Master Syllabus
Department of Geography

GEOG 460: Travel and Tourism Consulting

Course Description

Familiarization with and assessment of various travel products and their distribution channels. Development of skills in problem solving and task functions such as: information gathering, promotion, reservation and ticketing. Laboratory computer experience. Industry approved entry-level travel agent certification optional.
(3 credit hours).

Course Objectives

The objective for the course is to teach students: research, technical and managerial skills which are necessary for a future successful career in the travel/tourism industry. It is expected that after the course students ought to be able to solve "real" problems when consulting clients and selling various travel/tourism products.

Course Rationale

This course is the forth in the sequence of courses composing the Travel & Tourism Program. The first course (GEOG 261) addresses the issue of "what is a tourism/travel/hospitality as a phenomenon (theory)?" The second course (GEOG 262) provides students with an understanding of "where tourism does take place (geography or tourism demand)?" In the third course (GEOG 360) students learn "how a tourism product is developed (tourism supply)?" This course provides students with knowledge and skills on "how a travel/tourism/hospitality product is distributed (marketed and sold)?" Consequently, through the four-course sequence students gain a complete guidance for successful future careers in a travel/tourism/hospitality industry.

Course Content and Format

The course program and objectives are conducted in two, parallel and complimentary segments:

1. A familiarization with the overall knowledge and skills required from a prospective travel consultant is done in a lecture or seminar style formats using multimedia presentations and numerous industry resources: guides, timetables, brochures, regulations, magazines, etc. It also involves numerous take-home assignments. Students can obtain the travel industry entry level certification in the form of the Travel Agent Proficiency Test (TAP), from the Travel Institute. An example of a

potential outline of topics covered in this segment, with a time allotment for each topic at the discretion of the instructor:

    A. Travel Consultant's Knowledge and Skills: business, geography, technology
    B. Understanding the Travel Product: air travel, ground travel, accommodations, cruises
    C. Marketing and Sales: marketing cycle, sales cycle, specialized sales
    D. The Workplace: communications, office operations, home-based agents, job search, careers.

2. A familiarization with a selected professional travel related Global Distribution System (GDS or CRS – Computer Reservation System) and a development of practical skills necessary to operate such as GDS. This segment consists of lab group instruction and Internet-based home assignments following a selected sequence of lessons, quizzes and tests, using the training program developed by the Viasinc (Vocational Instruction and Software, Inc.). Students have an option of obtaining a certification upon finishing a specific Viasinc computer training sequence. An example of a potential computer training sequence for a selected GDS system, with a time allotment for each topic at the discretion of the instructor:

    A. Principles of Creating a Passenger Name Record (PNR)
    B. Airline Reservation
    C. Car Rentals
    D. Hotels
    E. Ticketing
    F. Additional GDS databases, Office Communications and Customer Service

Textbook Suggestions

For segment 1:

Gagnon, Patricia J., and Houser, Shelly M., 2005, 8th edition: *Travel Career Development.* Wellesley, MA The Travel Institute (formerly the Institute of Certified Travel Agents), pp. 436. It includes: *Travel Career Development Student Workbook.*

For segment 2:

Viasinc (Vocational Instruction and Software, Inc.), 2011 or newer edition: *Introduction to Sabre* (or other selected GDS course): *Student Workbook.* Walnut Creek, CA, Viasinc, Inc., pp. 160.

Methods for Evaluating Student Performance

Forms of evaluation might include: examinations, in-class and take-home assignments, workbook assignments, computer quizzes and tests, class participation.

Evaluation of the Course

Student evaluation of the course using university and departmental course evaluations forms and procedures.