

Master Syllabus

Department of Geography

GEOG 360: Tours and Meetings Management

Course Description

This course introduces principles, strategies and techniques applicable in planning and operational stages of tours, meetings and other organized forms of travel and tourism, both leisure and business oriented. Faculty supervised practical field experience in tour planning and conducting. Lab fees also apply. (3 credit hours).

Course Objectives

The objective of the course is to teach students some research, technical and managerial skills which are necessary to their future successful career in the tour operations and meeting planning segments of the travel/tourism/hospitality industry. It is expected that after the course students ought to be able to solve “real” problems associated with planning and operations of tours and meetings, and specifically:

1. Assess potential markets for specific tours or meetings
2. Develop proper planning and budgetary procedures of tours or meetings
3. Understand the principles of tour guiding and escorting, and managing meetings
4. Develop basic skills needed in operating tours or meetings

Students will test their knowledge and skills by planning and managing a full-day tour to a selected location.

Course Rationale

This course is the third in the sequence of courses composing the Travel & Tourism Program. In the sequence, GEOG 261, students gain an understanding WHAT a tourism/travel/hospitality is (= theory). In the second course of the sequence, GEOG 262, students develop an appreciation WHERE various forms of tourism/travel/hospitality are appropriate and take place (=geography). This course introduces students to an organized tourism/travel/hospitality product and how it is developed. Thus this course is more practical than theoretical, as reflected by its objectives and format.

Course Content and Format

The course format and objectives are realized through five complementary segments:

1. Class material is overviewed in a lecture/seminar format using multimedia presentations and numerous industry resources – guides, timetables, brochures, magazines, etc.
2. Participatory observation: three short sightseeing tours to observe tour and meeting practitioners at work:
 - a. A guided walking tour of the Ball State campus (in cooperation with Ball State Orientation Office)
 - b. Bus tour of the city of Muncie (in cooperation with Muncie Convention and Visitors Bureau)
 - c. Convention center site inspection (in cooperation with Horizon Convention Center in Muncie)
3. A tour package design and development: a group (two student) project of an escorted tour package to assigned destination, including: itinerary, budget, brochure, and sales-type in-class presentation
4. Practical problem solving: completely planned, budgeted (class fee) and arranged by students during the entire semester, and fully operated by the students at the end of a semester, a full-day sightseeing motorcoach tour to a selected destination.

An example of a potential outline of topics of this course, with time allotment for each topic at the discretion of the instructor:

1. Tour Essentials:
 - a. Terminology
 - b. Guiding
 - c. Planning
2. Tour Operations
 - a. Routines
 - b. Hotel Procedures
 - c. Air Travel
 - d. Cruises
 - e. Attractions
 - f. Restaurants
 - g. Problem Solving
 - h. Careers

3. Meeting/Conventions Management
 - a. Design
 - b. Development
 - c. Operations

Textbook Suggestions

Mancini, Marc, 2001: *Conducting Tours*. Albany, NY: Delmar Publishers, pp. 246.

Methods for Evaluating Student Performance

Forms of evaluation might include: examinations, in-class and take-home assignments, post-trip reports, class projects and trip development/operations participation, course evaluation forms.

Evaluation of the Course

Student evaluation of the course using university, and departmental course evaluation forms.