Course: Bachelor – Conscious Organisations

Philosophy of the program

Our purpose is to educate the current and next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs in Europe to conduct business consciously. 'Consciously' refers to conducting business in a way that is purpose-driven, ethical, human-centered, sustainable, and inclusive, and where all Business Stakeholders (not only shareholders and managers) benefit. For the last 10 – 15 years, researchers demonstrated that consciously led companies created benefits for all stakeholders and prospered financially at the same time, in many cases above and beyond shareholder-driven companies. However, the practices of conscious business – and what might be different from a traditional view of business – is not yet an explicit part of business education in Europe.

The current economic system is under rising pressure because of unsustainable exploitation of resources and increasing pollution of our planet. Climate change and severe biodiversity losses are accelerating at an unprecedented scale while societies face rising inequalities in wealth and access to opportunities. These problems are not separate crises – they can all be rooted in fundamental flaws of the current economic system. A conscious business approach implies a fundamental change towards an economy that is sustainable, circular, prosperous, and inclusive.

Many of the challenges Europe faces require businesses, or support from businesses to create innovative solutions. Businesses are the dominant drivers for innovation, jobs, and economic wealth, which in turn address real problems of real people. Conscious businesses can do this while making healthy profits and without causing 'collateral' damage to nature, employees, health, equality, or local communities. Currently, too many businesses are still operating in the old paradigm of material gain while depleting resources, making them (major) contributors to some of our biggest problems such as climate change, inequality, public health, and loss of biodiversity.

We believe businesses can be drivers of good, if they design, organize, and create their business consciously. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to educate current and future business leaders regarding how to manage more consciously so that potential damage is eliminated or minimized, and to increase benefits to society and the planet. We aim to address this challenge by creating and teaching an innovative business syllabus which includes Conscious Business Practices for bachelor-, graduate- and executive-level education. Based upon the Syllabus, Conscious Business Education trains current business teachers how to incorporate the Syllabus into their business education courses and/ or programs.

Goals for the complete syllabus on Conscious Business (21 courses):

1. Describe and teach innovative methodologies to help business students become more conscious leaders.
2. Understand tools and methodologies for conscious business.
3. Apply tools and methodologies to manage businesses better.
4. Embed ethics and ethical dilemmas in every course.
5. Stimulate reflection and development of leaders to become more system-oriented, ethical, inclusive, and conscious.
6. Highlight the superiority of purpose-driven companies.

This course is unique, because:

- Students embark on an individual and collective learning journey by creating a conscious culture within the classroom and within self-managing teams.

- Students apply the concepts of conscious culture through experiential activities of creating a purpose for the class and values within self-managing teams.

- Experiential activities, including mind-mapping, world café, and poster presentations.

- Students deepen their conscious awareness through workshops and personal and team reflections.

- This 2 ECTS course is designed to fit (all or parts) into a regular 3 ECTS course related to Organisations (OB, OD, etc.).

Suggested tools from the Toolbox

Developing a Shared Purpose for the Class

Shared Core Values Guidelines

World Café-to-go (English & Spanish)

Facilitator Guide - Understanding Worldviews

Workshop Facilitator Guidelines

Seminar 1, Module 1 Workshop: Developing a Shared Purpose

Detailed facilitation guidelines are included in "Developing a Shared Purpose for the Class" in the Toolbox.

Once the class' shared purpose statement is finalised, include it in the placeholder slide at the beginning of every seminar. Re-presence the shared purpose each time, asking students to contemplate it for 30 seconds before continuing with the seminar.

At the end of the course, facilitate a discussion with students on how they have fulfilled the purpose of the class and examine shifts and expanded purpose.

Seminar 3, Module 2 Workshop: Developing Shared Values

- Pre-define self-managing teams of 4 people each. These self-managing teams will stay together during the course and continue to work together on the final project.

- In this workshop, each self-managing team will develop a set of shared values which align with the shared purpose of this class.

- Refer to the speaker's notes in the slides.

- Give students the handout from the Toolbox: "Shared Core Values Guidelines Handout."

- Walk through the slides that explain the process. Walk through the example. Ask if there are questions regarding the process.

- Teams have 45 minutes to define their shared core values.

- Teams return to plenary to report their values and definitions only, 2 minutes per group. Remind teams to take a photo of their values, definitions, etc. to use throughout the course.

- Teams break out to reflect on their process.

- Teams return to plenary to provide a short summary of their reflection, 2 minutes per group.

Seminar 4, Module 3 Workshop: Seeing through our cultural lenses.

See "Facilitator Guide – Understanding Worldviews" in the Toolbox, along with instructor notes included in each slide.

Seminar 4, Module 3: Exploring an SDG using Mind-mapping. (Note: you can expand this course to 3 ECTS by splitting this process out of seminar 4 so it becomes a separate seminar)

1. Demonstrate how to create a mind-map. You can play the first 1.5 minutes of this video for students: https://youtu.be/FMkK8g3UQN8 . Choose a topic such as planning my vacation, class outing, etc. to co-create a simple map with the class.

2. Explain the UN's sustainable development goals (Notes are in the slide). You can go to https://sdgs.un.org/ - scroll down to the 17 SDGs on the home page and hover the mouse over selected SDGs to provide examples of each SDG.

3. ACTIVITY – In self-managing teams – 25 minutes to complete the activity.

   a. Nominate a new team facilitator and a new scribe for this process (in other words, rotate roles).

   b. Start with re-presencing your team values. Each person on the team shares one value that is important to them as you work together today.

   c. Choose one of the SDGs to work on for your final group project. Mind-map answers to these questions:

      i. Why did you choose this SDG? Why is it important to you?

      ii. What are some ideas to address this SDG?

      iii. What organizations are currently doing something to address this SDG?

4. Bring everyone back to plenary. Each group takes 2 minutes to share a summary of their mind-map.

5. Groups return to reflect on their process – 10 minutes. Reporting back to the plenary is not needed.

6. As groups return to plenary, show them the group assignment related to the SDG. Each group assignment builds on the next until the final poster presentation.

Seminar 5, Module 3: World Café Facilitation – Conscious Management Concepts

Use the World Café-to-go (English & Spanish) guidelines in the Toolbox for facilitating the World Café process. Some guidance is also included in the speaker's notes in each slide.

Seminar 6: (Note: you can expand this course to 3 ECTS by splitting Seminar 6 into two separate seminars)

Unless the class is delivered virtually, the students should create the poster by hand, on large flipchart sized paper. The intention is to have a gallery of posters at the last session of the course, for the presentations.

The Posters should be hung on the walls of the classroom in advance of the class session. The students can walk around the room to view the posters as if they were in an art gallery.

Give students guidance and examples of posters. Encourage them to practice co-presenting so they stay within the 10-minute time limit.

Sources that were used to create this course

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Suggestion for assessment

1. Written research assignment - Module 2 (40% of grade): Research Scribe Media or Zappos. Include answers to the questions posed for the assignment.

2. Reflection paper - Module 3 (20% of grade): Reflection which explores the student's worldview and cultural lens.

3. Final team poster presentation - Module 4 (40% of grade)

Suggested assessment criteria (e.g., rubric)

Assignment #1, the research assignment will be assessed upon the following criteria:

1. Framing (the extent to which the introduction introduces, frames, and identifies the topic as assigned).

2. Theory (the extent to which students master theoretical concepts, literature, and theories).

3. Results (the extent to which appropriate academic sources are used that are linked and relevant to the subject. The student should also demonstrate an understanding of the subject, critical thinking, and analytical insights. Originality is also assessed).

4. Argumentation (entails the persuasiveness of the essay, e.g., argumentation, support, illustrative statements).

5. Structure and organisation (the extent to which the research paper meets the structure appropriate for a theoretical essay).

6. Academic writing, including reference requirements and writing mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation).

7. Adherence to the page range limit.

Detailed Rubric found in the following file: Bach Conscious Orgs - Assignment 1 Rubric - Research Assignment.xlsx

Assignment # 2, which is reflective in nature, will be assessed upon the following criteria:

1. Framing (the extent to which the introduction introduces, frames, and identifies the reflection).

2. Results (the extent to which the student demonstrates an understanding of the subject, critical thinking, and analytical insights. Originality is also assessed).

3. Authenticity (the extent to which the student examines their thoughts, feelings, and views).

4. Structure (the extent to which the paper meets the structure appropriate for a reflection).

5. Writing: coherence, correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

6. Adherence to the page range limit.

Detailed Rubric found in the following file: Bach Conscious Orgs - Assignment 2 Rubric - Reflection Paper.xlsx

Assignment #3, final team poster will be assessed upon the following criteria:

1. Content: All objectives are identified, evaluated, and completed. A sophisticated synthesis and application of the course content is included. The application of methodologies is demonstrated. All critical points are covered with the appropriate depth.

2. Design: format, visual appeal, structure, and images included in the poster.

3. Oral Presentation: clearly communicates ideas, concepts, analysis, and conclusions within designated timeframe and in a manner that is engaging and understandable. Maintains eye contact with the audience.

4. Q & A: Provides answers to questions that are clear and relevant, adding to the content provided in the presentation. Answers are neither too long nor too short.

Criteria #3 is the most individual grading criteria which is usually necessary for grading since group gradings are not allowed.

Detailed Rubric found in the following file: Bach Conscious Orgs - Assignment 3 Rubric - Poster Presentation.xlsx

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