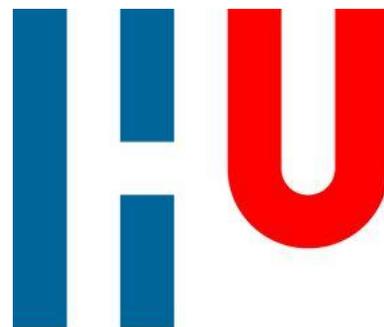


COURSE GUIDE



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- MB-BUSSOC-14 2025 - 2026
- Term D
- 5 EC
- Minor Globalizing Business
- Full time
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- Heidelberglaan 15, Utrecht
- November 2025

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Business in Society

Minor Globalizing Business

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Course Description

The challenges facing society today, like climate change, biodiversity loss, inequality, and resource scarcity, demand a profound transformation of the way business operates. Traditional “business as usual” approaches no longer suffice. This course explores how organizations can become agents of positive change by integrating sustainability, innovation, and responsibility into their core strategies and operations.

Business in Society examines how companies align their business interests with societal and environmental priorities, drawing on frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Doughnut Economics, Circular Economy principles, and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards. The course emphasizes that sustainability is not merely a moral obligation but a driver of innovation, competitiveness, and long-term value creation.

Through a series of interactive workshops, students will:

- Analyze the ecological and social impact of business activities;
- Assess corporate sustainability performance and risks;
- Explore social entrepreneurship and impact-driven business models;
- Reimagine business models for circular and regenerative economies.

Students will learn how forward-looking companies use innovation to create sustainable value for stakeholders and society while ensuring economic viability. The course combines academic theory with practical applications, encouraging critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity in designing solutions for a sustainable future.

Ultimately, Business in Society inspires students to understand the evolving role of business in addressing global challenges and to develop the mindset and tools necessary to build organizations that contribute positively to people, planet, and profit.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



This course will focus on these goals as a framework that supports business to respond to the trends in society; threatening shortage of resources, major shifts in demographics and economy, pollution and climate change. Besides attention for the growing share of CSR-oriented businesses, this course will also focus on companies that choose a disruptive innovation path. Companies that look for sustainability in their business model and who can give social and environmental returns, in addition to their economic returns.

Topics and goals covered will be:

1. Ecological Footprint
2. SGD Goals
3. Social Entrepreneurship
4. Social Marketing
5. CSR Ladder
6. Social Business Model Innovation
7. Circular Economy
8. Opportunities in Sustainability
9. Conducting Research

1 Course Goals and Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. **Identify and analyze global sustainability trends**
 - Recognize how environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues shape the global business environment.
 - Explain the interconnections between business activities and major sustainability challenges such as climate change, inequality, and biodiversity loss.
2. **Evaluate the strategic role of business in addressing societal challenges**
 - Assess how companies integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), circular economy principles, and responsible innovation into their strategies.
 - Distinguish between compliance-driven Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and proactive sustainability leadership.
3. **Apply sustainability frameworks to assess business impact and opportunities**
 - Use analytical tools such as the ESG framework, Doughnut Economics, and the Sustainable Business Model Canvas to evaluate corporate sustainability performance.
 - Identify opportunities for businesses to contribute to sustainable development through innovation and value creation.
4. **Develop and communicate sustainable business innovations**
 - Design or redesign business models that balance social, environmental, and economic value (People, Planet, Profit).
 - Present a persuasive, evidence-based proposal for a sustainability innovation, demonstrating feasibility and impact.
5. **Reflect on ethical and professional responsibility in business decision-making**
 - Articulate one's own perspective on the ethical responsibilities of businesses and managers in shaping sustainable futures.
 - Demonstrate intercultural and systems thinking when evaluating sustainability dilemmas.
6. **Collaborate effectively in multidisciplinary teams**
 - Work constructively in diverse groups to conduct research, analyze company cases, and present findings.
 - Provide and integrate feedback to improve collective understanding and project outcomes.

2 Place in the Curriculum and Related Courses

Place in the Curriculum:

This course is an obligatory regular part of the minor Globalizing Business. It is a course for students with interests in sustainability, innovation, and corporate social responsibility.

Related Courses:

Consultancy
Managing Change and Innovation
Topics in International Business
Global Management Project

3 Study Burden

Total study burden in hours per student = 5 EC (European credits);
28 hours x 5 EC course = 140 hours.

Workshops (10 times 90 minutes):	25
Self-study; reading:	45
Assignments:	70
Total hours:	140

4 Pre-requisites

Basic knowledge of Business, Marketing, Management & Organisation, Business Ethics, presenting, and report writing.

5 Exemption Possibilities

Generally, not applicable.

6 Didactic Forms

Lectures and group working method. The topics of Business in Society are dealt with through lectures, discussions, assignments, and different reading materials.

- Theoretical lectures
- msTeams
- Workshops
- Teamwork
- Written assessment and presentation

7 Assessment

In Osiris the following type of assessment is registered:

Type of Assessment	Weight	Min. Mark
Assessment	100%	5,5

In the course, the assessment is divided into different assignments adding up to a 100% Portfolio assessment. During the course, the individual and team assignments are done in the form of homework assignments, presentations and workshops and are registered in Ms Teams under assignment. The average of the portfolio result should be at minimum a 5.5 for a pass.

Resit consists of repairing missed or insufficient assignments. The resit is planned directly after the regular block.

8 Planning

Total List of Assignments:

Introduction course	1	Indiv Ecological Footprint	Individual	3
Environmental Impact	2	Indiv. Your SDG	Individual	3
Intro Sustainable Marketing	3	Barriers to sustainable Consumption	Indiv. Liter	4
Marketing of Sustainable products	7	Marketing of Sustainable products	Indiv. Theo	4
Workshop 1	5	Social Entrepreneurship	Team	3
Research Workshop	4	Research design	Team	3
Workshop 2	6	CSR ladder	Team	3
Feedback on Research plan	9	reflective assignment	Individual	4
Workshop 3	8	Business Model Innovation	Team	3
Workshop 4	10	Circular Economy	Team	3
Final Presentation	11	Research Results Poster	Team	10
				43

In MS Teams all assignments have a rubric. On the moment of publication in Teams of the assignments the rubrics are available. The student is advised to check these to understand what is assessed. Each assignment is allocated points. These points are added up to the total. The grade that is entered in Osiris will be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{earned points}}{\text{total points}} \times 10 = \text{Grade (in 1 decimal)}$$

Individual assessment vs. team:

Individual	18 points
Team	25 points
Total points	43 points

9 Course Material and Literature

All reading material, handouts, PowerPoints, and links used will be provided on msTeams
Other recommended reading:

- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.
- Dean, T. (2013). *Sustainable Venturing: Entrepreneurial Opportunity in the Transition to a Sustainable Economy* (1 edition.). Boston: Prentice Hall.
- Kopnina, H., & Blewitt, J. (2014). *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. New York: Routledge.
- Hart, S. L. (2010). *Capitalism at the crossroads: solutions to our economic and environmental challenges in a post-crisis world*. Philadelphia, Pa.; London: Wharton School ; Pearson Education [distributor].
- <http://www.iisd.org/blog/why-private-sector-reporting-sustainable-development-goals-important>

10 Course Evaluation

Evaluation of the course and assessment will take place at the end of the block by management