

# Syllabus

## *Course Description*

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| Course Title                   | Sustainability Accounting and Integrated Reporting  |
| Course Code                    | 25455   |
| Course Title Additional        |   |
| Scientific-Disciplinary Sector | SECS-P/07   |
| Language                       | English   |
| Degree Course                  | Master in Accounting and Finance  |
| Other Degree Courses (Loaned)  |   |
| Lecturers                      | Prof. Paolo Maria Perego,<br>Paolo.Perego@unibz.it<br><a href="https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/38679">https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/academic-staff/person/38679</a>   |
| Teaching Assistant             |   |
| Semester                       | First semester  |
| Course Year/s                  | 2   |
| CP                             | 6   |
| Teaching Hours                 | 36  |
| Lab Hours                      | -   |
| Individual Study Hours         | -   |
| Planned Office Hours           | 18  |
| Contents Summary               | This course explores the principles and practices of sustainability reporting in response to growing ESG demands. Students learn how firms disclose ESG information, its impact on stakeholders, and the challenges of ensuring credibility, including greenwashing.  |
| Course Topics                  | In the past decade, there has been a significant increase in attention towards environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues among managers, investors, regulators, and various stakeholders. This heightened interest is evident in the adoption of ESG-related disclosure mandates worldwide and the expansion of sustainable investing within global capital markets. This course |

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|  | <p>aims to provide students with an in-depth exploration of sustainability reporting considering this growing emphasis on ESG dimensions.</p> <p>Through this course, students will delve into the fundamental concepts and tools of sustainability accounting and reporting. They will examine the potential advantages for firms that disclose ESG information while also grappling with significant challenges, including the risk of greenwashing.</p> <p>Furthermore, students will gain insight into the existing and emerging ESG regulations and frameworks governing ESG performance metrics. The focus will be on the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), as well as concurrent ESG standard-setting initiatives worldwide (e.g. Global Reporting Initiative, IFRS International Sustainability Standard Board and Task-related Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures). Through case studies and practical examples, students will learn how ESG factors are incorporated into financial statements and how these disclosures influence investment outcomes. Engaging with these topics will enable students to develop a hands-on understanding of the complexities surrounding ESG reporting and its implications for corporate behavior and different market participants.</p> <p>Here a detailed list of topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolution and current landscape of sustainability/ESG accounting and reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The role of sustainability/ESG accounting and reporting in sustainable finance: regulatory and market-based drivers</li> <li>- ESG reporting standards: latest developments in EU (CSRD/ESRS) and main international frameworks (GRI, IFRS, TCFD, TNFD, Integrated Reporting)</li> <li>- Double Materiality assessment and interoperability across ESG reporting standards: theory and practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Carbon management and carbon reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- international greenhouse gas (GHG) measurement protocols across Scope 1, 2 and 3.</li> <li>- international GHG disclosure best-practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Management accounting and control for ESG/sustainability:</li> </ul> |
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|  | <p>- the role of ESG-related incentives in executive compensation</p> <p>ESG/Sustainability in internal control and corporate governance systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance engagement in relation to ESG/sustainability reporting: current auditing standards (ISAE3000) and future developments (ISSA5000)</li> <li>• Integration of ESG/sustainability information in investment decision-making processes: current developments/challenges in responsible/impact investing and sustainable finance</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Keywords</b>  | Sustainability accounting, ESG reporting, Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), Greenwashing, Sustainable investing   |
| <b>Recommended Prerequisites</b>                             | None   |
| <b>Propaedeutic Courses</b>                                  |  |
| <b>Teaching Format</b>                                       | <p>The course integrates in-class explanations of background material with problem-solving sessions and real-world cases. Case analysis, presentations, and interactive discussions serve as the primary teaching methods employed.</p> <p>Active participation in class activities is expected from students, providing them with opportunities to apply theoretical concepts to real-world business cases.</p>   |
| <b>Mandatory Attendance</b>                                  | Highly recommended   |
| <b>Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes</b> | <p>Knowledge and understanding:</p> <p>Master's degree graduates should be able to acquire an advanced level of preparation that allows for an in-depth and integrated view of accounting and budgeting and planning and management control issues. These learning outcomes are achieved through an advanced knowledge and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of economic-financial communication to stakeholders in national and international contexts;</li> <li>- of economic-business models and performance measurement for planning and management control of internal and external audit models and methods.</li> </ul> <p>Accounting courses will also enable students to acquire skills in specialised topics that characterise the profession of chartered accountants and auditors.</p> |

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|  | <p>Applying knowledge and understanding:</p> <p>Ability to apply knowledge in the area of Accounting for the analysis and solution of complex problems in national and international interdisciplinary contexts</p> <p>Ability to apply knowledge in the area of Accounting to develop and integrate the results of economic-financial communication into business decision-making models</p> <p>Ability to apply knowledge in the area of Accounting for the design and management of corporate restructuring and other extraordinary operations</p> <p>Ability to apply knowledge in the area of Accounting in order to be able to dialogue and interact in a competent manner with the managers of the various company functional areas, with financial markets and with corporate and tax law professionals</p> <p>Making judgements:</p> <p>Ability to apply the knowledge acquired to make managerial and operational decisions and to solve problems in the administration and finance of companies, intermediaries and financial markets, jointly taking into consideration multiple perspectives of analysis, from the economic to the legal, financial, strategic, managerial.</p> <p>Ability to select data and use appropriate information to describe a problem concerning the management of companies, intermediaries and financial markets.</p> <p>Ability to relate models and empirical evidence in the study of companies, intermediaries and financial markets.</p> <p>Communication skills:</p> <p>Ability to communicate effectively in oral and written form the specialised contents of the individual disciplines, using different registers according to the recipients and the communicative and didactic purposes, and to evaluate the formative effects of its communication</p> <p>Learning skills:</p> <p>a) ability to use information technology autonomously to carry out bibliographic research and investigations and for one's own training and updating</p> <p>b) ability to identify thematic links and establish relationships between different cases and contexts of analysis</p> |
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|   | <p>c) ability to frame a new problem systematically and to generate appropriate taxonomies</p> <p>d) ability to develop general models from the phenomena studied.</p>  |
| <b>Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes (additional info.)</b> |   |
| <b>Assessment</b>   | <p>After completing this course, students should be able to critically discuss the assumptions underlying sustainability in organizations and the role of accounting and reporting of ESG information. The practical orientation of the course allows students to navigate the dynamic intersection of sustainability accounting, responsible investing, and corporate governance in today's global financial landscape.</p> <p>The course encourages experiential learning by promoting reflection on the way ESG/sustainability information is disclosed in corporate reports. Students should further be able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the broad nature of sustainability accounting and accountability developments and rationales, united to the ability to conduct teamwork.</p> <p>The course also provides transferable skills such as time management and the ability to communicate clearly and confidently in oral and written form.</p> |
| <b>Evaluation Criteria</b>  | <p>Attending students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations, assignments/group project work, optional Midterm</li> <li>• Final written exam: combination of multiple-choice questions and open/essays questions</li> </ul> <p>Non-attending students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final written exam: combination of multiple-choice questions and open/essays questions</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Required Readings</b>  | <p>The course literature comprises a set of ESG-related academic articles, book chapters, standards/frameworks, examples of recent corporate ESG/Sustainability reports, and lecture slides.</p> <p>The list of required readings for exam preparation is announced by the beginning of the course.</p>   |
| <b>Supplementary Readings</b>   | <p>Supplementary readings will be provided during the course.</p>   |

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| <b>Further Information</b>                  | The OLE course page is announced at the beginning of the course.  |
| <b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b> | Clean water and sanitation, Affordable and clean energy, Decent work and economic growth, Industry, innovation and infrastructure, Life on land, Sustainable cities and communities, Responsible consumption and production, Climate action, Life below water, Reduced inequalities |