Tourism as a Path to International Cooperation & Sustainable Development

An Online Course presented by the UNWTO THEMIS Foundation and The George Washington University
Overview

Tourism as a Path to International Cooperation & Sustainable Development is an online curriculum that prepares university graduates, industry professionals and government officials with the specialized knowledge required to participate in tourism initiatives aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Course Objectives

• To enable participants to take part in tourism-related international cooperation projects and development programmes.

• To disseminate the World Tourism Organization’s (UNWTO) principles and guidelines, especially tourism’s role in job creation and poverty alleviation.

• To develop innovative approaches linked to the 2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development as designated by the United Nations.

• To foster opportunities for networking and community building between course participants, industry professionals and key tourism stakeholders.
After eight years of preparing for my PhD in civil and environmental engineering, I realized that I wanted to pursue a career in international development. I enrolled in the UNWTO-GWU tourism course with the goal of answering one question: Would changing my professional direction lead me toward a more meaningful career? I discovered with certainty that the answer was yes. Not only did I enjoy the course materials, but I had the opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds in tourism and sustainable development. During both the distance learning phase of the course and the two weeks I spent in DC, I was impressed by the caliber of the faculty and students and their global perspective. In addition to finding the course enormously worthwhile, it helped me to understand how my background in environmental engineering would be relevant to a career in tourism development and to prepare for an assignment with the World Bank.

Faezeh Behzadnejad, PhD
Dr. Hannah R. Messerli is the Dwight D. Eisenhower Professor of Tourism Policy and Chair of the International Institute of Tourism Studies in the School of Business at the George Washington University (GWU).

Dedicated to advancing understanding of tourism’s development complexities in today’s rapidly changing economies, she has worked globally in analysis, policy, planning, and product development. Prior to joining the George Washington University School of Business, Dr. Messerli worked in the public, business and academic sectors including professional positions with the World Bank, UNDP/ILO, hotel and tourism companies, and New York University.

Leveraging applied research to inform best practice and innovation, Dr. Messerli works with diverse stakeholders to develop strategy, capacity and policies enabling increased competitiveness, productivity and sustainability of tourism. Messerli’s technical assistance in nature-based and heritage tourism development include engagement with the governments and the private sector in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Malawi, Lesotho, Gambia, Rwanda, Cote d’Ivoire, Montenegro, Cyprus, Macedonia, Palestine, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Peru, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, China, Thailand, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, among other countries.
Seleni Matus is the Executive Director of the International Institute of Tourism at The George Washington University.

She has spent more than 15 years working with governments and the private sector in tourism destinations throughout the Caribbean and Latin America to develop and implement sustainable management plans and programs that have enhanced the quality of tourism offerings and helped to ensure the long-term health of natural ecosystems. Seleni Matus also assisted multinational corporations, such as Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. to adopt corporate strategies for destination stewardship.

A native of Belize, Matus served as the country’s Director of Tourism and oversaw the reorganization of the Belize Tourism Board in order to meet the demands of a fiercely competitive global marketplace. She has co-authored several publications including, Linking Communities, Tourism & Conservation: A Tourism Assessment Process, Tourism and Biodiversity: Mapping Tourism’s Global Footprint, and From Ship to Shore: Sustainable Stewardship in Cruise Destinations.
The online course fee is $1,225 USD.

Payment Deadline

Once formally admitted, participants will be asked to submit the online portion of the tuition fee directly to the UNWTO.Themis Foundation by September 30th, 2016. The final admission of participants will be formalized with the payment confirmation.
Admission procedure

Participants are required to complete the official on-line application form for the Course by **September 30th, 2016**. In addition, the documentation listed below must be submitted in PDF or JPG format to capacity@unwtothemis.org, with the subject line “GWU-THMS16|Surname”.

**Documentation required:**

- Professional resume;
- One letter of recommendation (Professional or Academic);
- Copy of your highest academic degree;
- ID Picture;
- English certificate for non-native speakers only (TOEFL and IELTS are preferred);
Introduction to Tourism (optional)

Basic introduction to tourism for participants with limited academic or experiential background in tourism.

1. Sustainable tourism in the international development assistance and cooperation environment

Description:

This module will highlight the outcomes and subsequent actions following the George Washington University (GWU) / UNWTO Tourism Policy Forum held in Washington DC in 2004, as well as recent activities of UNWTO focused on the role of tourism in international development. This module focuses on information sharing and communication between development agencies involved in promoting tourism as sustainable development strategy, stressing the need for:

- more structured coordination between all development assistance partners working in tourism and sustainable development, particularly at the regional and national levels;
- benchmarking and learning from best practices across regions and sectors concerned with tourism and sustainable development;
common guidelines and tools to assist with the implementation and evaluation of projects and programs using tourism as a tool for sustainable development.

It will also focus on international cooperation and development assistance initiatives which employ a sustainable tourism approach to realize priority economic, social and environmental outcomes in developing countries.

Participants will learn to:

1. Understand how development assistance and cooperation programs can utilize tourism to accomplish sustainable development objectives.

2. Describe development processes, aid and humanitarian interventions that are relevant to the tourism industry.

3. Engage stakeholders in the design and ownership of sustainable tourism development processes.

4. Analyze the role that sustainable tourism can play in developing and emerging countries.

5. Understand the critical importance of ethics and social responsibility throughout the tourism development process.

6. Relate tourism to economic growth and competitiveness goals and poverty alleviation.

7. Relate tourism to biodiversity conservation, protected area management & climate change.

8. Apply the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for quality assurance or certification programs for hotels, tour operations, attractions, transport companies and tourism destinations.
2. Tourism project development cycle

Description:

Participants will develop a sustainable tourism project outline related to development assistance goals. It is expected that the project should utilize one or more of the course modules to assist the participant in the development of the project outline during the on-site component of this course.

Participants will learn how to:

1. Map the context for a sustainable tourism project using available information sources.

2. Conduct a value chain analysis of the tourism industry in general or a specific component.

3. Catalyze coalitions and partnerships to design and implement projects.

4. Employ group facilitation techniques to enhance participations, communications and social networks.

5. Create collaborative, sustainable solutions or interventions.

6. Design implementation actions including performance, personnel, timelines and budgetary requirements.
7. Use performance monitoring & evaluation systems (e.g. log frame) to document project outcomes.


3. Sustainable tourism enterprise development

Description:

This module describes how to establish and develop a tourism enterprise. General business principles are discussed and then tailored to the tourism industry.

Participants will learn how to:


2. Develop an effective business plan.

3. Identify important considerations when defining your tourism product.

4. Conduct marketing research for new tourism ventures.

5. Apply eco-certifications to tourism businesses

6. Determine how your tourism business can benefit communities and the environment.

7. Examine e-commerce in entrepreneurial tourism ventures.

8. Understand how to sustain and grow your tourism business.
4. Tourism workforce development toolkit

**Description:**

This toolkit is designed for professionals involved in workforce development in the education, economic growth, and natural resource management sector for projects founded by donors (like USAID) or implemented by contractors, consultants, government agencies or civil society. There is shared concern for: (a) the high rates of unemployment among young people, ages 12-24, which constitute between 40-60 percent of the population in most developing countries; and (b) the need for these same countries to develop sustainable tourism industries, that provide jobs and promote economic growth, while at the same time practicing sound natural resource management.

**Participants will learn how to:**

1. Understand how tourism workforce programs can contribute to the competitiveness of the tourism industry.

2. Conduct tourism workforce development assessment using tools for employers, training providers and youth.

3. Plan and implement a tourism and youth workforce assessment.

4. Utilize three focus group protocols that examine youth’s current activities and their perceived barriers and opportunities to getting a job in tourism.
5. Analyze survey results using an integrated gap analysis process.

6. Translate assessment findings into new program-design recommendations.

7. Review case studies of successful tourism work force development programs.

8. Monitor and evaluate tourism work force development programs.

5. Tourism clusters & destination management

Description:

This module looks at how to assess tourism’s potential, and how to measure the potential costs and benefits of tourism at the destination level. It examines how destinations have improved competitiveness by creating environmentally and socially friendly tourism products and services. The course emphasizes to establish policies and management plans to identify and reduce negative impacts created by tourism facilities and services, and looks at how to create public-private sector management systems with broad stakeholder support.

Objectives:

Participants will learn how to:

1. Initiate a tourism assessment process focused on visioning, goal setting and effective resource utilization.

2. Formulate, integrate and coordinate sustainable tourism policies for the public and private sector at the local, national and multilateral levels.
3. Develop a visitor experience management approach to audit a destination’s performance and to undertake remedial actions through multi-stakeholder engagement and involvement processes.

4. Design a tourism management information system to collect statistics and other data needed to assess visitor profiles/spending patterns, resident attitudes, supply inventory/performance (hotels, tour operators, attractions, etc.), social, economic/environmental impacts, and safety/security.

5. Utilize clusters, networks and management systems to enhance a destination's competitiveness, including developing a business plan for the organizational sustainability model.
6. Develop destination marketing programs, including branding, positioning and strategic interventions.

7. Build a systematic framework for public and private sector partnerships at the local, regional and national level.

8. Establish local destination management organizations (DMOs) to coordinate a destination’s tourism activities including products development, and quality assurance programs (briefly outline how destination management commercial companies fit into the overall DMO strategy – i.e. receptive tour operators, event management, etc.).
Contacts

UNWTO-Themis Foundation
Av. Dr. Vilanova 13, Edif. DAVI
AD500 Andorra la Vella
Principality of Andorra
Phone: +376 -802600.
Fax: +376 -829955
E-mail: capacity@unwtothemis.org
http://themis.unwto.org

The George Washington University
2201 G St, NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20052
USA
Phone: +1 (202) 994 8197
E-mail: iits@gwu.edu
http://business.gwu.edu/tourism
About The George Washington University
The International Institute of Tourism Studies in the School of Business is recognized worldwide for creating and diffusing knowledge that fosters innovation in sustainable tourism development and engenders a deeper understanding of tourism as a key pillar of the world economy.

About the UNWTO.Themis Foundation
The UNWTO.Themis Foundation is the education and training arm of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) committed to advancing quality, competitiveness and sustainability of the tourism sector worldwide through excellence in education and training.

About the World Tourism Organization, a United Nations specialized agency, is the leading international organization with the decisive and central role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. It serves as a global forum for tourism policy issues and a practical source of tourism know-how. Its membership includes 157 countries, 6 associate members, 2 permanent observers and over 480 Affiliate Members.