

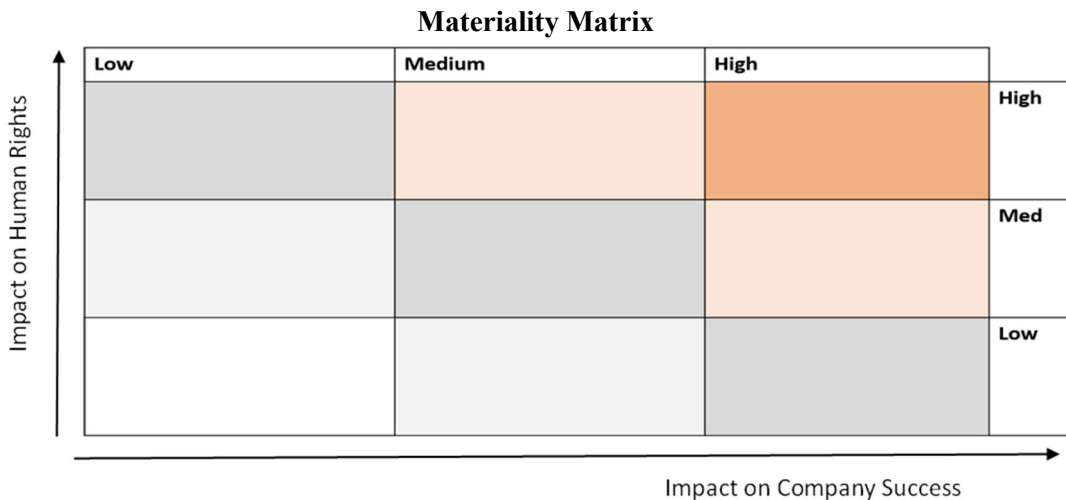
Econ 1710: Economics of Human Rights
Case Study Assignment
 Spring 2023

The Case Study Assignment includes an individual written report and a group presentation. The goal of the assignment will be to give students a deeper perspective on the complexity of business interaction with human rights issues by researching the human rights policies and issues for one case study company and by working together to summarize and present the results of the class research. Details of each element of the assignment, including how to select a case study company, are described below, along with a schedule of due dates and a grading rubric.

Case Study Written Report (Due 4/27 by 11:59pm)

The main element of the Case Study Assignment is a Case Study Report that each student will prepare on their selected company (see “Selecting a Case Study Company” below) with the information listed below:

1. Introduction
2. Company Overview
 - a. Brief overview of the company and its operations, including its global supply chain.
 - b. Relevant company human rights policies and affiliations, if any.
3. Human Rights Issues
 - a. Materiality Matrix (see image) of key human rights issues for your company
 - b. Analysis of at least one area of strength and one of weakness for the company.
 - c. Section should focus on human rights issue areas and not just lawsuits or specific controversies, although controversies can be used to illustrate an important issue.
4. Recommendations
 - a. Evaluate the company’s current efforts and how it could improve its human rights policies and impacts.
5. Summary



Report Grading Rubric (20 points total)

- Report structure and content: 3 points
- Company overview and human rights policies: 2 points
- Human Rights Issues and Materiality Matrix: 5 points
- Recommendations for improvement: 4 points
- References (see requirements): 2 points
- Grammar and Style: 2 points
- Development of draft information (see below): 2 points.

Selecting the Case Study Company (Due 1/26 by 11:59pm)

This semester, the case study companies are drawn from the corporate sponsors and affiliates of Pitt's Center for Sustainable Business (CSB), whose mission is "to maximize the value of investments in sustainable business strategies for all stakeholders" (<https://www.sustainablebusiness.pitt.edu/about>). The list below represents companies who have demonstrated their interest in sustainability through their connection with the CSB but who may still struggle to understand their impact on human rights.

Companies will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis by responding to a Canvas discussion post with your selection from the following list. Additional information each company is available on the CSB website ([Our Corporate Sponsors](#) | [Center for Sustainable Business](#) | [University of Pittsburgh](#)).

- Accenture (Ireland, Technology Services)
- Ansys (USA, Engineering Software)
- BASF (Germany, Chemicals)
- Consol Energy (USA, Coal)
- Dick's Sporting Goods (USA, Retail)
- Enel (Italy, Energy Company)
- Evoqua Water Technologies (USA, Water and Sewer)
- Federated Hermes (USA, Financial Services)
- IBM (USA, Technology Equipment and Services)
- Ingevity (USA, Chemicals)
- Mine Safety Appliance (USA, Safety Equipment)
- Peoples (USA, Energy)
- Pitt Ohio (USA, Logistics and Transportation)
- PPG (USA, Paint)
- Tarkett (France, Flooring)

Research Process

During the semester, students will build their research by submitting draft information using the topics and schedule listed below. Draft information will not be graded, but points will be deducted from the final grade for missing or late information (see the Report Grading Rubric). The goal of the draft schedule is to help students make progress on their research during the semester by matching the research with the topic being discussed in class during the week and by breaking the research into smaller steps.

Canvas also includes a curated library guide of useful resources for your research.

Report Style and Reference Details

- The report is limited to six pages of text. Margins, spacing, and font size are at the discretion of the author, but should be chosen to enhance clarity for the reader.
 - You will know much more about the topic than you can fit in six pages. Resist the temptation to cram as much information into the report as possible.
 - Focus your writing on providing clear, well-supported information that supports your main points.
 - Pay attention to the point distribution in the grading rubric and make sure not to miss required elements.
- Citations and references
 - All research (including data and the work of others) must have clearly cited references using the Turabian “Author-date style” that is explained in the Pitt Library citation guide here: <https://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp/turabian>
 - Examples of information that must be cited in the text
 - Sentences that use words and phrases like "reported" "reportedly" or “according to”
 - Sentences that include a quote from a person or publication
 - Sentences that include a comparison (something is better than or worse than)
 - Reference to standards (such as the UNGP) and other publications
 - Statistics and numerical data
 - The reference list and any attached figures will not count toward the page limit.
- The research for the report must include *at least one direct communication with an expert* on either the company or the key human rights issues.
 - The direct contact (either phone call or email) must be properly cited.
- The report grade includes points for grammar and style. If you are unsure of your writing skills, work with the Pitt Writing Center (<https://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu/>) on your draft report.
 - Helpful grammar tips are included on Canvas and are available at the Purdue Online Writing Lab (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/index.html)

Draft Research Notes (Due Saturday at 11:59pm of each week)

Students should create a word document that includes their draft research notes on the weekly topics that are listed below, summary information on benchmarks and stakeholder initiatives. See the draft research template for additional details.

- Week 4: Identify the company’s human rights policies, benchmark rankings, and participation in stakeholder initiatives (if any)
- Week 5: Develop an outline of the company’s global supply chain (including industry sectors and geographic regions or countries)
- Week 6: Identify any indication of forced labor in the company’s global supply chain.
- Week 7: Identify concerns about inequality or discrimination related to customers, employees, or social groups.
- Week 8: Identify one or more company impacts on community economic development issues (positive or negative)
- Week 9: Identify one or more environmental impacts of the company operations.
- Week 10: Identify any conflict regions in which your company has operations and any related information about their policy for working in those regions.
- Week 11: Identify whether there are any human rights implications from customer use of your company’s products.

The notes do not need to include complete sentences but should include relevant sources, ideas, or questions about each topic. The research notes will also include several tables that will help you to keep track of your findings and preliminary impressions of each topic for your company.

The last page of the Research Notes should include a reference list that students build each week. The reference list will become the bibliography of the report but does not need to be fully formatted yet and can be annotated (ie, include notes about each reference). The annotations are for the draft research document only and should not be included with your final report.

Presentations (4/6 – 4/20)

The second element of the Case Study Assignment is individual presentations on each of the case study companies, which the class will develop into a summary evaluation of the companies for presentation to the Center for Sustainable Business (CSB) on April 20 during class.

The individual presentations will take place on 4/6, 4/11, and 4/13 and should be 10-15 minutes each.

The presentations should include the following information:

- Power point presentation with 4-5 content slides (not including cover and references)
- Information on company overview and supply chain
- Materiality Matrix for the company
- Key human rights issues
- Recommendations for improvement

After all of the individual presentations are finished, the class will develop the summary presentation on 4/18 and will present it to the Center for Sustainable Business on 4/20.

Presentation Grading Rubric (10 points total)

- Company overview (2)
- Materiality Matrix and Human Rights Issues (4)
- Recommendations (2)
- Group Presentation to the CSB (2)