

SYLLABUS

TITLE: Tourism Business in Spain

Instructor Name: Brian Lafora O’Sullivan

Language of Instruction: English

UO Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 40

Total Hours of Student Engagement (THSE): 120

Level: 300

SEGOVIA, SPAIN

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to Spain's most vital industry: tourism, using the historic city of Segovia—a spectacular urban laboratory founded over 2,000 years ago where tourism serves as the primary economic engine—as its living classroom. Focusing on this unique local setting alongside the wider national and international markets, students will explore diverse tourism sectors and analyze how tourism operates as a highly competitive global business.

The course emphasizes immersive, experiential learning, connecting academic models with hands-on corporate operations and strategic field excursions. Through real-world case studies and direct interaction with industry players, students will analyze tourism management practices, international commercial strategies (including customer engagement and global loyalty frameworks), trade fair dynamics, and rural entrepreneurship. In teams, students will apply these multi-dimensional insights to design and pitch their own innovative tourism business venture.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Understand the fundamentals of tourism management** and analyze major contemporary trends, digital challenges, and the macroeconomic impact of tourism on the Spanish and European economy.
2. **Analyze global tourism business models**, evaluating how commercial networks, international trade fairs, and strategic alliances drive global hospitality and transportation industries.
3. **Master the mechanics of Customer Experience Management (CEM)** and strategic loyalty frameworks as key drivers for long-term customer retention and value proposition in global brands.

4. **Evaluate local and rural tourism initiatives** using Segovia as a primary case study to understand sustainable growth, community-impact business models, and strategies to overcome seasonal demand.
5. **Develop an entrepreneurial mindset** by identifying market gaps, calculating commercial risks, and structuring a comprehensive business venture pitch.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course uses an active and experiential learning environment designed to maximize student engagement and critical business discussion. Class sessions will combine interactive lectures, case study workshops, professional presentations, and fieldwork.

A central pillar of the methodology is experiential education. The curriculum is fully integrated with four mandatory field excursions and a local entrepreneur interview project, allowing students to directly cross-examine classroom business theories with real-world corporate operations.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

To ensure a balanced academic workload, promote accountability, and strictly meet UO/LCB examination standards, the grading criteria are structured as follows:

Assessment Component	Weight	Due Date / Frequency
Weekly Assignments & Class Participation	15 %	Ongoing (Every unit / Includes pop quizzes)
Excursion Analytical Reports	10 %	Due 4 days after each field trip
Local Interview Project & Presentation	15 %	Week 5 (Report: 10% / 10-min Pitch: 5%)
Midterm Examination	15 %	Week 4 (End of Unit 4)
Final Venture Project & Presentation	20 %	Week 7 (Written Plan: 10% / 15-min Pitch: 10%)
Final Examination	25 %	Week 8 (Final Exam Period)

Detailed Assessment Criteria:

- Weekly Assignments & Class Participation (15%): Requires mandatory completion of readings and active contribution to case debates and experiential activities. Short, unannounced quizzes will be conducted in class to check continuous preparation and factor into this grade.
- Excursion Reports (10%): A professional analytical report must be submitted after each of the 4 field trips, evaluating the host company's business model, operations, and alignment with course theory.
- Interview Report (15%): Working in pairs, students will interview two local tourism entrepreneurs. Assessment includes a written strategic report (10%) and a comparative 10-minute presentation linking findings to course concepts (5%).
- Exams (40% total): Rigorous written tests including multiple-choice, key definitions, and case analyses to ensure high academic accountability. Consists of a Midterm Exam (15%) in Week 4 (covering Units 1–3) and a comprehensive Final Exam (25%) in Week 8.
- Final Venture Project (20%): Teams of two will develop a tourism business plan featuring market analysis, financial forecasts, and a customer loyalty strategy (10%). Teams will deliver a 15-minute pitch presentation in Week 7 to clear the final week's workload bottleneck.

COURSE OUTLINE & EXCURSION INTEGRATION

Unit 1: Tourism in Spain and its Business Impact

- Topics: Overview of Spain's Tourism Industry; types of tourism; economic impact of tourism on Spain's GDP; contemporary challenges and market opportunities.
- Activities: Macroeconomic data analysis of Spain's tourism data; group debates on current post-crisis trends.
- Integrated Field Trip 1: Palacio Real y Jardines de La Granja. Focus: Cultural, heritage, and seasonal mountain tourism management.

Unit 2: Entrepreneurial Strategies & Market Gaps

- Topics: The role of entrepreneurship in hospitality; discovering market gaps; business model innovation in tourism.
- Activities: Brainstorming workshop for new venture ideas; case study analysis of successful European tourism startups.
- Reading: "Entrepreneurship in Tourism".

Unit 3: Industrial & Corporate Tourism Management

- Topics: Key concepts in corporate tourism operations; supply chain management; corporate trends. Special Focus: The strategic ecosystem of international tourism trade

fairs (e.g., FITUR, ITB Berlin) as major drivers for B2B corporate strategy, destination marketing, and global contract negotiations.

- Activities: Operations case analysis; corporate networking simulation; launching team interview frameworks.
- Reading: "Introduction to Tourism Management" & instructor-provided case studies on trade show leadership.
- Integrated Field Trip 2: Fábrica Huercasa (Sanchonuño). Focus: Agrotourism, industrial operations, and B2B international export strategies.

Unit 4: Business Planning & Midterm Assessment

- Topics: Structuring a comprehensive business plan; market demand analysis.
- Activities: Practical workshop on drafting financial and operational entry strategies.
- Reading: "Business Planning for Tourism".
- ASSESSMENT: Midterm Exam (15%) (Rigorous evaluation covering academic concepts from Units 1, 2, and 3).

Unit 5: Customer Experience & Global Loyalty Frameworks

- Topics: Customer Experience Management (CEM); tools and techniques for managing satisfaction and brand loyalty. Special Focus on Airline Loyalty Programs: Case study of Iberia & Avios. Understanding coalition loyalty currencies, frequent flyer mechanics, revenue management, and strategic airline alliances (AJB & oneworld).
- Activities: Strategic analysis of corporate reward ecosystems; design of a customer retention loop.
- Reading: "Customer Experience Management".
- ASSESSMENT DUE: Interview Project Reports & Presentations (15%).
- Integrated Field Trip 3: Whisky DYC Distillery. Focus: Industrial heritage tourism, brand experience, and global hospitality corporate standards.

Unit 6: Market Research, Branding, and Positioning

- Topics: Market research methodologies; consumer behavior; finding target markets; Unique Value Propositions (UVP) and positioning for startups.
- Activities: Designing a brand identity, unique loyalty perks, and a marketing entry strategy for the team's startup project.

Unit 7: Future Directions & Venture Project Pitches

- Topics: Future trends in international tourism; sustainability and responsible management integration; rural tourism entrepreneurship as a tool against depopulation.

- Reading: "Future Directions in Tourism Management".
- Integrated Field Trip 4: Rural Day & Enotourism (Bodega Erre & Pintia, Ambroz). Focus: Rural development, sustainable enotourism, and community-integrated hospitality business models.
- ASSESSMENT DUE: Final Written Business Plans & 15-Minute Team Presentations (20%). (Moved to Week 7 to ensure student capacity and avoid final week bottleneck).

Unit 8: Final Course Review & Examination

- Topics: Course synthesis, global takeaways, and professional feedback.
- ASSESSMENT: Final Exam (25%).

COURSE READINGS

Tourism business frameworks evolve rapidly; reading lists will be complemented with updated news articles from current financial media outlets during the term. All citations must follow standard APA formatting.

Recommended Textbook Contexts

- Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (2019). *Tourism Management*.
- Goeldner, C. R., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (2011). *Tourism: Principles, Practices, Philosophies*.
- Supplemental professional case studies on Iberia, American Airlines, IAG Loyalty & Avios, and global loyalty models provided by the instructor.

Academic Misconduct

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

Generative AI Course Policy

Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.) are welcomed as learning assistants in this course under specific guidelines:

- **Permitted Uses:** You are encouraged to use GenAI tools during the preparatory process to brainstorm venture ideas, generate preliminary project outlines, perform English grammar/spell checks, and review theoretical content.
- **Strict Prohibitions:** Submitting AI-written essays, reports, or entire sections of your business plan as your own work is fraudulent, constitutes academic misconduct, and will result in disciplinary action. Critical analysis, primary local research, and final writing must be executed entirely by the student.
- **Citation Requirement:** Any assistance received from an AI tool must be explicitly disclosed and cited in your work. (e.g., "AI assistance from ChatGPT was utilized to structure the initial outline of this market entry section."). If you have any questions, ask the instructor prior to submission.

Accessible Education

The University of Oregon and I are dedicated to fostering inclusive learning environments for all students and welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Accessible Education Center (AEC) assists students with disabilities in reducing campus-wide and classroom-related barriers. [If you have or think you have a disability](#) and experience academic barriers, please contact the AEC to discuss appropriate accommodations or support. Visit 360 Oregon Hall or aec.uoregon.edu for more information. You can contact AEC at 541-346-1155 or via email at uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Reporting Obligations

I am not a designated reporter. Students experiencing sex- or gender-based discrimination, harassment or violence should call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE [7244] or visit safe.uoregon.edu for help. Students experiencing all forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment may contact the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 or the non-confidential Title IX Coordinator/OICRC at 541-346-3123 to request information and resources. Students are not required to participate in an investigation to receive support, including requesting academic supportive measures. Additional resources are available at investigations.uoregon.edu/how-get-support.

Pregnancy Modifications.

Pregnant and parenting students are eligible for academic and work modifications related to pregnancy, childbirth, loss of pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, lactation, and related medical conditions. To request pregnancy-related modifications, students should complete the [Request for Pregnancy Modifications form](#) on the OICRC website. OICRC coordinates academic and other modifications for pregnant and parenting students to ensure students can continue to access their education and university programs and activities.