

Emerging Topics

SPEAKER SERIES

Dr. Sean Buchanan

Associate Professor

The Associates Fellow in Business
Administration



The new corporate activism: The promise and pitfalls of business speaking out on social issues

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Businesses are increasingly speaking out on social issues such as climate change, reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ matters, gun control, and immigration. However, this kind of corporate sociopolitical activism may pose risks to businesses in certain instances.

In this talk, Dr. Buchanan provides an overview of the emerging research on corporate sociopolitical activism and describe the conditions under which it may be harmful or helpful to businesses.

Drawing from research on Patagonia clothing, Dr. Buchanan highlights the importance of “value congruence” between a business and its key stakeholders and demonstrates how Patagonia works to achieve ongoing alignment with its stakeholders in pursuit of its own sociopolitical activism.

In doing so, Dr. Buchanan aims to generate insights for managers on how to engage in sociopolitical activism that benefits rather than harms their business.