



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New SOU program offers degree in Sustainable Tourism Management**

(Ashland, Ore.) — Southern Oregon University’s newest academic program will provide students the tools they need to recognize and address the role of sustainability in the tourism industry, and to become leaders of tourism-related organizations – from regional to global – that commit to sustainable business practices.

SOU’s unique [Sustainable Tourism Management bachelor’s degree program](#) will get underway this fall term with a core curriculum of classes from the university’s Business, Social Science and Environmental Science and Policy departments. It is offered through the [SOU School of Business](#).

“The undergraduate degree is one of very few programs around the world focusing on sustainability and regenerative destination management,” said Pavlina McGrady, an SOU assistant professor of business who is coordinator of the new program. “The old destination marketing models focusing on growth in arrival numbers did not work and that became obvious during the pandemic – now is the time for the tourism industry to change and innovate and we need new tourism leaders.”

“This is the focus of the new Sustainable Tourism Management program – with its unique multidisciplinary nature, it will equip learners with tools to lead tourism destinations with systemic, long-term thinking to replenish and revitalize, bringing about healthy communities, circular economies and thriving environments,” McGrady said. “Students will also have the opportunity to gain a solid international perspective on tourism management, working with international organizations and universities for course projects, internships and applied research.”

Those who major in Sustainable Tourism Management will learn about the importance of environmental and conservation practices in the operational, strategic and financial objectives of tourism-related organizations and destinations. They will come to understand the social responsibilities of those organizations to protect and preserve the resources and cultures that make their areas attractive to visitors, and to contribute to the long-term success of destination communities and environments.

“Learners in the Sustainable Tourism Management program will become experts in integrating sustainable planning, practices and policies in the growing tourism industry of southern Oregon and beyond,” said a document proposing the new program.

The program aligns with [SOU's vision statement](#), to be “an inclusive, sustainable university for the future that guides all learners to develop the knowledge, capacities and audacity to innovate boldly and create lives of purpose.”

“SOU collaborates across academic divisions, facilities, student life, housing and landscaping to forward our deep commitment to sustainability,” said Vincent Smith, director of the Division of Business, Communication and the Environment. “This new program will build on our existing collaborations between the Business program and Environmental Science and Policy program to serve our region’s growing sustainable tourism industry.”

Students in the program must complete 36 credit hours of required lower division coursework in business, environmental science and tourism, and 52 credit hours of required upper division coursework – including two courses in applied research and an internship. Required courses include “Sustainable Tourism,” “Tourism Policy and Planning,” “Tourism Economics,” “Case Studies in Corporate Sustainability,” “Environmental Sociology” and “Ecological Economics and Sustainable Development.”

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### **About Southern Oregon University**

Southern Oregon University is a medium-sized campus that provides comprehensive educational opportunities with a strong focus on student success and intellectual creativity. Located in vibrant Ashland, Oregon, SOU remains committed to diversity and inclusion for all students on its environmentally sustainable campus. Connected learning programs taught by a host of exceptional faculty provide quality, innovative experiences for students. Visit [sou.edu](http://sou.edu).