Tourism Studies Institute Gets Grant for Tunisia Work

GWSB’s International Institute of Tourism Studies (IITS) has received a $250,000 award from the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia to help Tunisian instructors learn about developing smaller businesses that keep tourist dollars in local communities.

Through the grant, GWSB faculty will work in partnership with the Higher Institute of Technological Studies of Djerba, a Tunisian island with picturesque beaches, a golf course and luxury properties. The program is aimed at instructing faculty at the Institute about “micro-tourism” or customized tourism that is done on a smaller scale. After the initial instruction, the program would be self-sustaining, with Tunisian faculty instructing their students through an expanded program.

The Institute now has tourism instruction, but only for undergraduates. The grant would expand the program and create a master’s program in the field.

Overall, the program is aimed at helping the Tunisian tourism industry shift from mass travel to custom-tailored tourism, particularly in the southern part of the country.

The goal is empowering young graduates to start their own micro-tourism or customized tourism projects, instead of seeking employment from major hotels and tour operators.

While Djerba has tremendous potential, “The hope is that it can be scalable to other areas in Tunisia,” said Kristin Lamoureux, director of the IITS.

In addition to Lamoureux, GWSB faculty involved in the Tunisia program include Donald Hawkins, Eisenhower Professor of Tourism Policy, and Larry Yu, professor of hospitality management and faculty director of the Masters of Tourism Administration program.

For more on the funding, go here.