

GEOG3214 Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Auditing

(6 credits)

Course Teacher: Dr Wendy Y Chen

Objectives

The course will help the students to understand the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and environmental auditing, develops the skills of addressing the role of CSR in environmental welfare, learns the step-by-step procedures of conducting basic environmental auditing, and explores the contribution of CSR and environmental auditing to social sustainability.

Course Synopsis

The world's major environmental problems are closely related to the impacts imposed by various commercial establishments. Recently, the contribution of the business sector to social responsibility and sustainability has been increasingly emphasized. The awareness of the social and environmental implications of business operations, products, and services has brought changes in relevant attitude, behaviour and policy. On the other hand, various stakeholders, such as the public, investors, customers, employees, media, or business partners, are interested in the social and environmental activities of corporations and their contribution to sustainable development. This course introduces the students to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and environmental auditing. It will focus on the recognition of CSR as a process that integrates social and environmental concerns in business operation, and the application of environmental auditing as a preventative tool to manage social and environmental responsibilities. Adopting an integrated scientific and practical approach, the course appeals to students with science, social science, business or humanity background with an interest in the corporate social performance, the welfare of the environment, and the quest for sustainable development.

Lecture Topics

- Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- CSR definitions and practical examples
- Introduction to environmental management system and environmental auditing
- Preparatory activities for a basic environmental auditing
- On-site audit activities
- Post-audit activities and follow up

Assessment

Examination (two hours) 50%; Coursework 50% (consists of one assignment).

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge:

- Understanding of CSR and environmental auditing
- Evaluating business social and environmental performance
- Critical thinking about environmental management and sustainable development

Skills:

- Assessment of corporate performance and interpretation of major environmental issues
- Conducting basic environmental auditing
- Preparation of environmental auditing report

Recommended Reading List

1. David Chandler, 2015. *Corporate Social Responsibility: A Strategic Perspective*. Business Expert Press, New York.
2. Lawrence B. Cahill, and Raymond W. Kane, 2011. *Environmental Health and Safety Audits*. Government Institutes, Rockville, MD. USA.