



School of Management



COURSE SYLLABUS PROPOSAL

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES FOR GRAND CHALLENGES: PLASTIC POLLUTION

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July 6 - July 17

Monday - Friday (7:00 am - 10:00 am)



DESCRIPTION

This course explores sustainability from the perspective of grand challenges. By examining in depth the issue of plastic pollution, one of the most recent and complex sustainability issues facing businesses, students have the opportunity to experience the challenges and opportunities that such an issue can present. Beginning by situating plastic pollution within the SDG framework and then unpacking the challenge itself, its many stakeholders, the evolving regulatory context and its systemic nature, the first sessions offer insights into mapping the materiality of an issue within a particular business. The course then moves on to identify solutions and opportunities through a variety of cases. Strategies include product, service and business model innovations, cross-sector partnerships and other aspects of systemic change.

Throughout the learning journey opportunities for personal and professional reflection on grand challenges will be included. The course concludes by considering the application of key learnings to other grand challenges.

The course is recommended for those facing the complexity of dealing with grand challenges in their businesses and those who want to rethink the idea of "business as usual" from a sustainability perspective.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Relate grand challenges to business threats and opportunities
2. Compare and contrast different stakeholder perspectives
3. Analyse and determine the materiality of social and environmental challenges through the value chain
4. Develop and elaborate innovative solutions and recommendations for addressing plastic pollution
5. Think critically about “business as usual” and reflect on both individual values and systems change

METHODOLOGY

Over the duration of the course a variety of methods will be employed. A mix of class lectures using a variety of media, lively discussions, role play, case studies and group challenges will bring the issue of plastic pollution alive. Moments of reflection will be included throughout the course to give the students an opportunity to consider critical questions and to relate the class material to their own lives, personal values and management dilemmas. A strong emphasis on group work and communication underlies the methodology and attempts to offer experiential insights into working with those from different backgrounds: a key aspect of addressing grand challenges.

EVALUATION

Due to Universidad de los Andes policies, the final grading system for all the 2020 International Summer School courses will be Pass/ Fail. Your final grade will be defined in accordance to the accomplishment of the courses learning goals. The individual numerical grades will serve as a key input for the definition of the Pass/ Fail grade and feedback.

A passing score of 60% will be required.

- 20% Individual participation
- 35% Stakeholder team position paper
- 45% Company team project

PRE-REQUISITES

An interest in learning about the impacts of grand challenges on businesses and vice versa. No prior expertise on the topic is necessary.