Integrating Sustainability in Mainstream Business Curricula

Associate Professor Harsh Suri, PhD
• Why integrate SDGs into curricula
• PRME Blueprint for integrating SDGs into curriculum, research & partnerships
• Learner-centred holistic framework for integrating SDGs into curricula
Triple Bottom Line

Source: commons.wikimedia.org
Integrating sustainability in mainstream Business Curricula: Key challenges

- Perception: SDGs are peripheral to Business Education
- Curriculum crowding
- Experiential learning – pragmatic constraints
- Current Business Practices and Education
Evidence informed solutions

- Harness synergies with strategic T&L initiatives
- Reciprocal learning & empathy
- Engage with the lived realities of students
- Sustainability-employability nexus
- Challenge BAU by fostering critical reflexivity
- Programmatic, contextualised integration
“Most companies still lack the expertise to make the goals work for their business and a framework through which to evaluate what success looks like.”

- Analysed corporate and sustainability reports from 470 companies from 17 countries
- Engagement with SDGs

**Reporting quality scoring method**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Descriptive comment</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Description of ambition</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quantitative KPI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Quantitative KPI and target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Quantitative KPI, target and link to societal value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Figure 7: Quality of reporting**

### Top 3 reported indicators

- **GHG emissions reduction**
  - Average score: 3.42/5
  - Indicator for: 13 Climate Action

- **Representation of women in management positions**
  - Average score: 2.95/5
  - Indicator for: 5 Gender Equality

- **Energy efficiency**
  - Average score: 2.91/5
  - Indicator for: 7 Affordable and clean energy

### Bottom 3 reported indicators

- **Top earner income relative to the median compensation for all employees per country**
  - Average score: 0.67/5
  - Indicator for: 10 Inequality

- **% of workers that earn an amount equal or above living wage**
  - Average score: 0.69/5
  - Indicator for: 10 Inequality

- **Number of managers from developing countries**
  - Average score: 0.69/5
  - Indicator for: 10 Inequality

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Source: PwC, SDG Reporting Challenge 2017

Base: All companies (470)
2020 ASX150 Study by GCNA & RMIT

- CSR reports from 2018-2019
- Rising trend in reporting on SDGs (37% -> 48%)
- Prioritise SDGs (25%->48%)
- Quality of disclosure? Lacking measurable business performance targets link with SDGs
Thanks to all members of the 3rd PRME Champions Cycle (2018-2019) for their contributions to the development of this Blueprint.

https://d30mzt1bxg5lt.cloudfront.net/public/uploads/PDFs/BlueprintForSDGIIntegration.pdf
Scope of this Blueprint

1. Origin of SDGs and their importance for business and business schools
2. How can business schools contribute towards achieving the SDGs
3. Framework for SDG integration
4. Practical guidance, tools and examples
5. Next step: Good practice repository
**Strategic Journey**

**SDG integration requires commitment on different levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business School Level</th>
<th>Department Level</th>
<th>Individual Academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>Academic Programme Leads</td>
<td>Module Leads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Deans</td>
<td>Programme Administrators</td>
<td>Module Teaching Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Centre Heads</td>
<td>Research Leads</td>
<td>Researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Heads</td>
<td>Module Leads</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors (2020)
**PRME SDG Compass**

**Systematic process to achieve SDG integration**

1. **Step 1**
   - i) Understanding where we are

2. **Step 2**
   - ii) Defining priorities and setting goals

3. **Step 3**
   - iii) Deepen and/or broaden SDG integration

4. **Step 4**
   - iv) Communication and continuous improvement

**Update mapping**

**Feed back in to the cycle**

Source: Authors (2020)
## Unit of Analysis for Mapping SDG Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Activity</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Business School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mapping Methodology

Simple
Mapping by SDG Icon

Intermediate
Mapping with use of Key Words

Complex
Mapping via SDG Targets

Source: Authors (2020)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Choices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Spread of SDG integration across the degree programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Concentrated in Specific Courses (Modules/Units)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Disciplinary orientation of SDGs focused courses/ modules/units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Single Discipline Focus within a Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Integrating SDG education in core or elective courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. Core (Mandatory/Obligatory) Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Integrating SDGs into new or existing degree programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a. Existing Degree Programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Holistic learner-centred framework for scaffolding SDG integration
### Creating new normals for transformative action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowing: Recognise multiple normals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1: Multi structural understanding</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doing: Critique contemporary normals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2: Relational understanding</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Together and Being: Create new normals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3: Critical reflexivity for catalysing action</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Programmatic contextualised integration

- Business proposal
- Marketing
- Supply Chain
- Management
- Reporting
- Stakeholder engagement
- Financial markets
- Economic development
Your coaches
Meet your three coaches, who will address the following questions in relation to each goal.

**Sustainability Coach**
Why is this SDG important?

**Student Sustainability Champion**
How can I contribute?

**Industry Sustainability Champion**
How can businesses/organisations contribute?

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**Examples of personal actions**
1. Support leaders who reduce inequality
2. Protect and support the vulnerable groups
3. Buy from companies that pay fair and treat people fairly
4. Stand up for your rights, and the rights of others

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**Examples of actions from organisations and businesses**
Merriot International, Inc. is an American multinational hospitality company with an annual revenue of US$30.7 billion as of 2018 and with more than 47,000 associates working in 1,300 countries and territories. Diversity and inclusion are closely held company's strategic business goals and are embedded into every facet of their business — suppliers, franchisees, associates and guests. There are some of the company’s achievements:

- Conducting business with over 4,000 diverse-owned (minority, woman, service veteran, disabled, and LGBT) companies annually and having spent nearly $4 billion with diverse suppliers over the last decade
- Having provided support and training to 800+ open-hotel owned by women and diverse partners
- Creating diverse customer engagement initiatives with Marriott’s award-winning "Love Travels" campaign, which focuses on inclusive guest perspectives and experiences
SDGs focused Global Virtual WIL: Learning to know, to do, to live together and to be

Context: SDGs

Continuing the conversation...

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