Identification of Subjects for Social Responsibility Education at Universities and the Present Activity at the University of Tokyo

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The management of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has recently become a critical concern for companies in advanced countries. For universities, there is a requirement to contribute to the promotion of CSR, resulting in graduates who have sufficient cognition of and a good attitude towards CSR. In addition, universities have social responsibilities, which can be called "University Social Responsibility (USR)." On the basis of the concepts of the guidelines for CSR in the "Green Paper," which was presented by the European Committee (EC) in 2001, we provide a perspective here on what factors dictate the establishment of education programs for social responsibilities at universities. These factors include an outline of the concepts and the significance of CSR, social ethics and the morals of higher education and research, compliances, human resource management, human rights, safety and health in academic settings, and various concerns regarding environmental safety and preservation. Additionally, through the concept postulated here for social responsible education, in this paper, we introduce the present activity at the University of Tokyo (UT) in terms of the education program for CSR and USR, proposing that the future establishment of university-wide education programs based on the concept of CSR and the value of sustainability is required at UT.

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1.   Introduction

1.1   *Historical background and present status of corporate social responsibility (CSR)*

Currently, the companies in developed countries are required to adopt the concept of CSR. Numerous issues associated with the capitalistic economy have promoted the public opinion that companies should associate their business activity with broader social accountability and service for mutual benefit.

According to a review by Carroll,[1] the modern CSR movement originated in the 1950s. At that time, the emphasis was placed on the social conscience of business people, rather than on the company itself. It was in the 1960s and 1970s that companies were first required to connect business activity to broader social accountability and service for mutual benefit as well as to comply with legal requirements.

In 1992, the United Nations held the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro where the nations of the world agreed on an action plan for the next century –AGENDA 21. This agreement proposed that people have to be involved in planning developments for their own communities if such developments are to be sustainable, recognizing that human activity and environmental issues should be linked because humans depend on the earth to sustain life.[2] This international agreement has increased the awareness that CSR should be intrinsically linked to sustainable development, integrating environmental concerns with the economy and social impact in commercial operations.

Furthermore, the striking trend toward economic globalization from the 1990s has demanded that global companies integrate CSR into their core business strategy, their management structure and their operations, including the prevention of the widening of the difference between rich and poor due to economic globalization.[3]

In the 1980s, the concept of the stakeholders of companies was coined.[1] Stakeholders consist of employees, shareholders, investors, consumers, public authorities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and so on.[4] Along with the development of the recognition of the importance of interactions with stakeholders, companies are now required to disclose information going beyond traditional financial reporting so as to allow stakeholders to better identify the success and risk factors inherent in a company and its responsiveness to public opinion. In particular, in this decade, organizations that provide the indices of the CSR activity of each company are socially appreciated, supporting the increase in the amount of investment in CSR, i.e., social responsibility investment (SRI).[5] Moreover, progress in information technology (IT) has made it easy to acquire information on companies, which accelerates the notion that citizens can supervise the CSR activity of companies.

As outlined above, the management of CSR has recently become indispensable for enterprises in developed countries. Today, measures for CSR are critical for companies to raise their social image and maintain the sustainability of corporate activity.

Generally, the main pillars of CSR are thought to be based on three factors, that is, economy, society, and the environment. These three factors are called the "Triple Bottom Lines of CSR." Although various viewpoints and definitions can be found regarding the content of CSR, one paper, which was presented by EC in 2001, has been accepted as the authorized guideline of what companies should do to meet their social responsibility. The title of this paper is "Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility:

Green Paper."[6] This paper states that "CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis," describing the actions that corporations should take to meet their social responsibilities, covering economical, social and environmental concerns. The requirements outlined in the Green Paper are listed in Table 1. With respect to global environmental concerns, the Green Paper cited another report presented by EC in 2001 entitled "Ten Years after Rio–Preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development."[7] Thus, the requirements associated with global environmental concerns in Table 1 are those proposed in the Green Paper.

1.2   *Implications of universities with social responsibilities*

In response to the recent increased social and economic trend towards CSR, we are now in a position to examine the implications of universities with social responsibilities. Universities can no longer be simply responsible for the generation and conservation of basic science and scholarship. Actually, the report from the EC forum on CSR in 2004 refers to the important role of universities in building the necessary capacity for relevant CSR strategies, resulting in graduates as future managers and employees with improved capacities to coherently approach CSR.[8] In addition, this report requires universities to play a role in the improvement of the information on CSR for consumers, employees, and other stakeholders.

On the other hand, it should also be considered that the responsibilities of universities do not all directly promote CSR. Some of the responsibilities of universities are primarily oriented towards maintaining their own integrity, which can be termed "University Social Responsibility (USR)."

At present, however, the roles and obligation of universities for social responsibility remain to be sufficiently discussed. In particular, it is unclear how to establish programs for education on social responsibilities, although education is one of the fundamental and essential missions of universities.

On the basis of the guidelines for CSR presented by the Green Paper, in this paper, we provide a perspective on what universities should do to meet their USR and to promote CSR. Secondly, we propose here the factors that dictate the establishment of education programs for social responsibility at universities. Thirdly, through the concepts postulated in this paper for social responsibility education, the present activity at the University of Tokyo (UT) in terms of the education for CSR and USR was examined, and the programs associated with social responsibilities that have already been established and those to be established in the future were determined.

2.   **Materials and Methods**

2.1   *Definition of requirements for social responsibilities of universities and identification of subjects that should receive particular treatment in education at universities for CSR and USR*

On the basis of the requirements for CSR presented in the Green Paper,[6] actions to be undertaken by universities for USR were defined, and a distinction was made between what can be covered in routine courses at universities and what will require special measures for

Table 1
Requirements for CSR proposed in Green Paper.

<Economy>
   1. Close cooperation with stakeholders
   2. Compliance
   3. Providing superior products and services
   4. Promoting entrepreneurial initiatives
<Society>
   1. Human resource management
      Better information throughout company and profit-sharing and share ownership schemes
      Lifelong learning and empowerment of employees
      Better balance between work, family and leisure
      Equal pay and career prospects for women
      Consideration of employability and job security
      Reducing unemployment, raising employment rate, and fighting against social exclusion
   2. Health and safety at work
   3. Concerns with local communities
      Providing jobs, wages and benefits, and tax revenues
      Provision of additional vocational training places
      Donations to charitable activities
      Partnerships with communities, sponsoring of local sports and cultural events
   4. Concerns with human rights
      Extermination of child, forced and prison labors in international operations and global chain suppliers
      Consideration of wages, working hours and other social conditions
<Environment>
   1. Internal management of environmental impacts and natural resources
      Reducing the consumption of resources
      Reducing polluting emissions and waste
      Consideration of products' impacts throughout their life cycle
   2. Concerns of local communities
      Concern for local physical environment
      Environmental education for community
      Assisting environmental charities
   3. Global environmental concerns[*]
      Protecting natural resource base of economic development
      Poverty eradication
      Financial and technical assistance for sustainable development
      Support for NGO's advocacy role for sustainable development

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[*]The requirements proposed in the report "Ten Years after Rio –Preparing for the World Summit on Sustainable Development."[6]

action. The requirements belonging to the latter were identified as subjects needing special treatment in social responsibility education at universities.

2.2   *Examination of present activity associated with social responsibility education at UT*

   The textbook of safety and health education presented by the Division of Environment, Health and Safety (DEHS), UT, and the guidelines of the lecture course on environmental

safety presented by the Environmental Science Center (ESC), UT, were adopted to determine which requirements associated with social responsibility education are being taught at UT.

The number of participants in the lecture course on environmental safety from 1993 to 2004 was recorded on the basis of the registers of the lecture course.

3.   Results

3.1   *Requirements of universities in terms of social responsibilities*

On the basis of requirements proposed by the Green Paper for the promotion of CSR (Table 1), the actions that universities should take for USR are outlined in Table 2. When the concept of the Triple Bottom Lines of USR is considered, the economy can be classified into education and research, because the principal function of universities can be found in academic activity, that that of companies can be found in economic activity. Thus, the Triple Bottom Lines of USR are defined as 1) research and education, 2) society, and 3) environment.

3.2   *Requirements that should receive particular attention in social responsibility education at universities*

Some requirements of CSR and USR, which are described in Table 2, can be principally recognized as the inherent missions of universities. These requirements include the provision of superior education and research, and the promotion of academic, industrial and economic initiatives.

In contrast, special measures for the establishment of educational programs are necessary for some requirements, which are listed in Table 3, to be covered by universities not only for the promotion of CSR but also for the promotion of USR.

Table 2
Comparison of requirements to be dealt with in CSR and in USR.

CSR	USR
<Economy>	<Education and Research>
·Close cooperation with stakeholders	·Close cooperation with stakeholders
·Compliance	·Compliance
·Providing superior products and services	·Providing superior education and research programs
·Promoting entrepreneurial initiatives	·Promoting academic, industrial and economic initiatives
<Society>	<Society>
·Human resources management	·Human resources management
·Health and safety at work	·Health and safety in education and research
·Local communities	·Local communities
·Human rights	·Human rights
<Environment>	<Environment>
·Internal management of environmental impact and natural resources	·Internal management of environmental impact and natural resources
·Environmental concerns of local communities	·Environmental concerns of local communities
·Global environmental concerns	·Global environmental concerns

Table 3
Requirements needing establishment of special programs at universities for social responsibility education.

1) Concept and significance of CSR in corporate operations
2) Social ethics of education and research in universities
3) Significance of compliance
4) Human resource management and human rights
5) Preservation of safety and health in academic settings and work
6) Significance of environmental preservation
7) Promotion of saving energy and resources
8) Promotion of resource recycling
9) Contribution to sustainability of global environment

3.3   *Present activity of social responsibility education at UT*

In UT, two organizations are mainly responsible for social responsibility-associated education. One is DEHS, which is established in the headquarters of the university and is assigned to the management of matters associated with the environment, safety and health throughout the university. The other is ESC, which is in charge of the operation and research for environmental safety and the preservation of the university, including the safe treatment of chemical wastes derived from university activities.

The safety and health education by DEHS covers compliance with the laws related to scientific research, occupational diseases, mental health, and laboratory safety including the handling of chemicals, high-pressure gases and laser beams (Table 4).

A lecture course on environmental safety has been held by ESC since 1993, instructing the students and staffs of UT in 1) waste management and environmental monitoring in the university, 2) separation and treatment of chemical wastes derived from education and research activities, and 3) the safe treatment of chemical reagents in experiments (Table 5). A marked increase has been observed in the number of participants attending the lecture over the past several years (Fig. 1).

4.   Discussion

The Green Paper stated that "CSR is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis."[6] As described in this definition, economical, social and environmental concerns are recognized to be the main pillars of CSR, and these three concerns are generally called the Triple Bottom Lines of CSR.

When the implications of universities with social responsibilities are considered, there is a requirement to contribute to the promotion of CSR, resulting in graduates who have sufficient cognition of and a good attitude towards CSR. In addition, universities have social responsibilities primarily oriented towards maintaining their own integrity. In this paper, we termed this USR, providing a perspective on what actions should be taken by universities to meet their social responsibilities. In this respect, the Triple Bottom Lines of USR are defined

Table 4
Contents of safety and health education by DEHS of UT.

Contents common to official divisions, departments of humanities and sciences
    1. Labor safety and health law
    2. Mental health
    3. Visual display terminal (VDT) syndrome, occupational low-back pain
    4. Disaster prevention (fire and earthquakes)
    5. Compensation for work-related accidents and diseases
Contents specific to departments of sciences
    1. Safe treatment of chemical reagents
    2. Safe treatment of high-pressure gases, laser beams, etc.
    3. Experiment-related laws
        labor safety and health law
        fire prevention law
        high-pressure gas control law
        poisonous and deleterious substances control law
        etc.
    4. Emergency measures in experiment-related accidents
    5. Biohazards

Table 5
Outline of lecture course for environmental safety by ESC of UT.

I. Concept of environmental preservation, waste management, and environmental monitoring in UT
    1) Control system for environmental safety of UT
    2) Responsibility of people who discharge wastes
    3) Separation of wastes
    4) Daily wastes and recycling
    5) Medical or biological wastes
    6) Pollution release and transfer registers (PRTR) system
    7) Material safety data sheets (MSDS)
    8) Environmental monitoring of wastewater in UT
II. Separation and Treatment of chemical wastes
    1) Separation of experiment-related chemical wastes
    2) Collection of experiment-related chemical wastes
    3) Process of clearout of experiment-related chemical wastes
    4) Treatment of special chemical wastes (*e.g.*, asbestos, PCBs, mercury)
    5) Treatment of medical or biological wastes
    6) Treatment of disposal reagents, unknown reagents, and unknown wastes
III. Safe treatment of chemical reagents in experiments
    1) Safe treatment of combustible or explosive chemicals
    2) Safe treatment of toxic chemicals
    3) Safe treatment of high-pressure gases
    4) Emergency measures in experiment-related accidents
    5) Importance of safe planning of experiments
    6) Experiment-related laws
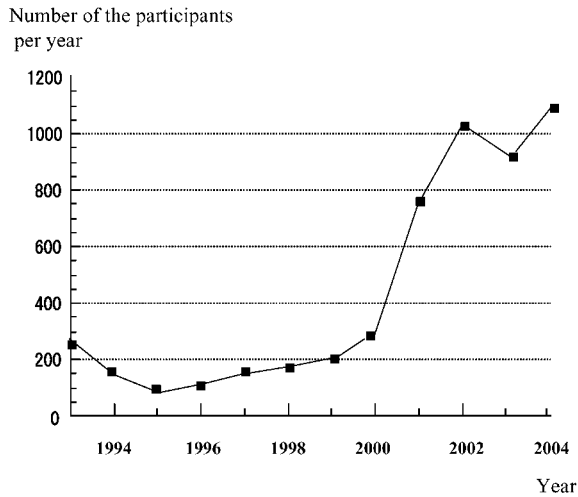
Number of the participants
per year

Fig. 1.   Number of participants in lecture course for environmental safety held by ESC of UT from 1993 to 2004.

as 1) research and education, 2) society, and 3) the environment, because the principle activities of universities cannot be found in economic activities but in the discovery, application, integration and teaching of information.[9] To meet the social responsibilities associated with research and education, universities should be required to provide superior education and results of research, and to promote academic, industrial and economic initiatives, as well as to comply with legal requirements and cooperate closely with the stakeholders of universities.

Regarding the USR requirements listed in Table 2, the staff of a university will usually attempt to provide superior education and research and they will naturally promote academic, industrial, and economic initiatives, because these are the inherent missions of universities. In contrast, special efforts will be required in universities to achieve sufficient recognition of and a good attitude toward the issues listed in Table 3. In addition to the instruction of the concept and the significance of CSR, these issues include those associated with social ethics and the morality of education and research, compliance toward associated-laws, human resource management, human rights, safety and health, and various concerns regarding environmental safety and preservation. We propose that these concerns be covered by special education programs at universities.

In the subjects proposed in Table 3, the ethical and moral concerns in education and research at universities are, at present, important and profound issues.[9,10] In 2004, UNESCO's European Center for Higher Education held the International Conference on Ethical and Moral Dimensions for Higher Education and Science, which adopted the Bucharest Declaration.[11] This declaration provides the following framework for problems associated with the ethical and moral dimensions at universities:
1) Universities cannot be regarded simply as 'factories' of science and technology, and of technical experts within a global knowledge economy, and must have key intellectual

and cultural responsibilities in a knowledge-based society.

2) The values and ethical standards that universities espouse will not only have a crucial influence over the academic, cultural and political development of their academics, students and staff, but also help to shape the moral contours of society-at-large, promoting the highest possible ethical standards.

3) High ethical standards should be respected and put into effect not only at a rhetorical level, but also in every aspect of the work of institutions including their internal governance and management and engagement with external stakeholders, as well as their teaching and research programs.

The major points of the Bucharest Declaration support the promotion of the requirements proposed in this paper, on which universities should act to promote CSR and USR.

With respect to education associated with environmental concerns, the main goal of environmental education is to change environmental behavior through increasing environmental knowledge and the number of positive effects.[12] In the past three decades, throughout the world, extensive and well-considered measures have been taken to develop high-integrity environmental education programs. Despite this, the results of several studies show that these environmental education programs have not necessarily been successful. For example, the survey by the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation in the United States revealed that two-thirds of adult Americans consistently fail simple tests on environmental knowledge.[13] In addition, there has been relatively little research on the role of universities as environmental educators, although environmental education at universities will largely contribute to the promotion of people's environmental literacy and the creation of social proenvironment behavior. To date, much attention has been paid to the role of environmental education in elementary and secondary school curricula, but few studies have focused on the role of universities as a means of increasing people's environmental knowledge,[14] and it has been shown that only 12% of four-year institutions of higher learning in the United States require environmental and ecological learning.[15] Kaplowitz and Levine examined the level of environmental knowledge of Michigan State University (MSU) students, reporting that the overall environmental knowledge level of MSU students was unsatisfactory, although the students were statistically significantly more knowledgeable about environmental issues than the average American adult.[16] Because environmental education will be an important dimension of social responsibility education, we postulate here that further efforts should be made to develop superior education programs to deal with environmental concerns at universities.

Finally, we look at the present activity for social responsibility education at UT. UT was established in 1877, as the first national university in Japan. The present organization of the university consists of nine faculties, 15 graduate schools, 11 research institutions, and 21 university-wide research centers, with approximately 2,800 professors, associate professors and lecturers, and a total student enrollment of about 29,000. The Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) ranks UT 16th of the universities all over the world in 2005.[17] Thus, UT is a high-level and large-scale higher education and research university.

At present, as shown in Tables 4 and 5, some of the requirements, which are proposed in this paper to need special instruction for social responsibility education, have been, at least partially, covered at UT. These requirements include the significance of compliance in education and research, safety and health in academic settings, the significance of environ-

mental preservation, energy and resource saving, and resource recycling. The recent marked increase in the number of participants in the lecture course of environmental safety, shown in Fig. 1, indicates an increased recognition of the importance of environmental safety at UT. In contrast, UT currently has no university-wide education programs for the following requirements: 1) the principle concept and the importance of CSR in corporate operations, 2) the social ethics of education and research at universities, 3) the contribution to the sustainability of the global environment. For the promotion of and action toward social responsibilities at UT, we propose that integrated education programs on these issues need to be established.

In conclusion, the management of CSR has become indispensable for companies in this decade, and there is also a requirement for universities to contribute to the promotion of CSR, resulting in graduates as future managers and employees with improved capacities to coherently approach CSR, and improve the knowledge of CSR for everybody. Some of the responsibilities that universities have, however, are primarily oriented towards maintaining their own integrity, which can be termed USR. This paper presents requirements for the establishment of special education programs at universities to promote CSR and meet USR, on the basis of the concepts proposed in the Green Paper. Because measures for the involvement of universities in social responsibilities are still in a fledgling state, further discussion on how to establish social responsibility education at universities, which will greatly contribute to the promotion of cognition of and appropriate attitude toward social responsibilities in the wider society as well as in universities, is required.

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