

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism
TOUR 340-001—Sustainable Tourism (3)

DAY/TIME: January 4 – 19, 2014 **LOCATION:** Various Locations/Costa Rica and Nicaragua
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will consider the characteristics of environmentally, economically and socio-culturally sustainable tourism and assess the possibilities and limitations for its implementation within a variety of destinations and product settings. It will also emphasize conventional “mass” tourism as well as small-scale “alternative” tourism.

Everyday students will be presented with a firsthand view of Costa Rica or Nicaragua’s past and present, to assist with the development of future ideas for building and strengthening sustainability practices. Sustainability models will be studied to assist students in understanding measures that support United Nations, Costa Rica and Nicaragua’s sustainability ideas to preserve World Heritage Sites, Culture, History and Eco Systems. In addition, students will explore both governments’ ideology to assist in further understanding how sustainability programs are impacted by government legislation and funding.

Our exploration will include numerous cities throughout both countries; from the coast to the mountains. Students will engage with residents, professionals, and students in cultural exchange, visit museums, learn about tourism businesses, biodiversity, and observe local sustainability projects. There will be hands on interactive assignments, required readings, writing assignments, team projects and presentations while in Central America.

Developing an understanding of the history, culture, political systems, and tourism, will set the stage for the presentation and final paper. These two projects will allow students to conduct a comparative analysis of each country’s sustainable tourism practices, current status and expectations. The David Weaver Sustainable Tourism text book required readings, articles, additional research, lectures and study abroad information gathered over the 15 day intense course of instruction will be the basis for both projects.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Conceptualize sustainability and its relevance to tourism.
2. Analyze the *economic, environmental, and socio-cultural* contexts of sustainable tourism.
3. Evaluate the principles of sustainable tourism in relation to tourism impacts.
4. Assess the practical application of sustainable tourism principles.
5. Demonstrate an awareness of good practice in sustainable tourism management.

6. Appreciate the challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing sustainable tourism management principles in such subsectors as accommodation, transportation, and tour operations.
7. Appreciate differences in and rationale for conventional “mass” tourism versus “alternative tourism.”
8. Show knowledge of current trends in community involvement in tourism planning and development based on field work.
9. An understanding of the impact of political practices as it relates to sustainable development and tourism.
10. Critically analyze the conceptual basis on which sustainability models impact tourism, history and culture
11. In depth knowledge of culture and history based on areas of interest and travel throughout Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This is an upper-level course in tourism and events management. It will require the use of information derived from: lecture/textbook material; general print and online library resources; and external data sources. The course is also delivered in a variety of ways: lecture presentation, small group discussions, reading groups, peer reviews, research, and writing assignments. The objective is threefold: to encourage collaborative and supportive learning environment among students; to emphasize that students are as responsible for their learning as I am; and to encourage analysis and critical thinking. Thus, students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code. They are expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class or take-home exercises and fulfill all assignments. Assignments must be turned in on the specified date due or **no credit will be given.**

ACADEMIC POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS: This program condenses 3 credits of study into a 15-day period. Our journey will be intense and exciting. In order to benefit from the site visits and to receive credit for the course, you must be up-to-date with the daily reading and writing assignments. Attendance is mandatory except in cases of verifiable illness. Due to the short duration of the study tour, there will be absolutely no extensions or late work accepted.

Journal Entries: A total of 10 journal entries are required during the study tour, 300 words minimum for each entry. Journals will be collected and evaluated twice in Costa Rica and Nicaragua (as indicated in the final itinerary) to give you feedback during the trip. Each entry should be your own personal observation, reflection and analysis of Costa Rica and Nicaragua’s history, culture and tourism as you have experienced it and relevant to the topics of study. In addition, journal assignments, notes and field study projects should be included in the journal. Journals will be kept confidential.

Field Study: Students will complete six (6) field study projects in teams. These assignments will include the application of knowledge learned from lectures, readings and tours. This activity is designed to have students demonstrate what they have learned on the trip and to learn from each other. Students will present a field study project on the last full day of the study tour as indicated in the syllabus.

Presentation: Each team will give a 10-minute oral presentation that is based on a field study projects completed on our study tour. All workshop presenters will be invited to the presentations. Selection of which project your team will present will be selected by the professor. Students will have time to enhance their projects before the presentations. This activity is designed to have students demonstrate what they have learned on the trip and to learn from each other.

Participation & Attendance: Active participation and attendance at site visits, lectures, and group discussions is an important part of the course. Students are expected to have read all materials prior to the discussion and to contribute their own insights frequently. Failure to do so will negatively affect your participation grade. Random assignments will be given based on readings.

Project Paper: Students will complete an 8-10 page research paper on an approved topic and the presentation in Costa Rica after returning to the United States. The paper may combine academic research, sources and citations with personal anecdote and analysis. The due date of the final paper is one week after our return date of January 19, 2014.

If you are challenged in a way that affects your learning outcomes please notify the professor and contact Disability Support Services in SUB I Room 222 or at 993-2474 PRIOR to departure. All accommodations must be arranged through this office.

REQUIRED READING

Weaver, D. B. (2006), *Sustainable Tourism (1st edition)*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier.

COURSE PACKET: To be printed or available on your computer at your expense before your arrival to Costa Rica. Readings in the course packet include selections regarding a historical overview, sustainable development, sustainable tourism, UNESCO, and culture as it relates to Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

EVALUATION: This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points.

Requirements	Points
<i>Journal Assignments (Short Essays & Assignments)</i>	25
<i>Field Study Projects & Presentations 1-6 (4 points each)</i>	25
<i>Participation (Adding to Discussion, Use of Material, and Leadership)</i>	25
<i>Final Presentation & Paper (25 points each)</i>	25
TOTAL	100

Grading Scale

A+	=	97 – 100	B+	=	87 – 89	C+	=	77 – 79	D	=	60 – 69
A	=	94 – 96	B	=	84 – 86	C	=	74 – 77	F	=	0 – 59
A-	=	90 – 93	B-	=	80 – 83	C-	=	70 – 73			

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE		TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENT DUE/DISCUSSION
Sat	Jan 4	Course Introduction Chapter Review Lecture I: Development & Tourism	Read - Weaver, Chapter 1, Emergence of Sustainable Tourism, pp. 1 – 17 Read - Weaver, Chapter 2, Issues in Sustainable Tourism, pp. 18 – 37 Journal Assignment #1 – Pg 17/1 of 3 Journal Assignment #2 – Pg 35/1 of 3 Article Package #1 – UN Articles
Sun	Jan 5	Chapter Review Lecture II: Costa Rica – Sustainability Models & Best Practices Used in CR Workshop 1: Tourism Bureau Presenter on Sustainable Data Analysis & Green	Read - Weaver, Chapter 3, Alternative Tourism, pp. 38 – 57 Read Weaver, Chapter 4, Conventional Mass Tourism, pp. 58 – 72 Assignment #3 – Pg 56/2 or 4
Mon	Jan 6	Chapter Review Lecture III: Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism Workshop 2: ADE Presenter-Building A Sustainable Community and Tourist Destination	Project 1: Ideas for Community Engagement /Sustainable Development & Alternative Tourism
Tue	Jan 7	Workshop 3: A Progress Report	Read Articles Package # 2- Projects that Assist with Sustainable Future
Wed	Jan 8	Chapter Review Lecture IV: Sustainable Development and Sustainable Tourism Workshop 5: Presenter – Hotel Owner Sustainable Property Vision & Tour Briefing: Team Project A – Develop Workshop 6: Sustainable Foods	Read Weaver, Chapter 5, The Facilitating Sectors, pp. 73 – 90 Read Weaver, Chapter 6, pp. Attractions 91-109 Project 2: Property Evaluation Using ICT Tools
Thur	Jan 9	Chapter Review	Read Weaver, Chapter 7, Quality Control, pp. 110 – 131 Read Weaver, Chapter 8, Tourist Destinations pp. 132 – 153 Read Weaver, Chapter 9, Journal Assignment #4 – Pg 207/2 or 4
Fri	Jan 10	Workshop 6: Sustainable Energy Development Workshop 7: Earth University- Professor and Student Led Lecture	Project 3: Culture & History –Sustainable

Sat	Jan 11	Independent Study: Student Choice	Project 4: All Inclusive Sustainable and Shades of Green
Sun	Jan 12	Lecture VI: Sustainable Development and Tourism in Nicaragua	Read Weaver, Chapter 10, Visitor management strategies for destinations, pg 174 – 190 Read Weaver, Chapter 11, Ecotourism, pp.191-208
Mon	Jan 13	Field Work-Study	Project 5: Understanding UNESCO World Heritage Sites
Tue	Jan 14	Lecture VIII: UNESCO Preservation of History and Culture	
Wed	Jan 15		Weaver, Chapter 1-11
Thur	Jan 16	Presentations Review & Course Review	
Fri	Jan 17	Independent Learning Day	
Sat	Jan 18	Preparation for Presentation Presentation to Group	
Sun	Jan 19	RETURN TO USA	
	Jan 26	FINAL PAPER DUE	

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu>].

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

