



BUSINESS AND LABOR RIGHTS IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Instructor: Dr. Sanchita B. Saxena

Class UGBA 192T

Semester: Fall 2022

Time/ Location: Wednesdays, 2pm- 4pm, N440

Credits: 2 credits course

The complex world of global supply chains, linking thousands of factories across multiple cultural and political boundaries, has provided countries in the global South with investment, employment, technology and access to markets. At the same time, however, workers in many of these factories often toil for long hours for minimal pay in difficult conditions that affect their mental and physical health, and in some cases, even cost lives. The very nature of this business model across boundaries often results in a “hands off” approach to labor issues due to a lack of knowledge and information about the reality on the ground. Many private initiatives to address these issues have been tried and tested, some with limited success.

This class will help students to understand the difficulty of ensuring good labor rights in very complex settings. Specifically, the class will cover:

- Key aspects of global supply chains
- Various solutions that have been tried to address the issue of labor rights in these supply chains
- New approaches that go beyond the social audit, focusing on the role of technology, labor organizing, the role of domestic governments and the domestic private sector
- Ways of rethinking the business model that may be beneficial for improved labor rights in the future

Course Objectives

- Foster awareness and empathy around the everyday realities faced by workers in global supply chains
- Analyze established solutions with the ability to critique their efficacy
- Think creatively about new approaches and potential solutions that businesses can adapt on to improve worker rights
- Acquire teamwork, group communication, and presentation skills



Dr. Sanchita Banerjee Saxena is the Executive Director of the Institute for South Asia Studies (Institute) at UC Berkeley and the Director of The Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies under the Institute. She is the editor of *Labor, Global Supply Chains, and the Garment Industry in South Asia: Bangladesh after Rana Plaza* (Routledge, 2020) and author of *Made in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka: The Labor Behind the Global Garments and Textiles Industries* (Cambria Press, 2014). Dr. Saxena has been a Practitioner Resident at the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Center in Italy and a Public Policy Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars in Washington D.C. She currently serves on the BRAC USA Advisory Council and is a non-resident Research Fellow at the Institute for Human Rights and Business. Dr. Saxena holds a PhD in political science from UCLA.