



# **The University of Hong Kong**

## **Faculty of Business and Economics**

### **ACCT3111**

## **Corporate Governance & Social Responsibility**

### **Course Syllabus**

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## **Course Content and Objectives**

After the 1997-98 Asia financial crisis and the 2008-09 financial tsunami in Europe and the United States, corporate governance and social responsibility has attracted widespread public attention and debates. In the past few decades, our Asian organizations have undergone dramatic transformations in their business strategies and practices. However, what are the characteristics of the corporate governance in Asia? How are Asian organizations adapting their governance in response to the dynamic business and regulatory environment? What are the impacts? Most of these questions are still under-explored. This is mainly because we do not fully understand our institutional and business environment and how these factors affect the corporate and managerial behaviors.

This course is designed to provide a theoretical framework to analyze these questions. More specifically, this course is to provide a multi-faceted overview of the characteristics and unique challenges of governance strategy and practices in Asia. Main topics include the country institutional environment, corporate ownership, family- and state-owned enterprises, board of directors and corporate transparency. In addition, the topics of corporate social responsibility, sustainability reporting, nonprofit organizations and social enterprises will be discussed in-depth to bring this course to a more forward-looking conclusion.

### **A Warm Reminder**

This is not a number-crunching course (No debit and credit!). For many of the management issues we are going to discuss, there are no absolute right or wrong answers, but only more or less developed one. If you are uncomfortable with ambiguity, this course may not be good for you.

Corporate governance is a cross-discipline subject. Students are expected to have a limited background in accounting, finance and management. As business cases will be used extensively throughout the course, students should have adequate exposure to and experience in analyzing and presenting cases on both individual and group basis.

### **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**

After completing this course, students are expected to achieve the following intended learning outcomes (ILOs):

1. To gain a reasonable understanding of theoretical development and practical knowledge in corporate governance and social responsibility.
2. To enhance students' appreciation and articulation of complex issues in corporate governance under local and international, particularly Asian, settings.
3. To gain knowledge on and apply effective corporate and management control through divergent strategic, financial, societal, and management contexts.
4. To familiarize students with critical issues of CG and CSR, including corporate ownership structures, transparency, board practices, CSR strategy formulation and implementation, and their impacts on different stakeholders.
5. To integrate management control issues with corporate governance as a firm-specific objective with (to) superior firm performance and greater accountability.
6. To gain hands-on experience to analyze, communicate, provide recommendations on business cases with salient sensitivities to various corporate governance settings.
7. To arouse interest in corporate social responsibility in local and Asian settings and to keep abreast of latest practical issues on CSR.

## Alignment between Program Learning Objectives and Course ILOs

Faculty Learning Goals	Course ILOs
1. Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of accounting, business and economics	ILO 1, 3, 4, 5 & 7
2. Application and integration of knowledge	ILO 2, 3 & 5
3. Inculcating professionalism	ILO 4, 6 & 7
4. Developing global outlook	ILO 2 & 7
5. Mastering communication skills	ILO 2, 3 & 6
6. Cultivating leadership	ILO 4, 6 & 7

### Academic Conduct

Students are expected to do your own class work. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism would automatically result in an F-grade. Moreover, plagiarism and copying of copyright materials are serious offences and may lead to further disciplinary actions. Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: [www.hku.hk/plagiarism](http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism). A booklet entitled “*Plagiarism and How to Avoid it*” is also available from the Main Library.

### Class Materials

As the contents to be discussed in this course are very contemporary, I do not prescribe a textbook. All required lecture notes, cases and readings will be organized by the instructor and distributed to the students at the beginning of semester. Additional readings may be added for class discussion.

### Course Assessment Components

1. Attendance & Participation (10%) & Group Learning Memo (15%)	25%
2. Business Case Analysis, Presentation, Report & Q&A (Group Basis)	20%
3 CSR Report Analysis (Group Basis)	15%
4. Final Write-ups (Individual Basis)	40%

### Assessment 1 – Attendance & Participation (10%) & Group Memo (15%)

We will rely on a wide range of business cases and readings as the primary means for knowledge dissemination. Each student of the class is expected to well-prepare, take ownership for the class discussion of the assigned readings and business cases. The grade for individual attendance and participation will be based on the extent of the student’s participation and contribution.

Moreover, in order to summarize/ concretize what you learn and discuss, at the start of each lecture, you are required to submit **THREE** short memos of **TWO to THREE** pages via Moodle, on group basis, that highlight key learning points of a previous class material. It will be nice for you to refer the assigned readings and articles in the memo to show your understanding. The guiding questions will be provided.

### **Grading Criteria for Assessment 1**

ILO	A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
ILOs 1, 2, 6, 7	Extremely well prepared for class discussion, active participation in group activities and show leadership in class.	Partially prepared for class discussion, quite active in sharing views.	Not well prepared for class discussion, limited participation in sharing views.	Not well prepared for class discussion, no sharing of views.	Never prepared for class discussion and no sharing of views and experience.

### **Assessment 2 - Business Case Analysis & Presentation & Q&A (20%)**

A number of group presentations will be scheduled throughout the semester. Each group should consist of **FIVE to SIX** students. Each group of students is required to deliver a presentation of **30** minutes, plus Q&A on the assigned governance area and business case. **Please also submit your PPT slides for my reference.**

The group presentations are evaluated based on the following five criteria: 1) presentation style; 2) the use of presentation/ visual aids; 3) the contents and organizations; 4) the use of real world and relevant examples and information and 5) the quality of interaction at the Q&A sessions.

### **Grading Criteria for Assessment 2**

ILO	A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
ILOs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7	Very good to excellent ratings on most or all 5 criteria.	Good to very good ratings on most or all 5 criteria.	Fair to good ratings on most or all 5 criteria.	Fair ratings on all 5 criteria.	Fail to prepare and present the case in an up-to-standard manner based on the 5 criteria.

### **Assessment 3 – CSR Reporting Evaluation (15%)**

Your group have to choose a company and examine its corporate and sustainability reports as well as its sustainability ratings (if any). Please assess the entity's environmental, social and financial performance and to examine whether the contents of such corporate and sustainability reports are consistent with their operations. You may comment the disclosure quality of the report, for example, in terms of understandability, clarity and comparability and so on. Please also take the perspectives of different stakeholders and justify your decisions and comments. Each group is also required to submit a report of **FIVE** pages via Moodle to summarize your findings. **The deadline of the report will be confirmed later. Late submission will have a penalty.**

## Assessment 4 – Final Write-ups (40%)

Each student is required to complete one individual write-up based on your selected corporate governance, social responsibilities and social enterprises topics. Each write-up should be written in the form of report in **TEN** pages. I will assess your write-ups based on the following criteria: 1) the content of the report; 2) the writing style (coherence/clarity) and 3) research and support. **Please submit the final write-up via Moodle. Late submission will have a penalty.**

### Grading Criteria for Assessment 3& 4

ILO	A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
ILOs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7	Very good to excellent ratings on most or all 3 criteria.	Good to very good ratings on most or all 3 criteria.	Fair to good ratings on most or all 3 criteria.	Fair ratings on all 3 criteria.	Poor ratings on all criteria or fail to submit the report.