



**INTRODUCTION TO
CORPORATE SOCIAL
INNOVATION COURSE
TAUGHT BY PROFESSOR
JEANA WIRTENBERG, PH.D**

2024

Preparing the Next Generation of Corporate Social Innovation Leaders

By Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D.

As an ever-increasing number of businesses step up to address the great challenges of our time, significant opportunities for social innovation are rising to the fore. More and more businesses are discovering new ways to thrive and prosper, at the same time as they address some of the world's most intractable social and ecological problems.

The ability to innovate is now seen as a key driver of business success and is an essential capacity for companies to sustain their competitive advantage. And many leading corporations are beginning to bring social innovation into the heart of their economic, social and environmental strategic priorities, plans, and goals.

In this context, RICS developed and implemented a three-credit MBA course called "Introduction to Corporate Social Innovation." Through this course, we help prepare the leaders of tomorrow to create profitable and sustainable business opportunities in a business world undergoing massive and transformational change.

The course provides a foundation to prepare the next generation of business leaders to integrate social innovation, sustainability, and shared value creation into the core of the operations, culture, and ventures of their firms.

The course addresses both the challenges and the opportunities of CSI, while focusing on the private sector's current and future roles in addressing these challenges in innovative ways. It culminates in a team project at a focal company to design and develop a business opportunity for CSI in the context of one or more of these challenges.

Using case studies, guest speakers, group projects, and course readings, students gain a broad understanding of the many ways they can pursue positive, innovative and sustainable change in a business environment.

Students develop the skills, knowledge, and practices for building innovative organizations that contribute to solving complex social, ecological, and economic problems.

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Course modules include:

- The business case: how can we create shared value
- Financing CSI: investing in society
- Accounting for CSI: formally measuring and reporting progress
- Greening the Supply Chain: building responsible B2B relationships
- Marketing CSI: communicating and branding
- Global Perspectives: CSI around the world
- Developing & Selling CSI initiatives: innovation and intrapreneurship
- Collaborating across sectors to create a healthier world
- Managing responsible organizations: leadership for a better world

The course has run five times since it was introduced in 2019 and is an elective for both the Strategy and Leadership tracks of RBS Strategy and Leadership concentrations.

Guest speakers have come from BD, Novo Nordisk, Merck, Visa, Prudential, RWJ Foundation, J&J, Phase Change Solutions, Panasonic, Samsung, Transitioning to Green, RBS Supply Chain Department, et al. Speakers are currently being lined up for the fall 2024 class and will include Sustainability VP at Milliken & Company, among others.

The course has consistently received rave reviews from students. Here are a few sample testimonials from MBA students who have taken the course:

[I liked] "Learning real-world perspectives from phenomenal guest speakers at the top of their field and an opportunity to learn from them and ask questions in an intimate setting as well as an informal way of networking with them."

"This course has opened my horizons to new opportunities, knowledge and perspective. There is a whole new dimension of what businesses are capable of doing that I was not aware of and it is truly inspirational. This course was like a key to a whole new world of opportunities for me."

For more information on our CSI courses and Rutgers Stackable Business Innovation (rSBI)

Certificate Programs [click here:](#)



RICSI Website Development. By Dan Grimm

During the past year our **RICSI website** has continued to be refined and populated with more useful information! At the site visitors can learn more about our **methodology**, as well as find presentations, articles, podcasts, and blogs related to CSI.

Our well-attended research series QUASI ("Questions and Unanswers About Social Innovation") is featured on the page titled "Our Research", as well as special issues of Rutgers Business Review that feature our work.

On the "**Our Teaching**" page students can learn how to enroll in our classes and certificate programs. Visitors can read about many of our past events on the "**Our Outreach**" page, and also find an extensive compilation of bespoke content related to the **topic of Health Equity**.

Our "**Smart Ideas**" page contains blogs and opinion pieces written by RICS staff with the intent of inspiring and engaging readers. It is also the place visitors can listen to our "Impact Reimagined" podcast series featuring notable guests such as Abigail Disney, Paul Polman and Lord Michael Hastings.

We encourage everyone to visit, or visit again, soon!