



BUSINESS DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY

Course code	<i>GRAI025</i>
Compulsory in the programmes	<i>Innovations and Technology Management</i>
Level of studies	<i>Graduate</i>
Number of credits	<i>6 ECTS (36 contact hours + 2 consultation hours, 124 individual work hours)</i>
Course coordinator (title and name)	<i>Associate Prof. Dr. Francesco Rosati</i>
Prerequisites	-
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

The goal of the course is to transfer students theoretical and practical knowledge on the role of business in tackling sustainability and societal grand challenges. The students will learn how business model design and innovation can support business in advancing the sustainability agenda, while addressing wicked problems and societal grand challenges. Students are first introduced with the concept of corporate sustainability and then exposed to academic literature on business model for sustainability and practical tools supporting business model design and innovation for sustainability. The course will use theories, models, tools and practical examples to enhance student theoretical and practical knowledge on how to use business as a force for good, while striving to create a positive impact on society. The course readings consist of journal articles, book chapters and cases. The students will learn through a variety of teaching and learning methods, including in-class workshops, exercises and dialogues.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (see Annex), ASSESSMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of LO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Understand the definition of sustainability and distinguish between absolute and relative sustainability.	LO1.1, LO1.2	Group project, discussion of readings, case analysis	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, group project
CLO2. Describe the role of business in advancing sustainability and addressing societal grand challenges.	LO1.1	Individual report, case analysis, discussion of readings	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, individual reflection
CLO3. Explain the concepts of business model, value proposition, value creation, value delivery, and value captured.	LO1.1, LO1.2	Group project, individual report,	Active participation in in-class discussion about literature and

		discussion of readings	company cases, group project, individual reflection
CLO4. Apply business model frameworks and tools to analyze the business models of companies that aim at advancing sustainability and addressing societal grand challenges.	LO1.3, LO2.1, LO3.1	Group project, case analysis, discussion of readings	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, group project
CLO5. Analyze the sustainability output, outcome and impact of a business model, along with the value captured by stakeholders.	LO1.2, LO2.1, LO3.1	Group project, discussion of readings	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, group project
CLO6. Design new business models based on patterns supporting sustainability-oriented business model innovation.	LO1.3, LO3.2	Individual report, discussion of readings	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, individual reflection
CLO7. Formulate a research problem statement in relation to business sustainability and address it by formulating a new sustainable business model idea, building upon conceptual and empirical contributions.	LO1.2, LO1.3, LO2.1, LO3.2	Individual report, discussion of readings	Active participation in in-class discussions about literature and company cases, individual reflection

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Interactive teaching and learning methods, whole class discussions about literature and company cases, workshops, and individual and group work assignment will be employed to enhance the quality of studies. All teaching and learning materials will bear proper references to the original sources. This will also apply to students' reports and presentations.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
<p>Session 1. Sustainability and societal grand challenges</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Understand the definition of sustainability and distinguish between absolute and relative sustainability.</p> <p>Session 2. The role of business in tackling sustainability and societal grand challenges</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Describe the role of business in advancing sustainability and addressing societal grand challenges</p>	8	<p>Session 1</p> <p>Sachs, J. D., Schmidt-Traub, G., Mazzucato, M., Messner, D., Nakicenovic, N., & Rockström, J. (2019). Six transformations to achieve the sustainable development goals. <i>Nature sustainability</i>, 2(9), 805-814.</p> <p>Session 2</p> <p>Business & Sustainable Development Commission (2017). <i>Better Business Better World</i>.</p>

<p>Session 3. Business models for sustainability</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Explain the concepts of business model, value proposition, value creation, value delivery, and value captured; (2) Describe the role of business in advancing sustainability and addressing societal grand challenges.</p> <p>Session 4. Assessing the sustainability of business Models: output, outcome, impact and value</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Analyze the sustainability output, outcome and impact of a business model, along with the value captured by stakeholders; (2) Apply business model frameworks and tools to analyze the business models of companies that aim at advancing sustainability and addressing societal grand challenges.</p>	8	<p>Session 3</p> <p>Bocken, N. M., Short, S. W., Rana, P., & Evans, S. (2014). A literature and practice review to develop sustainable business model archetypes. <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i>, 65, 42-56.</p> <p>Session 4</p> <p>Dembek, K., Lüdeke-Freund, F., Rosati, F., & Froese, T. (2023). Untangling business model outcomes, impacts and value. <i>Business Strategy and the Environment</i>, 32(4), 2296-2311.</p>
<p>Homework assignment – Group Presentation – to be uploaded by May 3rd at 11.00.</p>		
<p>Group Presentations – Round 1: Five groups will have their group presentations.</p> <p>Session 5. Business model design for sustainability: Archetypes and patterns</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Design new business models based on patterns supporting sustainability-oriented business model innovation; (2) Explain the concepts of business model, value proposition, value creation, value delivery, and value captured.</p> <p>Session 6. Business model design for sustainability: In-class workshop</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Design new business models based on patterns supporting sustainability-oriented business model innovation; (2) Explain the concepts of business model, value proposition, value creation, value delivery, and value captured.</p>	8	<p>Session 5 and 6</p> <p>Lüdeke-Freund, F., Carroux, S., Joyce, A., Massa, L., & Breuer, H. (2018). The sustainable business model pattern taxonomy—45 patterns to support sustainability-oriented business model innovation. <i>Sustainable Production and Consumption</i>, 15, 145-162.</p>
<p>Group Presentations – Round 2: The rest of the groups will have their group presentations.</p> <p>Session 7. Business model innovation for sustainability – Practices and strategies</p>	8	<p>Session 7</p> <p>Rosati, F., Rodrigues, V. P., Cosenz, F., & Li-Ying, J. (2023). Business model innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. <i>Business Strategy and the Environment</i>, 32(6), 3752-3765.</p>

<p>Learning objectives: (1) Design new business models based on patterns supporting sustainability-oriented business model innovation.</p> <p>Session 8. Going beyond sustainability – Towards regenerative business models</p> <p>Learning objectives: (1) Formulate a research problem statement in relation to business sustainability and address it by formulating a new sustainable business model idea, building upon conceptual and empirical contributions.</p>		<p>Session 8</p> <p>Konietzko, J., Das, A., & Bocken, N. (2023). Towards regenerative business models: A necessary shift?. Sustainable Production and Consumption, 38, 372-388.</p>
	Total: 32 hours	
Homework assignment – Individual Report – to be submitted by May 9th, 2024, at 23.59.		
CONSULTATIONS (online)	2	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
<i>Group Components 40 %</i>	
Group project presentation	40
<i>Individual Components 60%</i>	
Individual report	60
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

(Provide short descriptions and grading criteria of each assignment)

Group project: Sustainability-oriented assessment of business models

Group work: Aim and structure

The aim of the group work is to develop a sustainability-oriented assessment of business models addressing a specific United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

At the end of the course, the students present their group projects. The presentation will last 10 minutes and cover the following areas:

1. SDG(s)

Present the SDG (or SDGs) the group work focuses on.

2. Industry

Present the industry the group work focuses on.

3. Business models

Present the current business models predominantly adopted in the industry to tackle the chosen SDG(s).

4. Sustainability assessment

Present a sustainability-oriented assessment of the abovementioned business models.

Evaluation criteria

The group presentations will be judged according to the following criteria:

1. Quality of analysis (scope and depth of analysis and ability to draw valid conclusions from data and research)
2. Quality of presentation (logical sequence of presentation and ability to communicate critical thinking)
3. Quality of Q&A (ability to understand and respond to questions appropriately)
4. Overall performance

Submission details

The group presentations will be held on May 3rd and May 4th, 2024 (see the schedule above) and should be submitted on the ISM online platform no later than **May 3rd, 2024 at 11.00**. When submitting the group presentation, please name your file as follows: (group number)_presentation

Individual report: Individual reflections and business model design ideas

Individual report: Aim and structure

The aim of the individual report is to **design new business model ideas that overcome the limitations of current business models addressing the SDGs in a specific industry**. In the individual report, the students will formulate – and solve – a problem related to their group presentation. To come up with a problem formulation, students are expected to present their own observations and assumptions on shortcoming of current business models addressing the SDGs in the industry. In studying the problem, students are expected to use different theoretical perspectives and reflect on practical examples and data to come up with new business model ideas. Students will also be expected to reflect on the degree they have answered the problem statement.

This assignment will thus give students the opportunity to gain new knowledge out of an in-depth personal reflection on a specific problem that they wish to investigate in relation to the group work.

Evaluation criteria

An acceptable report must be submitted online through the ISM online platform, be individually written and be no longer than 1500 words (including figures and tables, but excluding the list of references). The students are not required to include a cover page, an abstract, or an executive summary as part of the report.

An *acceptable* report will also:



- Formulate and discuss about a problem statement originating from individual reflections related to the sustainability-oriented business model assessment presented as part of the group work.
- Make connections to relevant academic literature and practical examples and data.

A *good* report will:

- Discuss and compare different theoretical perspectives (within and beyond the course literature), including their assumptions, strengths and limitations.
- Discuss the main research findings.
- Provide an in-depth reflection on the limitations of the report, and on whether, and how, the problem statement has been properly addressed.

Submission details

The individual report (doc or pdf format) should be submitted on the ISM online platform no later than **May 9th, 2024, at 23.59**. When submitting the individual report, please name your file as follows: (student number)_report

RETAKE

If a student final mark of the course, including the final exam score, is insufficient, students will be allowed to exercise their right of retake. The students who failed the course will be allowed to resubmit the individual report. The group work cannot be resubmitted or presented later than the assigned date.

ASSISTANCE

Do not ever hesitate to request assistance with anything you do not understand.

REQUIRED READINGS

See the course outline.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Breuer, H., Fichter, K., Lüdeke-Freund, F., & Tiemann, I. (2018). Sustainability-oriented business model development: Principles, criteria and tools. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Venturing*, 10(2), 256-286.

Evans, S., Vladimirova, D., Holgado, M., Van Fossen, K., Yang, M., Silva, E. A., & Barlow, C. Y. (2017). Business model innovation for sustainability: Towards a unified perspective for creation of sustainable business models. *Business strategy and the environment*, 26(5), 597-608.

Hahn, T., & Tampe, M. (2021). Strategies for regenerative business. *Strategic Organization*, 19(3), 456-477.

Joyce, A., & Paquin, R. L. (2016). The triple layered business model canvas: A tool to design more sustainable business models. *Journal of cleaner production*, 135, 1474-1486.

Muñoz, P., & Branzei, O. (2021). Regenerative organizations: Introduction to the special issue. *Organization & Environment*, 34(4), 507-516.

Scheyvens, R., Banks, G., & Hughes, E. (2016). The private sector and the SDGs: The need to move beyond 'business as usual'. *Sustainable Development*, 24(6), 371-382.



DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the Master of Business Management

Programme:

Innovations and Technology Management

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be innovative decision makers	LO1.1. Students will be able to define the business problem and develop innovative solutions .
	LO1.2. Students will become independent learners and develop their own comprehension of scientific theories, models, and concepts.
	LO1.3. Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking in problem solving.
Students will be socially responsible leaders	LO2.1. Students will be able to evaluate past and current practices in their discipline from an ethical perspective .
Students will be effective communicators	LO3.1. Students will develop and deliver a coherent oral presentation .
	LO3.2. Students will develop and deliver a coherent written research paper .