

MGT 4803: Business Decisions for Sustainability and Shared Value
Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS) Foundation Course

Spring 2019: Tue-Thu 12:00-1:15 pm
Room #235, Economic Development Building (760 Spring St. NW, Tech Square)

Instructor: Dr. Ravi Subramanian, Associate Professor, Scheller College of Business

How to reach me?

Email me at ravi.subramanian@scheller.gatech.edu. If you would like to meet with me, please email me, suggesting a few dates/times that work for you and we will work out a mutually convenient time. My office is in Room #472 on the fourth floor of the Scheller College of Business. **Please address me as “Ravi.”**

Course Description

At the heart of the concept of “business sustainability and shared value” are interconnections among the economic, environmental, and societal dimensions of business performance. This course uses the World Economic Forum Global Risks Report and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as frameworks to explore the role of fundamental human needs (food, water, shelter, energy, wages, and community) in shaping long-term business value and overall economic progress. The course is multidisciplinary, discussion-oriented, and experiential, and uses a variety of pedagogical approaches such as lectures on fundamental concepts, cases, videos, and talks by invited speakers.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify drivers of long-term business value and relate these drivers to fundamental human needs.
- Determine opportunities for shared value based on the recognition of drivers of long-term business value.
- Analyze the economic, environmental, and societal performance impacts of shared-value initiatives.

Please note that since this course is an SLS foundation course, **assessments of learning will be conducted by SLS**. These assessments help track the achievement of SLS’ student learning outcomes and provide data for continuous program improvement and accreditation purposes. Students are also encouraged to participate in SLS events and opportunities. Please visit:

<https://serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu/events-and-workshops>

SLS-Specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- Students will be able to identify relationships among ecological, social, and economic systems (SLO #1)

Required Course Materials

- Cases to be purchased from HBS Publishing. Please use the following link to purchase access: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/595798>
- ForClass access (online content management platform, \$10 per student). This will be the avenue for class preparation/participation to be tracked. Please register at the following link: <https://app.forclass.com/enroll/DAFXEK>
- Additional course material posted on Canvas (<https://canvas.gatech.edu/>).

Laptop/Electronic Device Policy

In this course, it is important that all students have active engagement in class. Accessing electronic devices (smartphones, tablets, laptops, etc.) in class stifles engagement and diminishes the quality of the learning experience for everyone. For these reasons, the use of electronic devices is **not permitted** during class time (unless necessitated by a special consideration/need).

Grading

Final grades will be based on the following individual and group evaluation components. Late submissions for non-excusable reasons are not allowed. Requests for excused class absences/submissions should be made through the Dean of Students (please visit <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/class-attendance>).

Component	Individual/ Group	Weight	Notes
Class Attendance/ Participation + Article Discussion	Individual	20% + 5%	1 unexcused class absence allowed
ForClass	Individual	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due by 9:00 am on due dates (see sessions marked with an asterisk '*' in the Detailed Session Plan) Five unanswered questions allowed
Final Project	Group	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-4 slides summarizing project intent and progress due by 9:00 am on Thursday, February 7 on Canvas. Final presentation file (PowerPoint or other) due by 9:00 am on Tuesday, April 16 on Canvas. Final Project Presentations will be held on Tuesday, April 16 and Thursday, April 18
Personal Reflection	Individual	15%	800-1000 words Due by 11:55pm on Sunday, April 21 on Canvas

Special Considerations/Needs

Please send me an email by the end of the second week of the semester (**Friday, January 18**) if you require accommodations due to a special need. Please visit and follow the instructions at <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/content/student-instructions>. I will work with you and the Office of Disability Services to make the necessary accommodations.

Class Attendance/Participation

Please plan to attend, be prepared for, and ready to contribute in every class. Please be punctual, turn electronics off, and participate courteously. Please always **place your name card/tent in front of you**.

While you must read **every case and article** ahead of class (as listed in the Detailed Session Plan at the end of this syllabus), **you will be assigned specific articles to lead discussions in class. In addition to class attendance, your preparedness for these discussions will also determine your overall Class Attendance/Participation score.** Additional instructions for leading the discussions of articles will be provided in class. Peer evaluations will be conducted for assessing the quality of discussion leadership.

ForClass for Cases

To facilitate your preparation before class and to help the class be more interactive, we will use an online content management platform called ForClass. The tool allows you to provide answers to assigned questions electronically, allows me to collect your answers and facilitate a more effective class discussion, and enables you to learn from your peers as well.

Please thoroughly read every case prior to its discussion in class. For each case, questions requiring your responses **before class** will be posted on ForClass. Please respond to the assigned questions on ForClass by **9:00 am** on the date when the case is scheduled to be discussed. These case discussion sessions are marked with an asterisk '*' in the Detailed Session Plan at the end of this syllabus.

You may read and discuss the cases with your colleagues before class, but you **must submit your answers individually. You may be called on in class to explain your responses to the questions.**

Personal Reflection

Please submit, by **11:55 pm on Sunday, April 21 (on Canvas)** a two-page personal reflection, approximately 800-1000 words long, describing how the concepts/class discussions in this course have influenced your thinking surrounding sustainability and shared value, and what you believe you can do as an individual about to embark on a professional career, to initiate or facilitate shared value initiatives. An assignment link will be set up on Canvas.

Please do not leave this assignment for the very last moment when the semester is bound to get very busy. You can start working on your personal reflection at any time during the course.

Group Project:

The group project for this edition of the course will be a real-world project with one of our SLS partners. Specific details will be provided during the second week of class when the partner is scheduled to visit class and explain the project setting and the project topics available (there may be a bidding process for these projects). The output of the project will be a formal presentation towards the end of the semester with the partner and other invitees in attendance (presentation schedule will be announced).

- Groups **(of 3-4 students each)** must submit a brief presentation file (3-4 slides) of their project intent and progress by **9:00 am on Thursday, February 7** on Canvas. These slides should very briefly touch upon:
 - i. Topic of the project,
 - ii. Description of the initiative/concept that the group intends to pursue,
 - iii. Progress on the project so far.
- The final presentation file (PowerPoint or other) is due by **9:00 am on Tuesday, April 16** on Canvas.
 - Groups will present their projects in class on either **Tuesday, April 16** or **Thursday, April 18**. Presentation time slots (20 minutes each) will be randomly assigned ahead of time. We will have 5-10 minutes for Q&A after each presentation.
 - The course project grade will be based on how far the group's stated intent was taken to completion, the quality of the analysis, and the quality of the presentation (including the information contained in the presentation deck).
 - Across-group peer evaluations may be used as additional input for assessing the quality of the presentations/analyses.
 - Within-group peer evaluations will be used to determine whether an individual student's score for the project should be different (higher or lower) than the group's score.

Georgia Tech Honor Code

Students are expected to act and **must expect their peers to act** according to the highest ethical standards, as outlined in the honor code at <http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-affairs/academic-honor-code>. As a general rule, you are not allowed to use any material from previous years (including class notes, cases, readings, etc.) or from individuals that are currently taking or have taken a related class at Georgia Tech or elsewhere. Also, sharing or offering to share any material with or otherwise unfairly assisting future students or students in other sections of the course will violate the Georgia Tech honor code and is not allowed.

Detailed Session Plan

Sessions marked with an asterisk “*” have a ForClass assignment due by **9:00 am** on the day of class.

Session #	Day	Date	Topic	Readings/Notes
1	Tue	Jan 8	A: Introduction (1)	Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>World Economic Forum: The Global Risks Report 2017 (Part 1, pages 16-27)</i> • <i>UN Sustainable Development Goals – Why Do They Matter?</i> • <i>Creating Shared Value</i>
2	Thu	Jan 10	A: Introduction (2)	
3	Tue	Jan 15	Introduction of Project Theme/Topics	Mr. Garry Harris (Managing Director, Center for Sustainable Communities)
4*	Thu	Jan 17	B: Food*	Case: <i>Nestlé Sustainable Agriculture Initiative</i>
5	Tue	Jan 22	B: Food	Video: <i>Sustainable</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Five Private Companies Helping to Reduce Hunger</i> • <i>Corporations and the Fight Against Hunger: Why CSR Won't Do</i> • <i>Meet 5 Startups that are Changing the Narrative on Hunger</i>
6	Thu	Jan 24	B: Food	Invited Speaker Mr. Steven Fazenbaker (Coordinator, STAR Program, GT Division of Student Life)
7*	Tue	Jan 29	C: Water*	Case: <i>One Water: A Refreshingly Different “Ethical” Product</i>
8	Thu	Jan 31	C: Water	Video: <i>Watershed</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heineken Raises the Bar on Water Sustainability in Asia Pacific</i> • <i>Water Sustainability in a Changing World</i> • <i>The Business Opportunity in Water Conservation</i>
9	Tue	Feb 5	C: Water	Invited Speaker Mr. Jon Radtke (Water Sustainability Program Director, Coca-Cola North America)
10	Thu	Feb 7	Project Topic Briefs	Brief presentations of Project topics by groups
11*	Tue	Feb 12	D: Shelter*	Case: <i>To Build a Different Model: The Case for Preservation of Affordable Housing, Inc.</i>
12	Thu	Feb 14	D: Shelter	Video: <i>The Affordable-Housing Crisis</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Facebook and Google are Both Building More Affordable Housing in Silicon Valley</i> • <i>Affordable Housing is Good for Business</i> • <i>The \$300 House (1) and (2)</i>
13	Tue	Feb 19	D: Shelter	Invited Speaker Mr. Raymond Kuniansky (Chief Development Officer, Columbia Residential)

Session #	Day	Date	Topic	Readings/Notes
14	Thu	Feb 21		<i>Campus Sustainability Tour</i>
15*	Tue	Feb 26	E: Energy*	Case: <i>The Fox Islands Wind Project</i>
16	Thu	Feb 28	E: Energy	Video: <i>The History of the 1970s Energy Crisis</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Alabama Power Partners with Signature Homes to Develop Smart Neighborhood</i> • <i>How Clean Energy is Transforming the World, in 5 Charts</i> • <i>Lighting Up Lagos</i>
17	Tue	Mar 5	E: Energy	<i>Invited Speaker</i> <i>Mr. Bruce Edelston (President, Energy Policy Group, LLC)</i>
18	Thu	Mar 7	Project Updates	<i>Discussion of Project progress</i>
19*	Tue	Mar 12	F: Wages*	Case: <i>Nike: Sustainability and Labor Practices 1998-2013</i>
20	Thu	Mar 14	F: Wages	Video: <i>My Reality: A Hidden America</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why Wal-Mart's Minimum Wage Hike Makes Business Sense</i> • <i>The Case for Paying People More + McDonald's Sample Employee Budget</i> • <i>Five Policy Experiments in the Works Across the World to Tackle New Workspace</i>
21	Tue	Mar 26	F: Wages	<i>Invited Speaker (Tentative)</i> <i>Ms. Che Watkins (President and CEO, The Center for Working Families, Inc.)</i>
22	Thu	Mar 28	G: Community	<i>Invited Speaker</i> <i>Mr. George Halow (Investment Strategy & Planning Manager, Ford Motor Company)</i>
23*	Tue	Apr 2	G: Community*	Case: <i>Timberland and Community Involvement (with Short Video at HBS Publishing)</i>
24	Thu	Apr 4	G: Community	Video: <i>NOT Business as Usual</i> Articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wells Fargo Diverse Community Capital + Program Guidelines</i> • <i>Impact Investing for Good and Market Returns</i> • <i>What Connects a Corporate Giant, Farmers, and We the Consumer? Meet ITC e-Choupal</i>
25	Tue	Apr 9	Career Session	<i>Invited Panel (Tentative)</i>
26	Thu	Apr 11		[Buffer Session to allow Scheduling Changes]
27	Tue	Apr 16	Project Presentations	<i>Schedule TBD</i>
28	Thu	Apr 18	Project Presentations	<i>Schedule TBD</i>
29	Tue	Apr 23	Wrap-Up	Wrap-up/Course evaluations/SLS focus group