



Scoil Ghnó Lochlann Uí Chuinn UCD
UCD Lochlann Quinn School of Business

Lochlann Quinn School of Business Summer Internship Programme

Responsible Management and Society (HRM30130)

Venue: Lochlann Quinn School, Belfield, Room QTBA

Lecturer: Dr Colm McLaughlin
Associate Professor in HRM and Employment Relations
Co-Director, UCD Centre for Business and Society
colm.mclaughlin@ucd.ie

Module Description

This module explores the nature of responsible management and the relationship between business and society, and how societal issues are increasingly affecting all aspects of corporate strategy and behaviour. It will introduce students to the key issues of morality, ethics and the law and explore contemporary issues in this arena. Moreover, topical issues, around which informed perspectives and opinions diverge, will form an integral part of the curriculum, e.g. global warming, sustainability, inequality, globalization and the employment practices of MNCs in low-cost economies, gender inequality at work. The module aims to provide students with a strong sense of the connections (and tensions) between individual, organisational, and societal actions and outcomes, a sense of social embeddedness, while also retaining a positive/entrepreneurial outlook. This module will exploit these issues and frame student assessment and evoke student engagement through debate, critical analysis and written and verbal expression.

It is worth keeping in mind that much of the material covered in this module is by its nature somewhat controversial and political. Consider, for example, the following questions:

- ‘Do corporations have too much power and influence?’
- ‘Do businesses have any social responsibilities?’
- ‘Should management be responsible if it negatively impacts the bottom line?’
- ‘What role should the state play in regulating businesses?’
- ‘What labour standards should western companies adhere to when manufacturing in developing countries?’
- Is an economic model based on growth unsustainable?

These are questions to which there is no ‘one right answer’. Rather there are a range of view points and the challenge of students of the subject is to critically assess differing viewpoints by drawing on appropriate empirical and theoretical academic research.

Thus, we are less interested in your ability to rote learn facts on a subject, and more interested in your ability to put aside preconceived ideas, to think critically about a subject from a range of positions, and to construct a nuanced argument on an issue based on rigorous academic analysis.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this module students should be able to:

- Describe and understand contemporary approaches to responsible management.
- Describe and assess the key trends that impact on the relationship between business and society.
- Understand and apply various theoretical approaches to morality, ethics and the law within a business context.
- Explore a range of topical social, environmental and ethical issues and analyse the role of business within these topics.
- Display critical thinking skills in written and oral presentations, and construct an argument based on a wide reading of the academic literature.
- Work in a collaborative team process to produce high-quality work.

Assessment

The assessment for this module will have three components:

- Participation (15%)
- Group Debate (35%)
- Individual 2,000 word case study analysis (50%)

Participation

The classes will be interactive and marks are available for the *quality* of your contributions to class discussion. Part of this will be based around small written tasks that I give you to complete ahead of the class, but mostly it will be around your ability to discuss issues by drawing on the material from the lectures and readings.

Group Debate

You will be assigned to a group and allocated a moot during classes. The debate serves several learning objectives. The first is to give you the opportunity to verbally present your ideas. The second is to give you the chance to argue a case for something and to respond on your feet to opposing points of view. These are two very important skills that you will frequently use in the world of work. Third, in preparing for your debate, you will need to research the arguments that support your position and those that your opposing team are likely to raise, and you will need to think about the relative strengths and weaknesses of each set of arguments. That is, you will be developing important critical thinking skills.

Case Study Analysis

You will be presented with a choice of case studies and will be required to choose one and analyse it drawing on relevant academic literature. In this way, you will be able to apply some of the theoretical concepts and policy debates to a real life 'responsible management' case study.

Readings

Steiner J. & Steiner G. (2011) *Business, Government, and Society: A Managerial Perspective, Text and cases* Thirteenth Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Copies available in the library)

Handy, C. (2002) 'What's a business for?', *Harvard Business Review*, December 2002: 49-55.

McLaughlin, C. (2017) 'Corporate Social Responsibility and Human Resource Management', in Carberry, R. and Cross, C. (eds) *Human Resource Management: A Concise Introduction*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.

McLaughlin, C. & Deakin, S. (2012) 'Equality law and the limits of the 'business case' for addressing gender inequalities' in Scott, J., Dex, S. And Plagnol, A. (eds) *Gendered Lives: Gender Inequalities in Production and Reproduction*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2013) "Why Do So Many Incompetent Men Become Leaders?!", *Harvard Business Review*, August 22.

Laufer, W.S. (2003) Social accountability and corporate greenwashing. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 43(3).

Hart, S.L. (1997) Beyond greening: strategies for a sustainable world. *Harvard Business Review*.

The Secrets of Sports Direct - Channel 4, Dispatches Documentary:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Pfg13sLfbs>

Prahalad, C. K. and Hart S.L (2001) The Fortune at the Bottom of Pyramid,
http://www.stuartlhart.com/sites/stuartlhart.com/files/Prahalad_Hart_2001_SB.pdf

Carr, A. Z. (1968). Is business bluffing ethical? *Harvard Business Review*, 46(1), 143-153.

Byerly, R.T. (2013) "Business IN Society: The Social Contract Revisited", *Journal of Organisational Transformation and Social Change*, 10(1): 4-20.

Lecture Sessions

Session 1: Mon 10th June, 2pm – 5.30pm, Introduction and a model for understanding different approaches to 'responsible management and society'

Session 2: Tue 11th June, 2pm – 5.30pm, Regulating capitalism and issues of power

Session 3: Thurs 13th June, 9am – 12.30pm, Corporate social responsibility

Session 4: Fri 14th June, 9am – 12.30pm, Human sustainability and responsible management

Session 5: Sat 15th June, 9am – 12.30pm, Diversity and responsible management

Session 6: Friday June 28th (or alternative date), 9am – 12.30pm Group debates

Session 7: Monday July 29 and 30th, 2pm – 5.30pm, Environmental sustainability

Session 8: Tuesday July 30th, 2pm – 5.30pm, The future of responsible management and Course review