Tourism Education + Workforce Development

Potential Activities with
The George Washington University (GW) School of Business
Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management
International Institute of Tourism Studies

EXCELLENCE  LEADERSHIP  COLLABORATION
“Individual motivation to work and expand skills is [also] important to competitive advantage. Outstanding talent is a scarce resource in any nation. A nation’s success largely depends on the types of education its talented people choose, where they choose to work, and their commitment and effort. The goals a nation’s institutions and values set for individuals and companies, and the prestige it attaches to certain industries, guide the flow of capital and human resources — which, in turn, directly affects the competitive performance of certain industries. Nations tend to be competitive in activities that people admire or depend on — the activities from which the nation’s heroes emerge.” —Michael Porter, The Competitive Advantage of Nations

According to Michael Porter’s competitiveness theory what makes an industry competitive is its capacity to attract skilled human resources and to create and assimilate knowledge. This is possible only when public institutions and the private sector ensure that:

■ The industry generates valuable knowledge through innovative practices and creative applications;
■ The industry has a strong prestige that attracts the young and the talented; and
■ There are quality educational programs and initiatives producing a skilled workforce

The Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management and the International Institute of Tourism Studies at the GW School of Business can help tourism destinations achieve excellence in their workforce development and education that will help increase their competitiveness. Programs include:

■ Workforce assessment and strategy development at the national and local levels, including career opportunities, demand analysis, and mobilization of training and education resources
■ Academic exchanges and research partnerships with educational institutions
■ Courses and certificate programs
■ Customized training based upon identified needs
■ Joint internship and practicum programs

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Workforce Assessment and Strategy Development

Holistic Workforce Development Strategies

GW has the expertise and experience to conduct assessments of the current processes and status of tourism workforce development at the local, regional or national levels. One of the key components of this assessment is an analysis of skills and knowledge gaps in the current workforce. Another important component is an analysis of tourism education programs’ capacities and potential ability to fill the identified skills and knowledge gaps. Also essential is a review of relevant policies.

Based upon this information, GW can then identify opportunities for improvement and propose specific actions that can upgrade the workforce development capabilities of destinations. GW can help facilitate dialogue among public, private and educational institutions and engage them in the development of effective workforce development strategies. In addition to building relevant academic and professional development programs, such strategies can include targeted policy development, institutional capacity building and partnership development.

KEY BENEFITS

- Access to high-level expertise and advice from leading specialists in academic and professional tourism education
- Application of a holistic destination-level approach to workforce development needs analysis and strategy development
- Facilitated dialogue between public, private and educational institutions.

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Academic Exchange and Research Partnerships
With Educational Institutions
Joining the Leading Researchers

As a leader in tourism education and research, GW is an excellent partner for academic institutions around the world. GW invites local universities to engage in joint research and academic exchange programs. This involves programs for exchange of visiting scholars as well as programs for joint research through collection of data, development of case studies and publication in academic journals. Such partnerships are an opportunity for local institutions to improve their research capacity and ultimately contribute to the global tourism knowledge base. These initiatives are also important for strengthening the image and reputation of local academic institutions as equal participants in the accumulation and dissemination of contemporary tourism knowledge.

Student Research
Regular classes at GW offer another opportunity for targeted research generation. Through class projects, GW students can be engaged in projects focused on in-depth research of a specific topic, collection of best practices, identification of case studies, etc. Such approaches engage students in real-life project work and at the same time help generate findings and ideas for specific programs that would otherwise be too time-consuming. Such student research projects can be implemented as joint initiatives between GW students and students in local universities within a destination.

KEY BENEFITS

- Strengthened image of local academic institutions
- Promotion of destinations through case studies and local research
- Effective generation of important research and ideas

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Professional Development Courses and Certificate Programs for Public and Private Sectors

Internationally Recognized Programs

In addition to academic programs, GW is a leader in professional education. GW’s professional development curriculum has been successfully offered in more than 20 countries around the world. It is divided into two concentrations: Tourism Destination Management and Event Management; and two specialized series: Hospitality Management and Sports Business Management. Graduates of the programs are granted professional certificates issued by the GW School of Business.

The GW Professional Development Certificate Programs are designed for individuals working in tourism, both in the public and the private sector. Through the use of expert analysis, tools, best practices, benchmarks and case studies, the program is designed to provide the essential skills to make a destination’s workforce more competitive.

The GW Professional Development Certificate Programs have been Tourism Education Quality (TedQual)² certified by the United Nations World Tourism Organization.

Program Delivery

GW’s professional education programs are delivered in intensive, short workshop or seminar format. They can be delivered either at our campus in Washington, DC or customized for other locations around the world. Through GW’s advanced distance-learning education platform, our programs are also available via the internet. To meet the needs of busy professionals, our programs can also be offered in a blended format of both distance and in-class education. For more information about our programs, please visit http://www.gwutourism.org/careereducation

Certificate Program Partnerships

Through partnerships with a multitude of universities and professional organizations, the GW curriculum is being delivered to students around the world who wish to gain event and tourism knowledge at a professional level. Students and professionals benefit from shared learning, current best practices, networking, and career opportunities.

² For more details see: http://ekm.unwto.org/english/tedqual.php

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Customized Training Programs
For Public and Private Sectors and Educational Institutions
Training Based on the Needs of Stakeholders

Based on established needs, GW can customize existing or develop new curriculum for training programs that cover specific topics, meet concrete objectives and needs of international, regional or local public, private or educational organizations. Customized training for public-sector institutions can address specific gaps in their capacities such as contemporary tourism management, policy approaches, regulation and tourism legislation, destination marketing and many others. Private-sector entities can benefit from customized training programs too. They can request courses that build specific capacities for improving their competitiveness and ability to respond to the needs of contemporary travelers. GW can design customized training programs that can build the capacity of academic institutions as well. This creates opportunities to improve educational systems within destinations.

Training programs may be delivered in the form of workshops at preferred locations, on-line or in a blended format. Course materials may also be translated into languages other than English.

KEY BENEFITS

- Access to professional programs carrying UNWTO TedQual Certification
- Access to professional development for industry workforce through a well-established, internationally renowned program
- Flexibility in delivery systems
- Opportunity to engage local educational institutions and professional programs

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Joint University Programs
The GW International Consulting Practicum
Developing Future Industry Leaders While Generating Creative Solutions

The GW International Consulting Practicum is offered every summer as part of the core School of Business curriculum. It involves a two-week cooperative effort between graduate students from GW and a local university focused on a real-life consulting assignment. This intensive hands-on initiative nurtures the capacity of future tourism leaders in a destination through their involvement with generating actionable strategies for local economic growth.

Projects are usually conducted in two phases — a preparatory phase and an in-country fieldwork phase. During the preparatory phase GW and local students use technology (such as e-mail, electronic discussion boards, chat rooms, and online platforms for information exchange) to establish a long-distance working relationship, join efforts in conducting background research and prepare for fieldwork. During the second phase, student teams work together in the destination assessing current industry capacity and developing actionable strategies for tourism development. Fieldwork consists of site visits, review of tourism assets, and interviews with stakeholders and others. The student team holds interviews and open discussions with many community representatives, development agencies, donors, and potential partners.

The practicum generates immediate, mid-term and long-term impacts. First, the joint student team produces a set of specific recommendations and actionable solutions for the local destination. Second, through active cooperation, experiential learning and exchange of knowledge in an international team, the program helps build the capacity of motivated local students who are the future professional leaders of the host country. Third, through a series of events, meetings with local stakeholders, work with national, regional and local institutions and active public relations, the student practicum increases public awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism and catalyzes energy for implementation of the proposed solutions.

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Project Areas
The student consulting teams can undertake projects in a wide range of content areas, based upon the clients’ specific needs. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Rapid Assessment**: Assessing the potential of an area for tourism development and identifying existing needs and relevant strategies
- **Strategic Planning**: Assisting destinations and different stakeholder groups to assess their current situations, desired futures, and measures needed to close the gap
- **Marketing**: Conducting market research and designing marketing strategies
- **Product Development**: Identification of product gaps and development of products to satisfy demand
- **Business Planning**: Assistance with business plan creation, feasibility studies, etc.
- **Capacity Building**: Initiating training and capacity building programs for private- and public-sector stakeholders
- **Educational Initiatives**: Encouraging partnerships and enhancing the capacities of local educational institutions offering tourism-related programs
- **Technological Innovation**: Creating or enhancing web presence, implementing accounting and software systems, incorporation of GIS tools, etc.

KEY BENEFITS

- Focused knowledge and capacity of a consulting team with diverse background and experience in business, management, marketing, sustainable tourism, etc.
- Intensive generation of creative and actionable ideas — solution-oriented approach
- Average of 90-days worth of consulting input over a two-week period
- Building of local capacity through partnership with local academic institution (future industry leaders)

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The George Washington University
School of Business
Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management (DTHM)
International Institute of Tourism Studies (IITS)

Mission Statement:
The Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management and the International Institute of Tourism Studies are committed to being first in tourism and hospitality management education and research worldwide.

Since 1972, The George Washington University (GW) has been a pioneer in tourism management, education, research and technical assistance. GW was the first university in the United States to offer a master’s degree in tourism administration, and continued its tradition of “firsts” by creating the International Institute of Tourism Studies (IITS), the first university-based World Tourism Organization (WTO) Center for Tourism Education and Research in 1988. In 2004, GW was elected to serve as Chair of the WTO’s Education Council, an alliance of many of the world’s leading tourism research and educational institutions.

Surrounded by a world-class city, GW and DTHM/IITS provide faculty, students and alumni with special access to public decision-makers, tourism resources and global leaders in the tourism and hospitality fields. No other locale in the United States has such a concentration of embassies; national, state and local tourism offices; cultural institutions; research organizations; and industry associations.

The DTHM/IITS attracts scholars and professionals from around the globe creating unique opportunities for long-term educational, research and consulting alliances. DTHM/IITS faculty are educationally qualified and professionally experienced in a variety of fields resulting in a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching, research and service where constant emphasis is placed on real-world application. The full-time DTHM faculty are internationally recognized experts in such disciplines as tourism policy, tourism economics and forecasting, market research, destination management, event and meeting management, services marketing, ecotourism, sports management, cultural heritage tourism, airline profitability and health tourism. GW’s tourism faculty are actively involved in today’s forces that shape the tourism industry while being on the cutting-edge of tomorrow’s developments.

For more information on the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, go to http://business.gwu.edu/tourism.

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