



GLOBAL SUMMER PROGRAMME 2026

COR-LAW2245 SUSTAINABILITY LAW IN BUSINESS PRACTICE

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the 21st century business world, it is no longer common for businesses to pursue only profit maximisation or revenue growth at all costs. There is a greater global impetus for organisations to look at their businesses holistically to attain a triple bottom line, and pursue sustainable environmental, social and governance (ESG) outcomes for their stakeholders. This course seeks to explore how law promotes sustainability in the business world across various corporate functions, and how it holds businesses accountable for their sustainability practices. It will be taught from a practitioner's real-world perspective and give students a glimpse into the interplay of law, sustainability and business in practice.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- appreciate the role and influence of law in business and corporate sustainability;
- get a glimpse into the interplay of law, sustainability and business in practice;
- gain exposure to the latest sustainability issues concerning businesses, and prepare themselves for future career opportunities and challenges

PRE-REQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS / MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

NA

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Individual class participation : 20%
 Group presentation : 30%
 Written assignment : 50%

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

Over the course of weekly 3-hour seminars, students will explore the intersections between law, sustainability and different aspects of business practice through meaningful discussions, role-playing, research and sharing of current real-life topics and developments. External practitioners may also be invited to the class to enrich students with their perspectives.

CONSULTATIONS

By appointment

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

- Readings will be included in the weekly reading list uploaded on eLearn.
- Students will be expected to read such cases, articles and materials as are indicated for each week.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the university's accessibility services team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: accessibility@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

LESSON PLAN	
LESSONS	TOPICS
LESSON 1	Introduction - Sustainability and Business Practice - The Role of Law in Corporate Sustainability - The Emergence of 'ESG'
LESSON 2	Environmental Sustainability - Corporate Disclosures, Standards and Compliance - Sustainability Marketing and Greenwashing
LESSON 3	Environmental Sustainability - Corporate Climate Policies and Accountability - Corporate Climate Litigation
LESSON 4	Environmental Sustainability - Corporate Contracts and Operations - Green Finance - Private Environmental Governance
LESSON 5	Field Trip on Corporate Sustainability / Guest Sharing (details TBC)
LESSON 6	Social Sustainability - Companies and Human Rights Law - Companies, Human Resources & Employment Law
LESSON 7	Corporate Governance - Directors' Duties & Liabilities relating to Sustainability - Corporate Risk Management - Ethics & Corruption
LESSON 8	Businesses and International Environmental Law
LESSON 9	Sustainability Innovation and Regulation
LESSON 10	Field Trip on Sustainability Innovation / Guest Sharing (details TBC)
LESSON 11	Group Presentations (Part I)
LESSON 12	Group Presentations (Part II) / Course wrap-up