Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

TEACHING GUIDE

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS

MÁSTER U. EN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM MANAGEMENT (INGLÉS) (Plan antiguo)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

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I.-Subject Identification	
Type	OPTATIVA
Teaching period	1 course, 2S semester
Nº of credits	3
Language in wich the subject is taught	English

II.-Presentation

Presentation

With this course the student will be encouraged to acquire the conceptual foundations, the knowledge of documentary sources and the fundamental contents about protected natural areas as tourist resources. Students will acquire this knowledge as well as interpersonal and group work skills with the realization and presentation of tourism projects located in these areas, always responding to the demands of sustainability and quality essential to all tourist activities developed in protected natural areas and their surroundings. It would be advisable to have a minimum geographical and tourism-related knowledge for the good development of this course.

III.-Learning outcomes

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CB10 Have the necessary skills to continue studying in a self-directed and autonomous manner.
CB7 Know how to apply the acquired knowledge and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments, within broader or multidisciplinary contexts related to the area of study.
CB9 Know how to communicate conclusions, and provide the knowledge and reasons to support them, to specialised and non-specialised audiences in a clear manner and without ambiguities.
CG02 Ability to work, as part of a team and autonomously, in a multicultural and multidisciplinary context.
CG05 Continuous learning, self-directed and autonomous.
CG06 Ability to develop communication skills in different decision-making spheres and in different languages.
CT01 Ability to adapt to new situations.
CT02 Autonomous learning.
CT03 Capacity for analysis and synthesis.
CT04 Information management skills.
CT05 Planning and organisation skills.
CT06 Ethical commitment.
CT15 Motivation for quality.
CT16 Critical thinking.
CT19 Sensitivity to environmental issues.
CT21 Team work.
CT22 Ability to work in an international context.
CT23 Ability to work in interdisciplinary teams.
CE04 Comparative analysis of the national and international legal frameworks that regulate tourism activities and planning, as well as regional planning, in order to establish action strategies for agents operating in international environments
CE05 Application of the fundamentals of innovation management, efficiency and competitiveness to the management of tourism organisations (public and private).
CE10 Knowledge of planning and regional planning tools as well as of the mechanisms that regulate tourism activities, and development of a planning proposal for a given destination.
CE12 Definition and development of a tourism strategic plan for a given destination.
CE13 Knowledge and application of sustainable management tools for destinations and products.
CE14 Knowledge and implementation of quality systems and environmental, economic and social management applied to tourism within the strategic framework of sustainable tourism development.

- Key for degrees not adapted to RD 822/21: **CB** - basic competences, **CG** - generic competences, **CE** - specific competences, **CT** - transversal competences.
- Key for degrees adapted to RD 822/21: **CON** - knowledge, **COM** - competences, **HAB** - skills.

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IV.-Contents

IV.A.-Syllabus

Syllabus

Theme 1. Sustainable tourism and ecotourism.

1. Concept of sustainability
2. Concept of sustainable tourism and ecotourism.
3. Tourism and nature conservation interface. Linkages with cultural and intangible heritage
4. Ecotourism: Specialized forms of nature-based tourism

Theme 2. Natural areas legislative and planning framework.

1. Concept of protected area. Evolution of protected areas worldwide. Importance of protected areas for tourism.
2. Types of protection instruments and their relevance for tourism. IUCN Classification (World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks, others)
3. International, European and Spanish legislation and planning. Natura 2000 network. European Charter of Sustainable Tourism in NPAs.
4. Planning and management tools of protected areas.
5. Environmental impacts of nature tourism in protected areas. Carrying capacity.

Theme 3. Public use and tourism in protected areas.

1. Concept of public use.
2. Local socioeconomic development in NPAs
3. Brands and certificates. ECST
4. Programmes and public use planning.

Theme 4. UNESCO NPAs.

1. World Heritage sites
2. Ramsar sites
3. Biopshere reserves
4. Geoparks

IV.B.-Training activities

Type	Title
Other activities	Visits to NPAs and contact with businesses, development agencies and public administrations related to tourism
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Survey of ecotourism preferences
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Map of stakeholders of a NPA
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	EIA of specialized ecotourism types
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Analysis of tourism management of a NPA with the ECST
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Analysis of tourism planning of a NPA
Prácticas / Resolución de ejercicios	Create an ecotourism product or service in an NPA

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V.-Student workload	
Theoretical sessions	14
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies, etc.	8
Practical sessions in experimental, technological and clinical laboratories, fieldwork, etc.	0
Tests and/or exams	2
Academic tutorials	4
Related activities: conferences, seminars, etc.	2
Preparation of theoretical sessions and self-study	10
Preparation of practical tasks, exercises, case studies, projects, etc.	18
Preparation for tests and/or exams	17
Total student workload	75

VI.-Methodology and academic programme

Type	Period	Content
Academic tutorials	Week 1 to Week 8	The student may ask questions that have not been solved in the classroom, as well as request additional bibliography and/or any type of information related to the subject. [PC] The Mentoring sessions can be converted into virtual ones through the tools of the virtual classroom or Teams
Group work	Week 2 to Week 8	In each of the topics, the different practices to be carried out will be marked, obligatory or voluntary, as appropriate. [PC] the practices will be sent and evaluated by the virtual campus of the subject through the task created for it.
Tests and/or exams	Week 8 to Week 8	A final test will be held on the theoretical and practical contents of the course. In the case of a change of scenario by the CP, the Contingency Plan will be followed, according to the guidelines of the URJC and the Faculty of Legal and Social Sciences, and the tests will be adapted, with tests taking place online.

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Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 8	Lectures. [AP] Classes will have a theoretical and practical focus to encourage active participation of students. The teacher will explain the main contents of each topic, present practical activities, respond to the questions raised, give indications on how to find additional information and promote open, critical and constructive debate. [CP] The physical presence will be transformed into virtual presence, the classes will be developed in a synchronous way, according to the planned schedule, through videoconference through the virtual classroom. In addition, the student will have audiovisual support content and different resources to work on the contents of each topic. The active participation of the student will be positively valued through the resolution of questions and exposition of queries. It is recommended to have computer equipment with camera, microphone and internet access. [AD] Documents, articles, news, audiovisual support content and other resources will be provided to work on the contents of each topic. The active participation of the student will be valued positively through the resolution of questions and exposition of doubts, as well as the contribution of scientific documents to the forums of the different topics. It is recommended to have computer equipment with camera, microphone and internet access
Week 1 to Week 1	Relevant bibliography is/will be provided	Week 2 to Week 8

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VII.-Assessment methods

The general assessment method is continuous as established in the *Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes* of Rey Juan Carlos University.
All the assessment systems established in the degree report must be employed, except for those that have a minimum weight of 0%, which can be used by professors in the academic years they consider relevant. Each assessment system may be applied through one or more assessment activities, consistent with the system. No assessment activity can exceed individually 60% of the overall grade for the subject.
The sum of non re-evaluable activities cannot exceed 40% of the overall grade for the subject and, in general, should not have an established minimum grade (except for practical activities in which, strictly speaking, the conditions of the ordinary call cannot be reproduced in the extraordinary call).
Those students who do not manage to pass the subject in the ordinary call, or do not attend this first call, may attend the extraordinary call only for failed re-evaluable assessment activities.
The distribution and characteristics of the assessment activities are described below.

VII.A.-Description and weight of the assessment activities

A final test will be held on the theoretical and practical contents of the course.
Professor will decide evaluations adapted to the group.

VII.B. Assessment of students with academic exemption from class attendance

Having Academic Exemption from Class Attendance (DAAC) does not imply that students are automatically exempt from participating in the continuous assessment activities or in the training activities of compulsory attendance as established in the teaching guide. Once the exemption has been granted, students must contact the subject's teaching staff, who will propose the adaptations he/she may consider relevant, as long as they guarantee the acquisition and adequate assessment of the learning goals established. Students must maintain adequate communication with the teaching staff so that they may provide information on the dates for training and assessment activities, if these are not established in the programme and available for students at the time of achieving the exemption.
Subject with possibility of academic exemption: Yes.

VII.C. Review of assessment activities

In accordance with the Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes of Rey Juan Carlos University.

VII.D.-Students with a disability or special educational needs

In order to guarantee equal opportunities, non-discrimination, universal accessibility and academic success, students with disabilities or especial education needs may request curricular adaptations to follow their studies. These adaptations will be provided by the Unit of Attention to People with Disabilities of Rey Juan Carlos University, in accordance with the regulation which regulates the service for the Attention of People with Disabilities at the University. This Unit will issue a report for curricular adaptations, so that students with disabilities or special education needs must contact the service (at e-mail discapacidad.programa@urjc.es) in order to provide relevant information for different educational alternatives.

VII.E.-Academic behaviour, academic integrity and honesty

Rey Juan Carlos University is fully committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty, so studying at the URJC means assuming and subscribing to the values of integrity and academic honesty set out in the University's Ethical Code. To support this process, the University has Rey Juan Carlos University's Academic Conduct Regulation as well as different tools (anti-plagiarism, supervision...) that offer a collective guarantee for the full development of these essential values.

VIII.-Teaching resources and materials

Basic bibliography

Borges, M.A., Carbone, G., Bushell, R. and Jaeger, T. (2011) Sustainable Tourism and natural World Heritage – Priorities for action. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

Eagles (2002). *Sustainable tourism in protected areas: Guidelines for planning and management* (Vol. 8). IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

EUROPARC-Federation (2012) *Practical, profitable, protected. A starter guide to developing sustainable tourism in protected areas*. ECEAT International, Latvia

Holden, A., & Fennell, D. A. (Eds.). (2012) *The Routledge handbook of tourism and the environment*. Routledge.

Hornback, K. E., & Eagles, P. F. (1999). Guidelines for public use measurement and reporting at parks and protected areas. IUCN.

IUCN (2018) *Tourism and visitor management in protected areas: Guidelines for sustainability*. Gland, Switzerland

Lockwood, M., Worboys, G., & Kothari, A. (Eds.). (2012) *Managing protected areas: a global guide.* Routledge.

Newsome, D., Moore, S. & Dowling, R. (2013). *Natural area tourism: Ecology, impacts and management (2nd ed.).* Channel View Publications, Bristol, UK

Osipova, E., Wilson, L., Blaney, R., Shi, Y., Fancourt, M., Strubel, M., Salvaterra, T., Brown, C., Verschuuren, B. (2014). The benefits of natural World Heritage: Identifying and assessing ecosystem services and benefits provided by the world's most iconic natural places. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN

UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, IUCN (2012) *Managing natural world heritage*. Gland, Switzerland

Wuerthner, G., Crist, E., & Butler, T. (Eds.). (2015) *Protecting the wild: Parks and wilderness, the foundation for conservation*. Island Press.

Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2009) *Ecotourism: Impacts, potentials and possibilities?* Routledge.

Weaver, D. B. (Ed.). (2001) *The encyclopedia of ecotourism*. Cabi.

Consultation bibliography

IX.-Professors

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