Instructor: Omar El Sawy  6 Sat mornings 9am-12 + Spring Break trip  elsawy@marshall.usc.edu
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Class Name & Number:
GSBA 554 (15940)- Digital Strategies for Sustainability in Global Emerging Markets  - Spring 2013
(with experiential learning trip to Dubai/Abu Dhabi in Spring break)

Course Description:
The course provides a managerial understanding of business strategies for sustainability in a global environment which is becoming increasingly enabled by digital technologies. A successful business strategy for sustainability is different from and much broader than just “green” and must consider the multiple facets of the business ecosystem in which an organization operates: socio-cultural, economic, and technological – and not just the natural physical environment. Thus, a successful business strategy for sustainability has to worry about operating profitably while protecting/restoring the natural environment, but also about how actions affect members of society, resonate with cultural values, and generally conserve resources while building long-term capabilities. It is becoming increasingly critical for managers to understand and appreciate what business strategies for sustainability are, how to design them, and to be sensitized to the challenges of organizational implementation.

The course brings two additional critical aspects to business strategies for sustainability: (i) an emphasis on global emerging markets and (ii) taking advantage of the capabilities of digital technologies and the associated novel digital business models that they enable. The UAE (Dubai/Abu Dhabi) provides an exciting emerging location that may be a harbinger of things to come in our global economy, and provides a window to a region of the world that is relatively unexplored by global managers when compared to say BRIC economies. The course will also specifically focus on how to take advantage of digital technologies for sustainability strategies. In 2012, we live in a technology intensive digital world that is filled with ubiquitous high speed communication wireless networks, real-time sensors, smart grids, social networks, and a multitude of mobile devices. These technologies are enabling novel digital business models that enable open innovation, complex sensing, real-time information, health and environment monitoring, customer co-creation, and much more. This provides a multitude of new options for intelligent business strategies for sustainability.

The object of the course is to give you the skills and mindset to be a full participant in such progressive undertakings. The course will include an experiential learning trip to Dubai/Abu Dhabi (UAE) in the spring break. Team consulting projects will be carried out with 5 UAE companies in both locations (1.5 hours drive apart). Companies and projects finalized by start of semester. Project companies in Spring 2012 are Abraaj Capital, Dubai Road & Transports Authority, ATIC/Mubadala, Etisalat, and Cisco UAE. Deliverables for the course include 3 individual sector case write-ups, a team consulting project, and engagement, participation and attendance for both class sessions and experiential field trip.

Skills Acquired Through this course:
1) How to scope and assess a business strategy for sustainability, & understanding the drivers of sustainability.
2) An understanding of digital business models and how they can enable novel sustainability strategies.
3) An appreciation of high growth emerging economies in a direct experiential manner.
4) Familiarity with economic opportunities in the UAE region (Dubai/Abu Dhabi), and a new form of globalization.
5) An understanding of how to proactively transform value chain activities in a company for sustainability.
6) A team consulting experience in a high growth emerging economy.
7) A familiarity with the energy/environment/transportation sectors.

This course would benefit those pursuing careers in these FUNCTIONS in all industries:
Business Development --- Marketing --- Entrepreneurship --- Management Consulting --- Information Systems ---

TRAVEL COSTS & COURSE REGISTRATION:
The course includes 6 sessions of 3 hours each, and an international experiential trip in Spring Break to the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi/Dubai) that includes 5 full days of company visits/lectures/briefing. Travel costs will be borne by student and are additional course expenditures that are added to course fee bill at registration time. Travel costs will be determined at Fall pre-registration time when group hotel, airline, and land transportation is booked. Admission to the course is limited to 30 students. Procedures for pre-registration will be determined at prerегистration time in Fall 2013. Questions regarding travel can be directed to the Marshall Office of Global Programs. Questions regarding the course can be directed to the instructor at elsawy@marshall.usc.edu