

UHON 302-022
The Corporation in Society
Spring 2015
MW 1-2:15 PM
Version 2.3

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Course description

This course will focus on the evolving role of the corporation in society, from the early role of a corporation in colonial times through the present day. We will pay special attention to how society's expectations have changed and how business (and managerial) behavior has responded to these heightened expectations. This course is built on an active exchange between students, so class participation is a necessary component to a fulfilling classroom experience. We will also make extensive use of current events as examples to the ideas we are discussing. Finally, the understanding firm-stakeholder (stakeholders include customers, owners, suppliers, the community in which the firm is located, etc.) relationships to uncover how a firm manages its role in society will play an important role in the course. Understanding ethical issues in business also form a centerpiece to class discussions.

Course materials

There is no assigned text for this class. Instead, there will be various readings handed out in class for each session with required reading. These will also be made available in pdf form whenever possible. Additionally we will watch two movies relating to the corporation's role in society.

You are also **strongly encouraged** to subscribe to a business periodical (*Business Week*, *Financial Times*, *Fortune*, *The Economist*, *The Wall Street Journal*). Each student will be responsible for presenting on one current event during the semester..

Course requirements and grading

In developing course requirements and a grading scheme, I have tried to include a broad range of assignments that encompass not only the course material but also oral and written communication skills:

Class participation and engagement	30 %
Presentation of one current event	5 %
Three short reaction papers, one must based the Enron film	15 %
Stakeholder analysis group project	20 %
Final paper based on the film <i>Roger and Me</i>	30%

Any total score over 85 will earn an A. 70-85 will earn a CR. Under 70 will be a NC. But, this is subject to change as I see how the course develops. If you ever have any questions about your standing in the class, please ask me.

Participation and engagement. As a seminar, this class will rely heavily on input from every student, including yourself. The quality of the classroom experience will depend heavily on the participation and active engagement of the students. Therefore, attendance will be a critical element of our collective learning. Equally important is active *class engagement* with the course material and with the other seminar participants.

Presentation of one current event. Once during the semester each student will have to present on a current event that relates to the class in some way. This means that updates concerning the talent on *American Idol* probably won't fit unless there's a business angle. But, an update on BP's handling of the oils spill in the gulf would be entirely relevant. Students will need to explain the event and the topic in the class to which it relates.

Short reaction papers. These 2 page papers require you to respond to any material from the class. These papers should communicate any feelings elicited by the reading or film in question. One of the **three** reaction papers must be in reaction to the film *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*.

Team stakeholder analysis. Working with up to 2 other students, this assignment requires you to choose any current (within the past 6 months) issue facing a corporation. Explain the issue. Conduct a stakeholder analysis of the issue and explain the connection of each stakeholder to the issue. Explain and justify how the corporation should prioritize the different stakeholders in the issue. Construct a response to the issue for the corporation for the most important stakeholder. Construct a response from that stakeholder group to the corporation based on your response from the corporation to that group. This assignment should be no shorter than 10 pages. This assignment is due on the date indicated on the course summary schedule. You should submit your issue and team members on the date indicated on the summary of classes.

Final paper from Roger and Me. This assignment requires you to write an essay on any salient issue raised in the film. Construct a thesis statement – a short (25 words or less) summary statement – that encapsulates your position on the issue. In explaining your position make sure you address both the pros and cons of the issue. Support your arguments using facts, avoid what you “believe” or “feel”. Include a conclusion summarizing the evidence presented. This assignment should be no shorter than 7 pages. It is due no later than midnight the day of the scheduled final for this class.

Policies and procedures

Reasonable accommodation will be given to any individual with a legitimate disability. Please contact the instructor privately for arrangements. If you are a qualified person with disabilities who might need appropriate academic adjustments, please communicate with me as soon as possible so that we may make appropriate arrangements to meet your needs in a timely manner. Frequently, we will need to coordinate accommodating activities with other offices on campus. Course materials can be made available in alternative formats.

Finally, if I can be helpful to you in any way as we proceed through the course, please see me during office hours, make an appointment, or send me an email.

Appendix 1: Summary schedule

Week #	Sess. #/date	Topic	Reading
1	1 M 1/12	Intro	<i>No reading</i>
		Part 1, Corporate social responsibility	
2	2 W 1/14	The corporation and its stakeholders	Maier, "The revolutionary origins of the American corporation", pp. 51-60 Begin INB case
	3 M 1/19	Martin Luther King Day	No Class
	4 W 1/21	Inland National Bank discussion continued	<i>No Reading</i>
3	5 M 1/26	Corporate social responsibility	Lance Moir, "What do we mean by corporate social responsibility?", pp. 16-19, 20-21 Ed Freeman, <i>Managing for Stakeholders</i> , pp. 98-102 The Economist, "Just good business", January 19, 2008, Chester Barnard, <i>Functions of the Executive</i> , pp. 272-276 Discussion of arguments Pro/Con of CSR
	6 W 1/28	Global corporate citizenship	Sandra Waddock, "The development of corporate responsibility/corporate citizenship" Mirvis & Googins, "The stages of corporate citizenship", to page 118.
4	7 M 2/02	Are corporations really getting better?	Brammer and Berman, working paper, "Great Expectations"
	8 W 2/04	CSR wrap up	Case: The Collapse of Enron
		Part 2, Ethics	
5	9 M 2/09	Managing public issues Ethics and ethical learning	Wartick & Mahon, "Toward a Substantive Definition of the Corporate Issue Construct" Markkula Center for Applied Ethics readings: Ethical decision making: The Utilitarian approach, the Rights approach, & the Fairness approach Also read the article and follow through Kirk Hanson's powerpoint about how to build an ethical organization: "Towards an Ethical Organization".
	10 W 2/11	Ethics and ethical learning	The Parable of the Sadhu Begin research for "Find a company to work for" assignment
6	11 M 2/16	Ethical reasoning wrap up	The Collapse of Enron, further discussion Current event: Victoria Garcia
	12 W 2/18	Assignment: Where to work	Discussion of assignment: "Find a company to work for" Current event: Tori Pryor "Find a company to work for" assignment due
7	13 M 2/23	<i>Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room, II</i>	<i>No reading</i>
	14 W 2/25	<i>Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room, II</i>	<i>No reading</i>
		Part 3, Stakeholders	
8	15 M 3/02	Stakeholder theory: An overview	Elms, Johnson-Cramer, Berman "Stakeholder Theory" Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, "Managing for Stakeholders" Current event: Jay Maharath
	16 W 3/04	Shareholder rights and corporate governance, I	Corporate governance: An overview The legal rights of shareholders Enron reaction paper due
	M 3/9-F 3/13	<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>No class</i>
9	17 M 3/16	No class	Schedule a meeting, like Tori

	18 W 3/18	Shareholders and corporate governance, II	Van Buren & Greenwood, "Enhancing Employee Voice: Are Voluntary Employer–Employee Partnerships Enough?", <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i> , 81: 209-221. McCall, <i>Makes Me Wanna Holler</i> , Chapters 28 & 33 Current event: Blythe Frew
10	19 M 3/23	Employees and diversity	Friedman, "The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits" Hill, "Stakeholders vs. shareholders", <i>Dollars & Sense</i> Current event: Lauren Wade
	20 W 3/25	Business & the media	Croteau & Williams, <i>The Business of Media: Corporate Media and the Public Interest</i> , Chapter 5
11	21 M 3/30	Ecology and sustainable development in global business	Arnie Cooper (interview with Alex Steffen), "The Bright Green City", <i>The Sun</i> , April, 2010: 4-12. Current event: Anand Macherla
	22 W 4/1	Meeting with groups to discuss stakeholder assignment	<i>No Reading</i>
12	23 M 4/6	The community and the corporation	
	24 W 4/8	Understanding corporate culture	Edgar Schein, <i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i> , Chapter 1 Current Event: Clayton Richards
13	25 M 4/13	<i>Film: Roger & Me</i>	<i>No Reading</i>
	26 W 4/15	<i>Film: Roger & Me</i>	<i>No Reading</i>
14	27 M 4/20	Group assignment presentations	<i>No Reading</i> Stakeholder assignment due
		Part 5, Business-government relations	
	28 W 4/22	The corporation as political actor	Edwin Epstein, <i>The Corporation in American Politics</i> , pp. 189-213 Current event: Fouad Rtimate
15	29 M 4/27	Guest Speaker: Sen. Daniel Ivey-Soto	<i>No reading</i>
	30 W 4/29	Course wrap up	Course reflection
		Final paper due by midnight, Wednesday, May 6	