



Seminar MOEC0287
Seminar in Corporate Social Responsibility

Spring Term 2018

Course Objective

The course assesses the landscape of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in theory and practice. It introduces the major themes and players that currently drive the agenda. The aim of the class is to bridge theory and practice of CSR by highlighting different stakeholders in CSR such as consumers, employees or NGOs, drivers and outcomes of CSR activities as well as CSR implementation and legitimization, among others.

The course sensitizes students for ethically critical issues and highlights aspects of responsibility on the organizational level and the individual level. The students will develop and present relevant topics of this field and will learn more about ongoing research projects of the Chair of Foundations of Business Administration and Theories of the Firm.

The class sessions will be interactive, with emphasis on discussion. Students will be expected to write a seminar paper and prepare a presentation.

Lecturer

Dr. Florian Überbacher
Email: florian.ueberbacher@business.uzh.ch

Dr. Nadine Hietschold
Email: nadine.hietschold@business.uzh.ch

Administrative Details

Time: Tuesdays from 8:00h to 12:00h.
(Dates: 20.02., 13.03., 20.03., 10.04., 17.04., 24.04., 08.05.)
Location: Seminar room UNK-E-2, Universitaetsstr. 84, 8006 Zurich
(Tram-Station Winkelriedstr., Line 9 & 10).

A maximum of **20 master students** will be admitted to the seminar. To participate, please send an email to the lectures by **February 5, 2018**. The admission works 'first come, first serve'.

In the first session (February 20, 2018), the course outline will be presented and students have to sign up for a topic. As we will focus in class on a total of **10 topics**, two students will be assigned to one topic and are expected to work in team. In order to get credit for the





course, students have to write a seminar paper, present their findings to the class, and participate in the seminar meetings. The deadline for the module-booking of this course is March 16, 2018. The successful completion of the seminar accounts for **3 ECTS-Points**, which can be credited to MA: BWL 5. The students will be provided access to the reading material at the beginning of the course via OLAT.

All questions concerning the seminar can be directed to the lecturers: florian.ueberbacher@business.uzh.ch or nadine.hietschold@business.uzh.ch

Grading Weights

| | |
|--|-----|
| Seminar Paper | 50% |
| Presentation | 40% |
| Attendance and participation in class discussion | 10% |

The deadline for handing in the **seminar papers** is **June 10, 2018**. Yet, we strongly advise all participants to use the second half of the semester to finish the papers and hand them in before the other exams start. The papers have to be written in English and are related to the assigned overall topic. The specific subject of the seminar papers' topics has to be coordinated with the lectures (for example, after the corresponding presentation of the overall topic). The **seminar paper** constitutes **50%** of the final grade. The main text (without title, list of references, figures, tables, etc.) of the seminar paper should be **between 2,000 and 3,000 words** long (based on 12-point font size, Times New Roman, 2.5cm margins on all sides, and 1.5 space lined spacing). Further guidelines will be provided at the beginning of the seminar. In one session of the seminar, each student will be able to discuss his/her seminar paper topic in class.

The **seminar presentation** constitutes **40%** of the final grade. The presentations on assigned topics are held in teams of two students. Presentations are graded, amongst other, along the ability of the team to convey the content in an understandable and interesting manner to the audience. The **presentation** should not exceed a maximum time of **30 minutes**. A draft version of the presentation has to be send to the lecturers latest Wednesday in the week before the presentation for feedback. All teams are asked to facilitate **class discussions up to 60 minutes** after their presentation. The organization of an appealing and creative discussion format is equally important to the seminar presentation. Discussion formats could include for example role plays, panel discussions, focus groups, case study discussions, competitions, among others. The discussants are encouraged to involve all class participants as well as the lectures (as participants). The creativity and usefulness of the chosen discussion format will be acknowledged in the grading.

Finally, active **oral participation** in class constitutes **10%** of the final grade. Each session will be highly interactive. Students must carefully prepare some lectures if announced (e.g., read a text, read a case study).



Course Outline

In the following you will find the themes we will address during the course. The readings listed under each theme provide you with a preliminary introduction to the literature in that field. We encourage all students to read them before class, reading them will facilitate group discussions in class. The course instructors will provide the references to you. The students preparing the presentations should do further literature research. As a starting point, students should use the introductory references attached to each theme.

The following research questions can guide you in preparing your presentations as well as your papers:

- (1) What is the theoretical/scientific relevance of the phenomenon you study?
- (2) What is the practical relevance of the topic you analyze?
- (3) What are the challenges for multinational corporations or their employees in relation to the topic you analyze?
- (4) What are possible solutions?
- (5) What are theoretical and practical implications that can be derived from these solutions?

Introductory Literature on How to Write Scientific Papers:

Bänsch, A., & Alewell 2009. **Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten**, München: Oldenbourg.

Huff, A. S. 1999. **Writing for scholarly publication**, Thousand Oaks, USA: Sage.

Huff, A. S. 2009. **Designing research for publication**, London: Sage.

Sachs, S., & Hauser, A. 2002. **Das ABC der betriebswirtschaftlichen Forschung: Anleitung zum wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten**, Zürich: Versus.

Theisen, R. 2012. **Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten: Technik-Methodik-Form**, 15. Auflage, München: Vahlen.

For further guidelines on how to write scientific papers, please refer to the download box on our homepage: <http://www.business.uzh.ch/professorships/as/themenliste.html>



Handbooks Related to the Seminar Topics:

Brenkert, G.G., & Beauchamp, T.L. 2010. **The Oxford handbook of business ethics**. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Crane, A., McWilliams, A., Matten, D., Moon, J., & Siegel, D.S. 2008. **The Oxford handbook of corporate social responsibility**. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Doh, J.P., & Stumpf, S.A. 2005. **Handbook on responsible leadership and governance in global business**. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Scherer, A.G., & Palazzo, G. 2008. **Handbook of research on global corporate citizenship**. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

A Note on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person's ideas, knowledge, or language without appropriate crediting of the source. Plagiarism is theft of intellectual property, and therefore is a serious offense. It cannot be tolerated in academic work. Any evidence of plagiarism in a student paper will result in a failing grade for the course. It is also inappropriate to use very long quotes from an author even if the material is properly cited and enclosed in quotation marks. Such a practice raises the possibility that students do not really understand the material they are quoting. Ideas should be expressed in the students' own words except for the occasional use of quotations from other sources to highlight or support specific points. For further information see the *Harvard Guide for Using Sources* and its guidelines on avoiding plagiarism: <https://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/avoiding-plagiarism>



INTRODUCTION: CSR AS A MEANS OF DOING GOOD?

First Lecture a) Introduction and Theoretical Foundations of CSR (given by lecturers, 20th of February 2018)

In an ongoing globalization process, organizations are faced with changing environmental conditions and growing demands of internal and external stakeholders. This in turn enhances the pressure on firms to engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives in order to address these challenges. The expanding role of the business corporation in society is discussed in the scholarly literature under the umbrella term of corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is becoming a broad field within management research. Its scholarly roots can be traced back to the 1950s. Yet, it gained momentum in the 1990s and evolved into a concept that is discussed from very different theoretical perspectives and that is defined in multiple ways. The seminar will start with a general introduction into the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its related theories. An emphasis will be placed on the challenges of globalization and the post-national constellation for the multinational corporation. Further, the general themes of the seminar will be introduced and the research program of the Chair of Foundations of Business Administration and Theories of the Firm in relation to issues of CSR will be presented.

References:

- Beck, U. 2000. **What is globalization?** Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Garriga, E., & Melé, D. 2004. Corporate social responsibility theories: Mapping the territory. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 53: 51-71.
- Habermas, J. 2001. **The postnational constellation: Political essays**. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- McWilliams, A. & Siegel, D. S. (2001). Corporate social responsibility: A theory of the firm perspective. **Academy of Management Review**, 26, 117-127.
- Scherer, A.G., & Palazzo, G. 2008. Globalization and corporate social responsibility. In A. Crane, A. McWilliams, D. Matten, J. Moon & D.S. Siegel (Eds.) **The Oxford handbook of corporate social responsibility**: 413-431. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Scherer, A.G., Palazzo, G., & Matten, D. 2009. Globalization as a challenge for business responsibilities. **Business Ethics Quarterly**, 19(3): 327-347.
- Scherer, A.G., & Palazzo, G. 2011. The new political role of business in a globalized world: A review of a new perspective on CSR and its implications for the firm, governance, and democracy. **Journal of Management Studies**, 48(4): 899-931.



First Lecture b) How to Conduct a Good Presentation/ Write a Good Seminar Paper (given by lecturers, 20th of February 2018)

In the first session, you will get an additional introduction on how to conduct a presentation in our seminar. We will examine the structure and content of a presentation and highlight the important aspects you need to consider when preparing it. We will review what a good presentation is and we will discuss how you can increase the interactivity with the audience during your presentation.

In this session, we will also discuss how to write a good seminar paper. We will examine the structure and content of a scientific paper and highlight the important aspects you need to consider when preparing your paper. This session is also useful to discuss the ideas for the topic of your seminar paper. You will be able to work with your peers on your ideas and we will discuss your research questions in class.

Theme 1: Corporate Social Irresponsibility: The Dark Side of CSR (13th of March 2018)

CSR activities of firms are intended to foster some social good beyond the firms' own interests. Hence, most academic literature focuses on the positive side of CSR and the benefits that result from CSR activities for firms and society. However, firms might not implement the claimed CSR activities properly or even act irresponsibly. An organization that has a bad image is not attractive to consumers, so why do some firms refuse to 'walk the talk'? The objective of this presentation is twofold. First, the presentation should focus on the potential negative consequences of CSR activities for firms (e.g., reduced performance) and society (e.g., failed CSR projects) and evaluate to what extent negative consequences play a role in practice. Second, the presentation should introduce different concepts that center around the improper implementation of CSR activities by firms (e.g., corporate social irresponsibility, decoupling, greenwashing) and investigate under which conditions firms tend to irresponsible behavior and insufficient implementation of CSR activities. Finally, the presentation can discuss different issues, for example, why irresponsible behavior can be successful for the firm, how the dark side of CSR can be prevented or even if there is a positive side of the dark side (could irresponsible behavior of a firm be beneficial to the firm's stakeholders?).

References:

- Crilly, D., Zollo, M., & Hansen, M. T. (2012). Faking it or muddling through? Understanding decoupling in response to stakeholder pressures. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(6), 1429-1448.
- Lange, D., & Washburn, N. T. (2012). Understanding attributions of corporate social irresponsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(2), 300-326.
- Pope, S., & Wæraas, A. (2016). CSR-washing is rare: A conceptual framework, literature review, and critique. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 137(1), 173-193.
- Wickert, C., Scherer, A. G., & Spence, L. J. (2016). Walking and talking corporate social responsibility: Implications of firm size and organizational cost. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(7), 1169-1196.



Theme 2: The Outcomes of CSR Activities (13th of March 2018)

CSR activities are implemented with the intention to achieve something 'good'. But what does 'good' mean and which outcomes do CSR activities affect? The presentation should review potential positive outcomes of CSR activities on the societal, organizational and individual level and evaluate whether there are conflicting goals between different intended outcomes. For example, do CSR activities that benefit society also lead to financial performance of firms? The 'shared value' concept even suggests that there is no trade-off between economic value and societal value and that company success is closely tied to societal progress. The presentation can elaborate on the relationship between CSR activities and financial performance of firms and review existing theoretical explanations as well as empirical results on the relationship between those two constructs. In addition, the presentation should investigate under which conditions positive outcomes are likely and discuss whether CSR activities are an adequate means to achieve 'social good' effectively.

References:

- Aguinis, H., & Glavas, A. 2012. What we know and don't know about corporate social responsibility. **Journal of Management**, 38(4): 932-968.
- Halme, M., & Laurila, J. (2009). Philanthropy, integration or innovation? Exploring the financial and societal outcomes of different types of corporate responsibility. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 84(3), 325-339.
- Orlitzky, M., Schmidt, F. L., & Rynes, S. L. (2003). Corporate social and financial performance: A meta-analysis. **Organization Studies**, 24(3), 403-441.
- Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2011). The big idea: Creating shared value. **Harvard Business Review**, 89(1), 2.

MICRO-LEVEL PERSPECTIVES

Theme 3: Psychological Drivers of CSR Activities (20th of March 2018)

CSR activities in firms are often guided by specific managers or individuals. Hence, it is important that these managers and employees are dedicated to the CSR philosophy and implement the CSR activities properly. Which individuals are particularly likely to engage in CSR activities and drive them? The presentation should summarize existing research on the motivations, values and psychological characteristics of individuals in CSR activities. One central question is for example, whether such managers require economic motivations or altruistic motivations or even both. Moreover, the presentation can discuss to what extent these managers and individuals differ from volunteers, individuals in non-profit organizations and traditional managers. Finally, the presentation can discuss why psychological characteristics are relevant at all and whether individual characteristics matter or if an overall organizational mission is sufficient for effective CSR activities. Do we need



to consider the micro level (i.e., individuals) of CSR or is the meso level (i.e., organization) sufficient?

References:

- Christensen, L. J., Mackey, A., & Whetten, D. (2014). Taking responsibility for corporate social responsibility: The role of leaders in creating, implementing, sustaining, or avoiding socially responsible firm behaviors. **The Academy of Management Perspectives**, 28(2), 164-178.
- Gond, J. P., El Akremi, A., Swaen, V., & Babu, N. (2017). The psychological microfoundations of corporate social responsibility: A person-centric systematic review. **Journal of Organizational Behavior**, 38(2), 225-246.
- Hemingway, C. A., & MacLagan, P. W. (2004). Managers' personal values as drivers of corporate social responsibility. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 50(1), 33-44.
- Mudrack, P. (2007). Individual personality factors that affect normative beliefs about the rightness of corporate social responsibility. **Business & Society**, 46(1), 33-62.

Theme 4: The Consumer Perception of CSR Activities (20th of March 2018)

One aim of firms' CSR engagement is to establish a responsible image and in this way, attract consumers. Firms can use CSR activities as a competitive advantage and differentiate products or get a price premium for their products. The consumer is a powerful stakeholder of the firm as they decide with their consumption choices on success and failure of products and services. Hence, for firms it is crucial to understand how consumers evaluate different CSR activities. Which CSR activities lead to the most positive consumer responses? According to which criteria evaluate consumers CSR activities –in other words: what do consumers care about and why do they like some CSR activities more than others? Are there differences in CSR perceptions between different consumers groups? And do the positive consumer perceptions actually lead to a benefit for firms (e.g., increased sales)? Hence, this presentation should emphasize the role of consumer perceptions in CSR. Furthermore, this presentation can discuss not only how CSR activities affect consumers but also how consumers can affect CSR activities of firms (e.g., consumer boycotts).

References:

- Mohr, L.A., & Webb, D.J. 2005. The effects of corporate social responsibility and price on consumer responses. **Journal of Consumer Affairs**, 39(1): 121-147.
- Pomering, A., & Dolnicar, S. (2009). Assessing the prerequisite of successful CSR implementation: are consumers aware of CSR initiatives? **Journal of Business Ethics**, 85, 285-301.
- Ramasamy, B., Yeung, M. C., & Au, A. K. (2010). Consumer support for corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of religion and values. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 91(1), 61-72.



Singh, J., Iglesias, O., & Batista-Foguet, J. 2012. Does having an ethical brand matter? The Influence of consumer perceived ethicality on trust, affect and loyalty. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 111(4): 541-549.

Theme 5: Employees and CSR Activities (10th of April 2018)

Employees are at the core of business activities and often seek identification with the firm they work at. Hence, a moral organization conducting CSR activities might encounter higher employee commitment than a firm that is perceived as unmoral by its members. This presentation should include theoretical concepts of employees' perceptions of CSR activities (e.g., organizational justice theory, attribution theory) and demonstrate how employee perceptions of CSR activities are formed. It would also be interesting to discuss how employee perceptions of CSR activities differ from perceptions of other stakeholder such as consumers or suppliers. For example, do consumers and employees perceive the same types of CSR activities as suitable? While CSR activities often address society or the environment, CSR activities can also positively affect the employees or even be targeted at employees. What are the (positive) effects of a firm's CSR activities on its employees? Are there even CSR activities that directly focus on employees rather than society and how are they different to 'traditional' CSR activities? Finally, this presentation should focus on the measures companies can take to enhance employees' commitment to CSR activities (e.g., leadership style).

References:

- Vlachos, P. A., Panagopoulos, N. G., & Rapp, A. A. (2013). Feeling good by doing good: Employee CSR-induced attributions, job satisfaction, and the role of charismatic leadership. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 118(3), 577-588.
- Rodrigo, P., & Arenas, D. (2008). Do employees care about CSR programs? A typology of employees according to their attitudes. **Journal of Business Ethics**, 83(2), 265-283.
- Rupp, D. E., Ganapathi, J., Aguilera, R. V., & Williams, C. A. (2006). Employee reactions to corporate social responsibility: An organizational justice framework. **Journal of Organizational Behavior**, 27(4), 537-543.
- Waldman, D. A., Siegel, D. S., & Javidan, M. (2006). Components of CEO transformational leadership and corporate social responsibility. **Journal of Management Studies**, 43(8), 1703-1725.



MACRO-LEVEL PERSPECTIVES

Theme 6: Institutions and CSR activities (10th of April 2018)

Institutional theory has become a dominant theoretical perspective in organization and management research. Hereby, institutions are considered as a crucial enabler and constraint on organizational activities in general – and thus also on CSR activities of business firms. In this session, some conceptual groundwork on institutions of various types and on various levels and on how they impact CSR (and CSIR) activities of business firms shall be developed. As such, this session will create a foundation for the subsequent, more specific sessions, where institutions also play a major role. In general, this presentation could consider the following questions: What are institutions? What are different types of institutions, and how do they work? What is the relationship between institutions and legitimacy? Why are institutions and legitimacy critical for organizations and their CSR activities? How do institutions shape the concrete manifestation of different types of CSR activities?

References:

- Campbell, J. L. 2007. Why would Corporations behave in Socially Responsible Ways? An Institutional Theory of Corporate Social Responsibility: **Academy of Management Review**, 32(3): 946-967.
- Scott, W. R. 2008. **Institutions and Organizations: Ideas and Interests** (Chapter 3: Three Pillars of Institutions, p. 47-72). New York: Sage.
- Marquis, C., Glynn, M. A., Davis, G. F. 2007. Community Isomorphism and Corporate Social Action. **Academy of Management Review**, 32(3): 925-945.
- Matten, D., & Moon, J. 2008. "Implicit" and "Explicit" CSR: A Conceptual Framework for a Comparative Understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility. **Academy of Management Review**, 33(2): 404-424.

Theme 7: Private Governance and CSR activities (17th of April 2018)

As a wide range of scholars across disciplines have been arguing, national governments have become increasingly unable and unwilling to regulate companies and to secure corporate contributions to social welfare. To fill this regulatory vacuum, private actors have stepped in on the national as well as transnational levels aiming to constrain and regulate companies and promote CSR. In this context, the presentation could address the following questions: Why have national governments become increasingly unable and unwilling to regulate corporations? Who are the private actors who have assumed a role in the governance of corporations? What are the governance strategies that private actors mobilize? How and under which conditions do these private governance tools work? How do corporations respond to these private governance tools?



References:

- Bartley, T. 2007. Institutional Emergence in an Era of Globalization: The Rise of Transnational Private Regulation of Labor and Environmental Conditions. **American Journal of Sociology**, 113(2): 297-351.
- King, A. A., & Lenox, M. J. 2000. Industry Self-Regulation without Sanctions: The Chemical Industry's Responsible Care Program. **Academy of Management Journal**, 43(4): 698-716.
- Sharkey, A. J., & Bromley, P. 2015. Can Ratings have Indirect Effects? Evidence from the Organizational Response to Peers' Environmental Ratings. **American Sociological Review**, 80(1): 63-91.
- Vogel, D. 2008. Private Global Business Regulation. **Annual Review of Political Science**, 11: 261-282.

Theme 8: Governments and CSR activities (17th of April 2018)

Despite the advent of private regulation (see Theme 7), national governments are an important player in the promotion of CSR. For instance, there are several ways in which public regulation and private regulation relate to each other. Moreover, governments, regulators, and politicians themselves are an important target of both responsible as well as irresponsible corporate behavior. Hence, this presentation could deal with the following questions: How do the presence and the absence of public governance impact the development of private governance on a national as well as transnational level? How can corporate political activities contribute to as well as undermine efficient public governance? What makes corporate political activities responsible as well as irresponsible?

References:

- Schrempf-Stirling, J. 2016. State power: Rethinking the Role of the State in Political Corporate Social Responsibility. **Journal of Business Ethics**, Article in press.
- Moon, J., & Vogel, D. 2008. **Corporate Social Responsibility, Government, and Civil Society**. In Crane, A., Matten, D., McWilliams, A., Moon, J., & Siegel, D. A. (eds.) Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Short, J. L., & Toffel, M. W. 2010. Making Self-Regulation more than merely symbolic: The Critical Role of the Legal Environment. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 55: 361-396.
- Mantere, S., Pajunen, K., & Lamberg, J. A. 2009. Vices and Virtues of Corporate Political Activity. **Business & Society**, 48(1): 105-132.



Theme 9: Social Movements and CSR Activities (24th of April 2018)

Social movements – forms of relatively informal collective action with a focus on ethical, political, or social issues and aimed at promoting social change – have become a powerful driver of firms' CSR activities. This presentation could deal with the following questions: What are major types of social movements of relevance to the promotion of CSR, and how do they differ from each other? Why and when do social movements form? How (through what strategies and tactics) can social movements promote CSR in companies and industries? How do companies respond to social movements? What makes companies more or less susceptible to social movement pressure?

References:

- Briscoe, F., & Gupta, A. 2016. Social Activism in and around Organizations. **Academy of Management Annals**, 10(1): 671-727.
- Den Hond, F., & De Bakker, F. G. A. 2007. Ideologically Motivated Activism: How Activist Groups influence Corporate Social Change Activities. **Academy of Management Review**, 32(3): 901-924.
- McDonnell, M.-H., & King, B. 2013. Keeping up Appearances: Reputational Threat and Impression Management after Social Movement Boycotts. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 58(3): 387-419.
- McDonnell, M.-H. 2016. Radical Repertoires: The Incidence and Impact of Corporate Sponsored Social Activism. **Organization Science**, 27(1): 53-71.

Theme 10: Markets and Morality (24th of April 2018)

Finally, we move the level of analysis from individual firms to focus on the relationship between entire markets and society and specifically on the morality of markets. Markets are systems of exchange where producers, consumers, and other actors interact. Questions that the according presentation could deal with include: Are markets good or bad for society? How are moral markets created? How does the morality of markets affect the morality of individual companies? How can companies in immoral markets gain legitimacy?

References:

- Anteby, M. 2010. Markets, Morals, and Practices of Trade: Jurisdictional Disputes in the U.S. Commerce in Cadavers. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 55: 606-638.
- Fourcade, M., & Healy, K. 2007. Moral Views of Market Society. **Annual Review of Sociology**, 33: 285-311.
- Quinn, S. 2008. The Transformation of Morals in Markets: Death, Benefits, and the Exchange of Life Insurance Policies. **American Journal of Sociology**, 114(3): 738-780.



Weber, K., Heinze, K. L., & DeSoucey. 2008. Forage for Thought: Mobilizing Codes in the Movement for Grass-fed Meat and Dairy Products. **Administrative Science Quarterly**, 53: 529-567.