first dealing with internal corporate governance issues followed by separate lectures on social and environmental challenges. Lectures are generally designed to allow for interactive debate and discussion given the emphasis on students developing critical analysis and constructive questioning in dealing with difficult and complex social issues.

Who Should Attend?

Designed for students undertaking post-graduate studies in Business, Commerce, Marketing, Law, Economics and International Relations.

Course Structure

The course is offered in both Semester 1 and 2 in 2006 and students should enrol in BUSINESS 7000 – Social Challenges to Global Business (3 units). The Course is scheduled for Friday's from 10:00am – 1:00pm and will cover the following topics:

- Globalisation and the Social Challenges for Global Business
- Identifying New Markets for Export and Import
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Challenges for Exporters and Importers – Risk Management
- Corporate Governance and Corruption
- Globalisation and the Change Role of the WTO
- Dealing with Trade and Poverty Issues
- A Sustainable Environment for Corporations
- International Labour Issues
- Terrorism, Security and Consumer Protection Issues
- The Socially Responsible Corporate in the Modern Market Place
- Final Student Presentations

Assessment

Assessment is based on a mix of student participation, student powerpoint presentations, one business report and a final exam.

Further Information and Contact Details

Mr Jim Redden  
Institute for International Business, Economics and Law  
The University of Adelaide  
Level 1, Yarrabeb House  
Corner Botanic and Hackney Roads, Adelaide SA 5005 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: (08) 8303 6902  
Facsimile: (08) 8303 6948  
Email: jms.redden@adelaide.edu.au

The information contained in this publication is correct as at January 2006 but may be subject to change without notice.