



BUSINESS SCHOOL
Te Kura Pakihi

COURSE OUTLINE

ACCT 325 Corporate Sustainability Accounting and Reporting

Semester 2, 2022

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Paper Description and Aims

This paper aims to provide a detailed overview of social and environmental accounting (Accounting for Sustainability). The paper explores the growing global trend of companies to measure, disclose and report for socially and environmentally responsible initiatives including environmental performance, business ethics, community involvement, biodiversity and climate change. Emphasis is made on how sustainability creates shareholder value and how accountants can add value to develop a sound sustainable strategy. ACCT325 has been designed to provide students with the knowledge they need to become corporate sustainability managers and consultants.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this paper, you should be able to

- Understand and apply knowledge of social and environmental accounting and sustainability reporting,
- Demonstrate global perspective and understanding of the international guidelines and regulations related to social and environmental reporting and accounting,
- Holistically evaluate the corporate sustainability crises, complexities, challenges and critically understand the role of business and accounting in sustainable development,
- Communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) corporate sustainability reporting practices and disclosures,
- Critically evaluate the ethical, social and environmental implications of corporate actions
- Examine the issues related with social and environmental audits

Teaching Staff

Course Coordinator & Lecturer

Name: Dr Muhammad **Nadeem**
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Office hours: Tuesdays 12-2pm

You should contact the Course Coordinator (Dr Nadeem) with any course and content related enquiries about the paper.

Class Representatives

Class representatives are an important means of communication between students and staff. Contact details for your student class representatives can be found on the Blackboard page for this paper.

Course Delivery

The Vice Chancellor and the University expects **all students to attend all classes. Every week a student must attend the one-hour lecture and one two-hour seminar.**

Lecture Day/Time: Monday: 1.00pm – 1.50 pm Room: OBSGo2

The course includes a one-hour lecture and one two-hour seminar each week. Lectures are formal lessons, in which, the lecturer presents the key conceptual subject material related to the weekly topic and students take notes while the lecturer talks. The lecturers will bring the important issues to your attention, and add other information that may not be gleaned from the weekly readings. Lecture slides and/or notes will be available on Blackboard.

There will be NO seminar in week one. **Seminars** begin in the second week of semester. Seminars are interactive, collaborative sessions in which students attempt to cement concepts presented at lectures with their peers in a supportive environment. Each two-hour seminar creates a forum for live discussions and class room activities around the key issues from the weekly readings and cases mentioned in the course calendar. Students will be invited to take a lead role in the seminar discussion, chairing the discussion, discussing ways to improve sustainability performance of corporations or making a presentation to start the seminar. In the seminars, questions related to the weekly topic will be discussed and you are required to reflect high-order critical thinking skills. Seminar questions will be based on identifying the real-world sustainability problems and accounting issues, providing solutions, assessing a corporate sustainability initiative/framework or investigating a crisis situation with socio-environmental consequences. You cannot actively participate in any seminar discussion if you have not prepared for the seminar.

Before coming to the seminars, you are required to read the weekly readings. To prepare for seminar, you need to download and read the weekly readings that have been assigned for the week (and make notes). Due to copyright issues, we are unable to download the articles for you, but they can be downloaded through the library data bases.

Seminar Day/Time

Monday: 3.00-5.00 pm, Room : OBSGo2

Tuesday: 10.00-12.00 pm, Room : T105A

Seminars offer you the opportunity to work in groups on a series of tasks designed to apply the contemporary sustainability accounting concepts that you have been exposed to in lecture and from your reading, and to stimulate your interest in the course. The key feature of seminars, as opposed to lectures and individual study, is the participation of all members of the seminar group. **Prepare for seminars before going to them.**

Students unable to attend a seminar are expected to catch up on missed material from the classmates/groupmates or lecturer. All topics covered in the lectures and seminars are examinable.

Course Calendar The course calendar (in this outline) details scheduling information. Note that this calendar may change as the course proceeds. Any changes will be announced at lectures and be detailed on Blackboard.

Students are expected to prepare for and attend all classes to gain the full benefit from the course.

Expectations and Workload

For a typical 18-point paper at the University of Otago, you are expected to spend about 180 hours (approximately 12 hours per week) in lectures, seminars, private study, reading weekly readings, preparing assignments and other course related activities. It is expected that you will do six hours of study outside the classroom per week.

Course Learning Resources

Textbook information: There is no text book required for this course. Students must read and make their own notes from the weekly readings mentioned below. It is strongly suggested to read ALL the weekly readings before coming to the lecture and seminar. For any reason, you are not doing the required weekly readings; it is more likely that you score poor marks in your internal assignments and final exam. All the resources are available at the library.

Weekly readings

Week 1

- Hines, R. (1991). On Valuing Nature. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 4(3), 27–29.

Week 2

- Siddiqui, J., & Uddin, S. (2016). Human rights disasters, corporate accountability and the state : Lessons learned from Rana Plaza. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 29(4), 679–704.

Week 3

- Clarke, T., & Boersma, M. (2017). The Governance of Global Value Chains: Unresolved Human Rights, Environmental and Ethical Dilemmas in the Apple Supply Chain. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 143(1), 111-131

Week 4

- Chapple, W., & Moon, J. (2005). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Asia: A seven-country study of CSR web site reporting. *Business & society*, 44(4), 415-441
- Epstein, M. ., & Buhovac, A. (2014). A new day for sustainability: is your company ready to take on increased responsibility for its activities throughout the globe? *Strategic Finance*, 25.

Week 5

- Jamali, D., Safieddine, A. M., & Rabbath, M. (2008). Corporate governance and corporate social responsibility synergies and interrelationships. *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 16(5), 443–459.
- Aguilera, R. V, Williams, C. A, Conley, J. M., & Rupp, D. E. (2006). Corporate governance and social responsibility: a comparative analysis of the UK and the US. *Corporate Governance- an International Review*, 14(3), 147–158.

Week 6

- Gray, R. (2000). Current Developments and Trends in Social and Environmental Auditing, Reporting and Attestation: A Review and Comment. *International Journal of Auditing*, 4(3), 247–268.
- Ammenberg, J., Wik, G., & Hjelm, O. (2001). Auditing external environmental auditors—investigating how ISO 14001 is interpreted and applied in reality. *Eco-Management and Auditing*, 8(4), 183–192.

Week 7

- De Villiers, C., Venter, E. R., & Hsiao, P. C. K. (2017). Integrated reporting: background, measurement issues, approaches and an agenda for future research. *Accounting & Finance*, 57(4), 937-959.
- Stubbs, W., & Higgins, C. (2015). Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Role of Regulatory Reform in Integrated Reporting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1–20.

Week 8

- Matejek, S., & Gössling, T. (2014). Beyond Legitimacy: A Case Study in BP's "Green Lashing." *Journal of Business Ethics*, 120(4), 571–584.

Week 9

- Burritt, Rogger, L., Hahn, T., Schaltegger, S., Burritt, R. L., Hahn, T., & Schaltegger, S. (2002). Towards a comprehensive framework for environmental management accounting - Links between business actors and environmental management accounting tool. *Australian Accounting Review*, 12(2), 39–50.
- Kumar, S., & Putnam, V. (2008). Cradle to cradle: Reverse logistics strategies and opportunities across three industry sectors. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 115(2), 305–315.

Week 10

- Jones, M. J. (2003). Accounting for biodiversity: operationalising environmental accounting. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 16(5), 762–789.

Week 11

- Hennchen, E. (2015). Royal Dutch Shell in Nigeria: Where Do Responsibilities End? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 129(1), 1–25.

Week 12

- Boyd, C. (2012). The Nestle Infant Formula Controversy and a Strange Web of Subsequent Business Scandals. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106(3), 283–293.
- Carnegie, G. D., & Napier, C. J. (2010). Traditional accountants and business professionals: Portraying the accounting profession after Enron. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 35(3), 360–376.

Week 13

- Revision

Supporting Books

The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility, edited by Andrew Crane, Abigail McWilliams, Dirk Matten, Jeremy Moon, Donald S. Siegel, OUP Oxford.

Deegan, C 2014, *Financial Accounting Theory*, McGraw-Hill Education, Australia.

Gray, R, Adams, CA & Owen, D 2014, *Accountability, Social Responsibility and Sustainability: Accounting for Society and the Environment*, Pearson, UK.

Gray, RH, & Bebbington, K J 2001, *Accounting for the environment*, 2nd ed., Sage, London.

Benn, S, Dunphy, D and Griffiths, A (2014) *Organizational change for corporate sustainability*, 3rd ed., Routledge, London.

In addition to these resources, every week your lecturer will upload extra reading material (media reports and newspaper articles) on Blackboard. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you follow Blackboard announcements.

Blackboard

<https://blackboard.otago.ac.nz/> provides you with access to course materials, class notices, and resources. Blackboard is used to email the whole class so it is important that you check your student email and *Blackboard* regularly.

Further information about student support, learning support and information, academic integrity and other University resources for students is available on the COMMERCE_UG_2017: Commerce Undergraduate Students site on Blackboard.

Student Webmail

We will use your student email account to email you information relevant to your programme. To forward your University email address to an email address that you use regularly:

1. Log into your StudentMail account (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/smlanding/>) using your student username and password.
2. Click the **Cog** button (top right corner).
3. Click on **Mail** under **Your App Settings**.
4. Under **Accounts** on left hand side, select **Forwarding**.
5. Under the Forwarding heading, type in the email address you want your email to be forwarded to. You can also choose to have a copy of these emails kept on your StudentMail account, so please check the box if you would like this.
6. Click the **Save** button.

Assessments

All material presented is examinable (except where stated otherwise) by assignments and the final examination. All-important assessment information, such as due dates, content, guidelines and so on, will be discussed at week two seminar and detailed on Blackboard. *Students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of this information, keeping track of their own progress and catching up on any missed classes.*

Assessment	Due date		% of final grade	Requirements to pass this paper
Assignment 1: Critical reflection	Week 6		10%	You need to achieve at least 50% in the internal assessments to pass this course
Sustainability data spread sheet	Week9	Assignment 2	05%	
Group report	Week9		15%	
Group presentation	Week 9-12		10%	
Final exam	Will be announced later		60%	You need to achieve at least 45% in the final exam and overall 50% to pass this course.

Course Requirements

Assignment 1 : Critical reflection

Due date: **19 August, 2022** (Friday – Week 6). A hard copy of your assignment should be submitted by 5.00 pm in the assignment box at level 5 (Department of Accountancy and Finance). Online students can email a PDF copy to the course coordinator. There is an assignment box in the Commerce Building, on level 5 for ACCT325, to place your assignment in by the due date. Your assignment must be typed using 12 font, 1.5 line spacing and 2.5 cm margins on all sides. Late assignments will not be accepted.

For more details, refer to assignment 1 documents on Blackboard.

Assignment 2: Company research and analysis

This assignment has three parts. The first part is an individual task of preparing a sustainability data spread sheet (5%). The second part is a written group report (15%), and the third part is a group presentation (10%). This assignment critically assess the United Nations Sustainable development goals (UNSDG) disclosures' made by companies (a company will be assigned to each student). A document explaining assignment 2 in detail will be available on blackboard. The details of the individual task, group report and group presentation will be discussed in the week 2 seminar. Therefore, all the students must attend second week's seminar and read the document. Groups will be formed in week 2 during the seminar. Group presentations will start from week 09 onwards. All members in the group have to present. A non-presenting group member will incur a zero mark.

The group report (should also include individual data spread sheet) should be between 2500-3000 words. Your assignment must be typed using 12 font, 1.5 line spacing and 2.5 cm margins on all sides. Late assignments will not be accepted. The hard copy should be submitted by 5.00 pm in the assignment box at level 5 (Department of Accountancy and Finance) on **September 12th**, Monday (week 9). There is an assignment box in Commerce Building, on level 5 for ACCT325, to place your assignment in by the due date. Online students can email a PDF copy to the course coordinator.

Final Exam

The final exam will be held during the official university examination time. We have no say in when this will be. If you have any problems with the time and/or date, you need to contact the Examinations Office in the Registry Building. **Final exam is worth 60%.**

The final exam (closed book) will be three hours long, and you must achieve at least 45% (45/100) to pass the paper, regardless of internal marks. The exam will cover all topics covered throughout the semester. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of this information, keeping track of their own progress, and catching up on any missed classes.

Late Assignments

A one day extension is available on assignment at a 10% penalty of the total mark for the assignment (i.e. if marked out of 10, one (1) mark penalty applies). Students are encouraged to plan their work so deadlines are met. Under exceptional circumstances (e.g. illness, accident, bereavement or critical personal circumstances) individual students may be granted an extension of the due date for an assignment. There is, however, a limit to the length of time that an extension can be granted. Extensions are not granted automatically to students. A request for an extension should be made before the due date of the piece of assessment, in writing, either by email or letter.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome	Critical reflection	Sustainability data spreadsheet	Group report	Group presentation	Exam	Total
Understand and apply knowledge of social and environmental accounting and sustainability reporting	X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrate global perspective and understanding of the international guidelines and regulations related to social and environmental reporting and accounting		X	X	X	X	
Holistically evaluate the corporate sustainability crises, complexities, challenges and critically understand the role of business and accounting in sustainable development	X	X	X	X	X	
Communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) corporate sustainability reporting practices and disclosures	X		X	X	X	
Critically evaluate the ethical, social and environmental implications of corporate actions	X		X	X	X	
Examine the issues related with social and environmental audits	X	X	X	X	X	
Total	10%	5%	15%	10%	60%	100%

Course Calendar

Lecture/ Tutorial Number	Week Commencing	Topic	Seminar exercises & cases
1	Monday 11 July	Accounting for sustainability: An introduction	No seminar
2	Monday 18 July	Critical perspective on Corporate Social Responsibility	Group formation and assessments information discussed Case: Rana Plaza Factory fire in Bangladesh Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
3	Monday 25 July	International Sustainability Frameworks & Guidelines	Case: Apple manufacturer Foxconn factory suicides ¹ Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
4	Monday 1 August	Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility Reporting in developing countries	Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
5	Monday 8 August	Corporate Governance and CSR	Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
6	Monday 15 August	Social and Environmental Auditing	Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings Assignment 1 due this week.
7	Monday 22 August	Integrated Reporting	Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
Mid-semester break 29 August-02 September			
8	Monday 05 September	Accountability and corporate greenwashing	Case: Deepwater Horizon oil spill Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings

¹ Every student must develop library research skills in order to complete academic work in ACCT325. You need to gather and read more information on weekly cases.

9	Monday 12 September	Environmental costing	Case: Cradle to Cradle Approach Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings Group report (compiled) due this week and presentations begin...
10	Monday 19 September	Accounting for ecosystems	Discussion theme : Physical ecosystem accounts and New Zealand Biodiversity strategy 2000-2020 Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings
11	Monday 26 September	Accountability and Sustainability theories	Case: Shell in Nigeria Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings Assignment 2 : company presentation
12	Monday 03 October	Ethics in the Accounting Profession	Discussion theme : a) Ethical challenges faced by multinationals b) ethical decision making in the accounting profession Seminar exercises based on weekly topic and readings Assignment 2 : company presentation
13	Monday 10 October	Revision	No seminar

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate, it is subject to change. Changes will be notified in class and via Blackboard. Students are encouraged to check Blackboard regularly. It is the student's responsibility to be informed.