

International Strategic Communication and Sustainable Development (Term 2)

In this course, students will study international communication in a multidisciplinary setting, learning how to frame (international) business challenges through the lens of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Because the SDGs are interconnected, communication choices that support progress on one goal often affect others, making systems thinking and cultural awareness essential. Building on the work of Jeffrey Sachs as a theoretical foundation, students begin with a focused introduction to the SDGs and explore how sustainability debates are shaped, contested, and communicated across countries, sectors, and stakeholder groups.

Students follow a learning journey in which they discover that environmental, social, and governance (ESG) challenges are deeply interrelated, and that effective international communication requires an integrated approach across levels: interpersonal, organizational, societal, and global. Emphasis is placed on cross-cultural communication, stakeholder analysis, ethical considerations, and the strategic role of communication in guiding sustainable change.

Key themes include:

1. Sustainability marketing and communication.
2. Organizational strategy related to sustainability.
3. Nation branding for individual countries and groups of countries (i.e., the EU).

This course offers a distinctive learning experience: students will develop a realistic understanding of the complexity of sustainability challenges while gaining practical knowledge and skills in international communication, skills that are essential for professionals operating in the 21st-century global context.

Nation Branding (7.5 EC)

In this group assignment students undertake a project in the field of nation branding. First, students do research on the application of the SDGs in several preselected countries. Secondly, they jump into the topic of nation branding and find out how the same preselected countries give shape to their nation brand. We also take a closer look at the nation brand of the European Union, a very particular one as research shows. Finally, students combine the learnings of the two previous assignments and draft advice for the government of one of

the preselected nations, so that this government can improve its nation brand from the perspective of the SDGs.

We make extensive use of Simon Anholt's work on nation branding in this course, and we take recent scientific research for up-to-date examples. The goal of this assignment is to provide students with the opportunity to gain business experience in on sustainable nation branding. This assignment is 7.5EC.

Sustainability Marketing and Communication (7.5 EC)

In this assignment groups of students need to identify a particular sustainability issue in a business or an industry, and they need to critically assess it from the perspective of sustainable international business concepts, theories and frameworks (coming from the works of amongst others Wit (2020) and Beltz & Peattie (2012)). They will have to write a research report, that also includes advice to the organization or industry, and they need to do a presentation. The goal of this assignment is to make students aware of the (un)sustainable impact that businesses have and how this can be improved. This assignment is 7.5EC.

Textbooks

- Wide range of articles related to weekly topics.

Requirements

All students are welcome to participate in this minor. However, we expect students to have basic knowledge about international business.

Characteristics of this minor

- Date: November – January
- Location: Christelijke Hogeschool Ede
- Lecturers: Harm Hilvers (Course Leader), Cees van den Berg, Erik Geluk, Hans Linker, Hein Oldeman, Marleen de Sterke, Jelle Terpstra
- Level: Hbo-minor
- Language: English
- EC: 15