

Sustainability in Global Value Chains

(MNGT-E2005, 6 cr)

SYLLABUS 31.10.2022

Instructors' contact information	Course Information
Responsible teachers: Tiina Ritvala E-mail: tiina.ritvala@aalto.fi https://people.aalto.fi/tiina_ritvala Phone +358 40 353 8352	Status of the course: Elective in Degree Programmes in Management and International Business and Creative Sustainability, CEMS, and AALTO minor in World in Transition Academic Year: 2022-2023, Autumn II (25.10-24.11.2022) Location: TUE U006; THU T004 (Ekonominaukio 1) Exceptions: Excel workshop Room THU Nov 3 rd (T004) and FRI Nov 4 th (V002) Excursions at Wärtsilä Headquarters on November 17 Lecture time: TUE & THU at 14:15-17 (check below for exceptions)
Iiris Saittakari Email: iiris.saittakari@aalto.fi https://people.aalto.fi/iiris.saittakari Phone +348 45 6734631	Language of Instruction: English Course Website: https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=37098
Teaching Assistant: Emilia Eräpolku E-mail: emilia.erapolku@aalto.fi	

1. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student is able to: 1. understand what are global value chains (GVCs) and why are they at the core of sustainability; 2. identify different ways of economic, social and environmental upgrading in GVCs; 3. reflect upon the interdependencies and tensions between social, economic and environmental sustainability of GVCs; 4. envision how MNEs can transform their strategies and GVCs based on sustainability; and 5. apply Excel for basic analysis of data.

2. CONTENT

The course consists of three modules: 1) Introduction; 2) Social, economic and environmental upgrading in GVCs; and 3) Presentations and Conclusions

The first module provides an overview of the course and its key concepts. It emphasizes the role of global value chains (GVCs) in addressing global grand challenges and the UN sustainable development goals. The second module focuses on the different ways that companies can upgrade their GVCs and contribute to social, economic and environmental sustainability. Several classes draw on real-life cases and engage guests from different sectors and industries. The third module is dedicated to students' presentations of future-oriented entrepreneurial solutions to promote sustainability in GVCs.

3. LECTURES

Lectures will be kept in class room only (see the schedule below). Introductory videos, readings and discussion questions will be available prior to the lectures. Lectures are interactive and engage several top professionals in their fields. To get credit for the course, you must attend two thirds of the formal lectures (6/9). Furthermore, the participation in the first lecture is compulsory. Active contribution to class discussions and pre-assignments will account for 10 percent of the course grade, as described next.

Students must have MS Excel installed on their computer for the Excel assignment. Aalto University students and employees are provided, free of charge, with Microsoft Office 365 programs (e.g., Word, Excel and PowerPoint): [Microsoft Office 365 Services | Aalto University](#)

4. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The assessment of this course is based on four separate items that are explained in more detail below:

Individual assignments (60%)

- Participation and contribution (10%)
- Excel assignment (10%)
- Final paper (40%)

Group assignment (40%)

- Geopolitical risk in GVCs task (10%)
- Group project: Presentation and one page executive abstract (30%)

INDIVIDUAL (60% of course grade):

PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION, 10% (max. 10 points)

Class attendance and active participation are considered integral parts of learning. Therefore, active participation and contribution in lectures counts for 10% of the final grade.

As mentioned above, to get credit for the course, 70% of the lectures must be attended (6/9). Exceptions are made based on medical certificate only. In case of medical absence, please send your medical document to Elli Hämäläinen (elli.hamalainen@aalto.fi) and let the course instructors know that you have done so. Please do not send the medical documentation to the course instructors.

As long as one is active in most of the lectures or alternatively is submitting pre-assignments, it is enough for the full participation and contribution grade. In addition, active participation in group discussions is taken into account. It is possible to receive maximum points for participation without submitting pre-assignments, as they are alternative options for class participation.

EXCEL ASSIGNMENT, 10% (max. 10 points)

During the course you will perform an assignment that will improve your Excel skills. MNEs actively shape global value chains by moving their operations from one country to another. In this assignment you get to analyze what kind of operations Finnish and foreign-owned firms have moved from Finland to other countries and from abroad to Finland in 2019 and 2020. You will be given a file that contains data on 403 companies in Finland. The data was collected for Finland as a Business Location barometer conducted by Business Finland and Amcham Finland in 2020. More instructions are given at first lecture.

No previous excel skills are needed – the purpose of the exercise is to learn how to apply excel for such analysis. More detailed instructions will be given once the course starts. Guidance will be given in an Excel workshop for those who need help with Excel. The number of participants is restricted to 30 students and requires reserving a slot in advance via MyCourses.

While students must pass this assignment in order to pass the course, the workshop is not mandatory. There will be an instructions video available in addition to the workshop.

Length: Excel file with the tables and charts and a summary of about 500 words, 1-2 pages

Format: Summary Font size: 12 Times New Roman, 2.0 line spacing, submit as a Word document

Deadline: November, 8 at 23:00 / The assignments submission box in MyCourses

FINAL PAPER, 40% of course grade

Part 1. Case analysis (max. 30 points)

Part 2. Personal reflection on learning outcomes (max. 10 points)

Specific questions for the final paper will be given during the course.

Grading criteria:

1) content and analysis: key elements of the question are covered comprehensively and deeply, reflexive and critical use of the course readings and frameworks, depth of analysis.

2) organization and style: logical structure of the essay, including an introduction and a conclusion, clear writing style with complete and concise sentences, proper use of references (including a list of references at the end of the essay).

Friendly tip: Keep a learning diary during this course! The length for the Part 2. is 1000 words.

Total length (Part 1 and Part 2): 3000-3500 words, without references

Format: Font size: 12 Times New Roman, 2.0 line spacing, submit as a Word document

Deadline: December 8th, 2022, at 23:00 / The assignments submission box in MyCourses

Please use academic referencing (text references as well as reference list) in all writing. Failure to follow academic writing standards may lead to failing the assignments. Please use APA referencing style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

GROUP ASSIGNMENTS (40% of course grade):

CHOOSING POLITICAL STRATEGIES TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT GVCS, 10% (max. 10 points)

Task is given in connection with the lecture on November 10. Groups of 5 students max.

Length: Answers to the questions provided during the session. Max 3 pages.

Format: Summary Font size: 12 Times New Roman, 2.0 line spacing, submit as a Word document

Deadline: November, 17 at 23:00 / The assignments submission box in MyCourses

GROUP PROJECT (max. 30 points)

Your task is to familiarize yourself with the Science-based Targets Initiative (SBTi), including its sector guidance. Then pick a company from the SBTi database or find a company not yet included. Your task is to consider a new way of upgrading the company's GVC. Please see <https://sciencebasedtargets.org>

Propose an action plan on how the company can create new forms of value in its own operations and across its global value chain. Identify possible challenges in the implementation and integration of your action plan across functions and geographic regions and think about possible ways to solve them.

You are expected to use academic literature or frameworks that guide your analysis and proposal. Publicly available data (e.g. company and industry reports, academic and media research material) is enough for your analysis. Note that all literature and pieces of information must be clearly referenced in the text and fully listed in a bibliography at the end of the report. Furthermore, groups must keep a group diary, where they agree on the ways of communication, clarify the role of each team member early on in the project, and record all group meetings. More instructions are given during the course.

Format: Pecha Kucha presentation (20 slides x 20 seconds, see <https://www.pechakucha.com/>)

In addition to an oral presentation, the group project is documented in one page executive abstract. Please, include an appendix where you report the role and contribution of each group member.

Format: Font size: 12 Times New Roman, submit as a Word document

Deadline for the presentation slides and abstract: 21 November, 2022 at 23:00 / The assignments submission box in MyCourses

5. STANDARD ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING

General principles for Word files: Double-Spaced text, Times New Roman 12pt font, 2.54cm margin. For references, please follow the guidelines of the Journal of International Business Studies: <https://static.springer.com/sgw/documents/1560273/application/pdf/JIBS+style+guide.pdf>.

6. GROUP FORMATION AND TEAM MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

You will be divided into groups of 5 students during the first session. We will pursue diversity in the group in order to maximize chances for bringing in different view points and practising cross-cultural (national, disciplinary) teamwork skills. Note that each group member is expected to contribute equally. Team members will grade each other's contributions by using the school 'Teamwork Rubric' at the end of the course (online). If there is a problem in the group work, the group should first try to

solve it by itself and if the problem remains unsolved, then contact the course teachers. Note that it is possible that group members get different grades if contributions have not been equal.

7. SCHEDULE

#	Date & time	Topic
1	Tue 25.10.	Why sustainability and global value chains? <i>Tiina Ritvala & Iris Saittakari</i> Course goals and practicalities Core concepts and examples
2	Thu 27.10.	What are global value chains? What is the role of sustainability in them? <i>Tiina Ritvala & Iris Saittakari</i> Guest: Marjut Lovio, Marimekko
3	Tue 1.11.	Human rights issues in GVCs <i>Tiina Ritvala & Iris Saittakari</i> Guest: Suvi Halttula, Impaktly Group
4	Thu 3.11.	Sustainable GVCs in agriculture and retail <i>Iris Saittakari & Maria A. De Villa, Universidad EAFIT, Colombia</i> Case example: Coffee GVC in Colombia Guest: Saara-Kaisa Törmälä, Sustainability Manager, S Group
5	Tue 8.11. Note: Lecture starts 14.00!	Environmental upgrading <i>Tiina Ritvala & Iris Saittakari</i> Guest: Päivi Makkonen, Head of Supply Chain Sustainability, Neste Corp.
6	Thu 10.11.	Political risk in GVCs <i>Professor Maria A. De Villa, Universidad EAFIT, Colombia</i> Case Grupo Nutresa
7	Tue 15.11.	Multinational corporations and sustainable cities <i>Tiina Ritvala & Iris Saittakari</i>
8	Thu 17.11.	Excursion to Wärtsilä Headquarters, Hiililaiturinkuja 2, Salmisaari
9	Tue 22.11.	Team presentations

10	Thu 24.11.	Team presentations and course conclusion
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8. SESSION DETAILS

Please check the pre-lecture material and discussion questions through the MyCourses site before each session and submit the optional pre-assignments accordingly.

9. STANDARD ASSIGNMENT FORMATTING

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10. ETHICAL RULES

Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity and Handling Thereof:

<https://into.aalto.fi/display/ensaannot/Aalto+University+Code+of+Academic+Integrity+and+Handling+Violations+Thereof>