

Discipline: Cross-disciplinary (management, organization theory, marketing, business ethics, sociology)

1. Language

English

2. Title

Theoretical Perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

3. Lecturers

Prof. Dr. Laura-Marie Edinger-Schons, Chair of Corporate Social Responsibility, University of Mannheim (<https://www.bwl.uni-mannheim.de/schons/>)

Associate Prof. Dr. Christopher Wickert, Department of Management & Organization, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU University Amsterdam), (<https://research.vu.nl/en/persons/christopher-wickert>)

4. Date and location

May 23 - May 26, 2023, University of Hamburg

5. Course description and target group

5.1 Learning objectives

The content of the 4-day workshop is to discuss and develop a common understanding of key theoretical approaches in CSR research. This will help participants not only to gain a sound understanding of the vast body of CSR literature, but also to link the state-of-the-art literature and emerging "hot topics" to relevant research questions. The workshop will include thematic discussions on various topics as well as cross-thematic inputs by the workshop leaders on e.g., the publication process in CSR research, career planning, research communication as well as practitioner involvement in research.

The ProDok course CSR is primarily aimed at junior researchers (i.e., doctoral students) in business administration who focus their research on the areas of CSR, corporate sustainability, and the relationship between business and society. The focus here is not on specific phenomena within CSR research (e.g., CSR in the supply chain, CSR & NGOs, CSR in accounting, etc.), but CSR is understood as a multi-layered and multi-faceted management problem that can be studied from different theoretical perspectives.

Learning Objectives:

- Gain an in-depth understanding of foundational work and theoretical approaches in CSR research.
- Gain the ability to relate different theoretical approaches to theoretically and practically relevant and contemporary research questions.

- Gain practical knowledge on how to collaborate with partner companies in CSR research.
- Gain experience regarding possible career paths and publication strategies in CSR.

Target group:

- Doctoral students working on the topic of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the role of companies in society as well as their relationships with various social stakeholder groups.
- The course addresses doctoral students in the early stages of their dissertation to provide basic theoretical knowledge and a classification of different research approaches, as well as advanced doctoral students who wish to deepen their knowledge of different approaches,
- The course is aimed at doctoral students from all fields of business administration, but offers a focus on management and organizational theory approaches as well as marketing. The course is also explicitly aimed at doctoral students from business-related disciplines who deal with social issues such as CSR, e.g., sociology, psychology, political science.

5.2 Course content

The role of companies in society and questions of their social, environmental, and ethical responsibility are one of the mega topics of our time. Both in practice and in research, there is a strong dynamic and companies are continuously confronted with new challenges and are responsible for developing new solutions to these so-called societal grand challenges. Under the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the course attempts to shed light on these very multi-layered and complex phenomena.

The course introduces different theoretical approaches with which the phenomenon of CSR can be studied. After a brief introduction and overview, participants will take ownership of representative and influential studies in thematic blocks based on different theoretical approaches and will introduce them to the other participants in a group discussion led by them.

In particular, a focus will be to understand the underlying assumptions and premises and to analyze for which kind of research problems a certain approach seems to be particularly suitable and how this could make room for a contribution to research. Furthermore, exemplary contributions dealing with "hot topics" in CSR research will be discussed with the participants to gain an understanding of the research agenda for the future.

Each day, there will also be a cross-theoretical and interactive workshop on the publication process, interaction with practitioners, research communication, and career planning.

Participants will also be asked to prepare a poster of their research (both early stage and advanced projects) to serve as a basis for discussion and inspiration during the course.

5.3 Schedule

23rd May 2023 - Day 1, approx. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Prof. Dr. Edinger-Schons)

1. Introduction by the course instructor
2. Theoretical foundations: Employee perception of CSR and ethical behavior
3. Theoretical foundations: Customer perceptions of CSR and sustainable consumption
4. Current "Hot Topics" in the CSR Community: Corporate Digital Responsibility and social media
5. Cooperation with corporate practice in CSR research

24th May 2023 - Day 2, approx. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Prof. Dr. Edinger-Schons)

1. Theoretical foundations: Exchange relationships and their relevance for CSR
2. Theoretical Foundations: Individual Difference Factors of Moral Action
3. Current "Hot Topics" in the CSR Community: SDGs, Impact Measurement and Corporate Political Activism
4. On the Way to a Professorship: Strategic Career Planning in CSR Research and Research Communication

25th May 2023- Day 3, approx. 9am-5pm (Prof. Dr. Wickert).

1. Theoretical foundations: Instrumental perspectives on CSR - The "infamous" business case
2. Theoretical foundations: Institutional & stakeholder-oriented perspectives on CSR – The social license to operate
3. Theoretical foundations: Ethical perspectives on CSR - What is the right thing to do?
4. Publishing CSR research successfully and with impact

26th May 2023 - Day 4, approx. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Prof. Dr. Wickert)

1. Theoretical foundations: Political perspectives on CSR – private actors and global governance
2. Theoretical foundations: Organizational perspectives on CSR - implementation in core business processes
3. Theoretical foundations: Actor-oriented perspectives on CSR - "micro-CSR"
4. Conclusion and reflection

6. Course format

The course is interactive and depends on participation of the participants. It consists of three interconnected elements:

First, thematic blocks, where a selected theoretical perspective of CSR research is discussed. This is done on the basis of presentations by the participants on pre-assigned scientific articles (to be provided to participants a few weeks ahead of the course). The participants are tasked to present the most important contents of each paper, followed by a joint discussion. In addition, research questions that can be derived from the paper will be discussed. Second, cross-thematic blocks in which general topics such as the exchange with practitioners in research (as addressees of research as well as a source of information) and publication strategies in CSR research will be discussed. Third, all course participants are expected to prepare a poster of their research, which will be discussed during the course.

6.1 Requirements

The course requires only a basic knowledge of current research on corporate social responsibility as well as related fields such as sustainability management or business ethics.

6.2 Required reading

Required readings will be provided in advance to all registered participants.

6.4 Preparation

Participants are expected to have knowledge of the course literature. In addition, two presentations of 30 minutes each are to be prepared. Furthermore, participants are expected to prepare a poster that informs about their research and serves as a basis for discussion during the course. After registration, course participants will be contacted by the course instructor with more detailed instructions, including a list of papers.

7. Administration

7.1 Maximum number of participants

20, first-come-first-serve, while priority will be given to PhD students.

7.2 Assignments

Two research presentations, poster and essay (final assignment). Participation without the preparation of these assignments is not possible.

7.3 Exam / Exam performance

The final grade will be determined based on the final essay (50%) and two presentations (25% each, 50% in total) after the seminar. The deadline for submission of the paper 3-4 weeks after the end of the course. Attendance on all four days of the seminar is mandatory.

7.4 Credits / Points

The course corresponds to a scope of 6 LP/ECTS.

8. Working time expenditure

Division of working hours	Hours
<i>Preliminary</i>	40
<i>Work active</i>	100
<i>Cooperation</i>	40
<i>Examination (term paper)</i>	
SUM	180h