



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2020

### 8,239: Asia Compact: Sustainability in Singapore and Southeast Asia

ECTS credits: 6

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (40%)

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,239,1.00 Asia Compact: Sustainability in Singapore and Southeast Asia](#) -- Englisch -- [Walls Judith](#)

#### Course information

##### Course prerequisites

The course has no specific prerequisites but it is helpful if you have previously taken a class on corporate sustainability management. The course will take place in Singapore during the first week of spring break (March 30 - April 4, 2020). Please note that we will also visit Malaysia for 2 days during this time

Registration and admission into the course will be separate from the regular bidding process. In order to help me select the most motivated students for the course, I ask you to submit your CV and a short motivation statement explaining why you would like to take the course (1/2 page maximum). Please send this to [giannina.faktor@unisg.ch](mailto:giannina.faktor@unisg.ch) no later than 06.02.2020.

##### Learning objectives

This course on social and environmental sustainability will take place in Singapore during the spring break and focuses on aspects of sustainability across several important industries in the region such as building and real estate, palm oil and other agri-business, tourism, finance, shipping, and energy, for example.

In this course, students will reflect on environmental and social sustainability challenges and how these may be addressed in the context of business in the South-East Asia region. Students will explore the key challenges in the region and what these mean for business. They will hear from experts and managers in the region about how these challenges are being addressed by businesses and their stakeholders. Students will apply sustainability strategy concepts to analyze an industry in the region and recommend how this industry can become more sustainable, to gain a deep understanding of the sustainability challenges and solutions in Singapore and South-East Asia.

##### Course content

This dynamic course will provide participants with an overview and understanding of business and sustainability, challenges and solutions, in Singapore and Southeast Asia through the lenses of multiple stakeholders. According to a 2017 report by the United Nations (UN) [1], Asia is "lagging behind" on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030, failing to meet nearly two thirds of the targets that have been set. In particular, the region has shown inadequate progress on environmental stewardship, and Asian countries are among the world's most vulnerable to negative impacts of climate change. On the social side, Asia has widening inequalities, rapid and massive urbanization and changing demographics. South-East Asian countries are impacted by natural disasters, migration, famine, and trafficking of drugs and human beings. Geopolitical stability is one of the key priorities on the social side, while on the environmental side, key challenges include addressing biodiversity loss due to deforestation and marine life and coral reef depletion, water security and sanitation, sea level rise, and air pollution.



Singapore is at the nexus of these challenges as a small island city-state in the South-East Asian region. While Singapore itself is economically developed and its citizens enjoy a high standard of living, awareness and action around sustainability have been slow to take root, and the country is closely tied to social and environmental challenges that arise in the region. For example, in 2015, Singaporeans spent months breathing in transboundary "haze", air pollution that resulted from burning of forests and plantations in neighboring Sumatra (Indonesia) for the purpose of pulp-and-paper and palm oil production. Fingers were pointed at poor environmental practices of Indonesian farmers and companies, but many palm oil companies have headquarters in Singapore and access to finance through the Singapore Stock Exchange.

In an effort to raise corporate sustainability efforts, the Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX) has made reporting on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices mandatory for all companies listed on SGX as of financial year December 31, 2017, allowing companies up to 12 months to submit their first report. This mandatory corporate social responsibility reporting is done on a "comply or explain" basis and must include a statement of ESG practices and goals by companies' board of directors.

[1] <https://www.sei.org/featured/sdgs-report-card-asia-pacific-region-failing/>

## Course structure

After an introductory kick-off session in St. Gallen in the beginning of the semester, the main part of the course will be taught during the mid-term break at the St. Gallen Institute of Management in Asia, which is the local institute of the University of St. Gallen in Singapore ([www.singapore.unisg.ch](http://www.singapore.unisg.ch)). The course will include a two-day trip to an island in Malaysia (additional costs will apply, see "Additional course information").

The first part of the course will provide an overview of Singapore and South-East Asian economies through the lens of social and environmental development, highlighting the key challenges, and the relevance of geopolitical and cultural aspects as well as formal institutions. We will look at how the region has addressed corporate social responsibility and learn companies' key strategic approaches to address sustainability both internally and along its supply chain and stakeholder relations. We will consider mandatory disclosure and how this affects business and sustainability in the region, its advantages and its pitfalls. Participants will learn about the roles of business, global supply chains, consumers, government, local communities, NGOs and other stakeholders in sustainable development. Students will become familiar with classic approaches to address sustainability including supply chain management, stakeholder engagement, triple-bottom line approaches, green governance, closed-loop production, and other business models of sustainability. We will visit companies and non-profit organizations across different industries (most likely building and real estate, palm oil and other agri-business, tourism, finance, shipping, and energy) to understand how business is addressing sustainability issues and the challenge that remain in this region, with an eye on the multi-stakeholder solutions being crafted to resolve some of these complex problems. In addition to formal lectures, the course relies on discussions based on reading material, case studies, reports and media coverage, guest speakers such as experts and managers on sustainability, videos, and visits to company and other organizations.

The students will form teams at the beginning of the course and be assigned an industry on which they will be asked to conduct original research to assess a focal company's sustainability strategy and make recommendations going forward on how to improve its sustainability strategy. The results of this research will be communicated in a **presentation**, due on the last day of class (Saturday). Students will be taught critical thinking techniques and be required to analyze the company's sustainability strategy using frameworks learned in the class and comparative peer analysis, assess the options available to companies for improvement, and evaluate those options to come up with an ideal-scenario solution. Teams should also develop a reasonable implementation plan that companies could pursue based on available resources and capabilities. Presentations will be assessed based on critical reasoning, coherence, quality of data and analysis, and presentation style.

Student individual **participation** will be scored based on engagement in class discussion and company presentations. Each student is expected to complete the required readings. Personal attendance to all sessions is mandatory.

In addition, each student is required to write a **reflection paper** (2,000 words) to be submitted two weeks after the blocked seminar.

## Course literature

Relevant literature (articles, case studies, etc.) will be distributed at the kick-off meeting at the beginning of the semester.

## Additional course information



## IMPORTANT

The trip to Singapore is NOT sponsored. Participants have to cover their travel expenses (flight, hotel etc.) on their own. Total costs for flight and accommodation during the stay in Singapore are expected to be in the range of approximately 1,000CHF to 1,500CHF (based on students' feedback of previous years). The two-day trip to the island in Malaysia will cost about 250CHF (this includes transport, food and accommodation).

Singapore offers a wide variety of accommodation ranging from hostels to hotels and private residences as well as direct flights and stopover flights. You must arrive in Singapore on or before Sunday March 29, 2020. We will depart for Malaysia on Thursday, April 2 and return to Singapore during late afternoon/evening on Saturday, April 4. Please take this into account for your departure from Singapore.

Further, it is the students' responsibility to have a valid travel insurance for their stay in Singapore and Malaysia, including coverage for some potential activities on the water/ocean.

We also ask students to consider paying for carbon offsets related to flights.

## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/3)

##### Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (40%)

##### Remark

Topics will be assigned at the kick-off meeting.

##### Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

##### Supplementary aids

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##### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

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#### 2. Examination sub part (2/3)

##### Examination time and form

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

##### Remark

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##### Examination-aid rule

Practical examination

No examination-aid rule is necessary for such examination types. The rules and regulations of the University of St. Gallen apply in a subsidiary fashion.

##### Supplementary aids

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## Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

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## 3. Examination sub part (3/3)

### Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (40%)

### Remark

Learning reflection paper.

### Examination-aid rule

Term papers

- Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship.
- The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the APA or MLA standards. The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into the text in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C. (2017), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (12th ed., Cornelsen Schweiz).
- For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers both according to the MLA and the APA standard is never optional.
- Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.
- For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B. (2018), *Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende* (6. Auflage), Zürich: Schulthess, or the recommendations of the Law School).

### Supplementary aids

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### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

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## Examination content

The contents of the group and individual assignments will be announced during the introductory meeting.

## Examination relevant literature

The relevant literature will be announced during the introductory meeting.



## Please note

Please note that this fact sheet alone is binding and has priority over any other information such as StudyNet (Canvas), personal databases or faculty members' websites and information provided in their lectures, etc.

Any possible references and links within the fact sheet to information provided by third parties are merely supplementary and informative in nature and are outside the University of St.Gallen's scope of responsibility and guarantee.

Documents and materials that have been submitted no later than the end of term time (CW21) are relevant to central examinations.

Binding nature of the fact sheet:

- Information about courses and examination time (central/decentral) and examination type starting from the beginning of the bidding on 23 January 2020
- Information about examinations (examination aid regulations, examination content, examination-relevant literature) for decentral examinations after the 4th semester week on 16 March 2020
- Information about examinations (examination aid regulations, examination content, examination-relevant literature) for central examinations as from the starting date for examination registration on 6 April 2020

Please consult the fact sheet again after these deadlines have expired.