UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Key Information

Module code: ISSU0037  
Taught during: Session One: Monday 1 July - Friday 19 July 2019  
Module workload: 45 teaching hours plus approximately 100 study hours  
Module leader: Barnali Choudhury  
Department: Faculty of Laws  
Credit: 15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US  
Level: Level 1, first year Undergraduate  
Pre-requisites: Standard entry requirements  
Assessment: Presentation (25%), Essay (75%)

Module Overview
This module offers perspectives on corporate social responsibility both as a governing mechanism for businesses as well as a form of business practice. It examines the theoretical paradigms surrounding the corporate objective, international movements in corporate social responsibility led by organisations such as the OECD and the UN, and delves into the role of corporations’ vis-à-vis social rights at both domestic and international levels. The module devotes a significant proportion of time to the role of corporations in human rights and furthering social welfare and will discuss key critical perspectives on other social rights, including labour and the environment, where relevant. This module challenges students into viewing the role and responsibility of the corporation from perspectives beyond the traditional idea of profit making.

Week One
- Theories and Justifications for Corporate Social Responsibility
- Understanding Corporate Law – An Introduction to Corporate Law, Theory, and Governance Practices
- Regulation of and Liability faced by Corporations

Week Two
- Theories and Justifications for Corporate Social Responsibility
- Understanding Corporate Law – An Introduction to Corporate Law, Theory, and Governance Practices
- Regulation of and Liability faced by Corporations

Week Three
- Supply Chains
- Corporate Social Responsibility and International Trade
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Foreign Investment
Module Aims
This module introduces students to the modern corporation and debunks the notion that these entities have only one purpose: to make profits. It explores the many facets by which corporations can contribute to non-economic goals. From a theoretical perspective, it discusses why corporations should promote non-economic goals and it looks at the constraints on its ability to do so. The module explores the many international initiatives now focused on regulating corporate conduct and critically evaluates these efforts while comparing and contrasting these initiatives with efforts at the domestic level. By taking a comparative perspective – for instance, by exploring the initiatives of the U.K., France, and the U.S among others – this module helps students evaluate the effectiveness of individual corporate social responsibility initiatives and suggests ways forward.

Teaching Methods
Interactive lectures and seminars, open class and small group discussions, group work, excursions to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s), and private study. Reading lists will be available online via the UCL library site. Students will be directed towards class materials, further support and discussion forums on the Virtual Learning Environment.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this module, students will:
- Describe contemporary social issues implicated by corporate activity
- Critically discuss the theories underlying corporate governance and international human rights law
- Describe the regulatory challenges raised by corporations with respect to the protection of human and other social rights
- Critically assess existing international and domestic mechanisms regulating corporate issues implicating social rights
- Identify shortcomings in current regulatory efforts to regulate corporations and devise suggestions for improving these shortcomings

Assessment Methods
- 10-minute presentation (25%)
- 2,500 word essay (75%)

Key Texts
The readings for this module are primarily article based. However, these texts provide excellent background reading:
- Peter Muchlinski, Multinational Enterprises & the Law, 2nd ed. (OUP, 2007)