

The objective of this research is the development of a curriculum for undergraduate students majoring in tourism industry management at the National University of Laos (NUOL). This research identifies specific curriculum and other components necessary for a major program in tourism industry management. This research also evaluates the relevance of potential courses in light of the economic, political, environmental and tourism situation in the Lao P.D.R.

The target student population is classified into two groups. The first group is prebachelors degree students located at the School of Foundation Studies of the National University of Laos Dong Dok Campus, Vientiane Municipality. This population included 320 students studying in the second year of a two-year college preparatory program. From this population, a sample of 190 was chosen using systematic random sampling methods. (174 is required for the 95% confidence level). The second population was 240 fourth year undergraduate students in the Faculty of Economics and Management at the NUOL from which a sample of 150

was selected (147 is required for the 95 % confidence level). Data collection was conducted using a

questionnaire which included 3 sections. The first section is concerned with personal information about the respondents. The second part is related to the demand for various academic subjects, the relevance of potential curriculum items as well as the desirability of a variety of activities for the teaching – learning process. The third section solicited written comments and suggestions. The data obtained was analysed using the SPSS programme, providing descriptive statistics including frequency, percent, average value and standard deviation. The the sample groups both consisted of students who were mostly under 30 years old

Both groups indicated a strong desire to study the courses included in the proposed syllabus, with ratings of 4.12 and 4.05 for the pre-university and the university groups, respectively. Both groups also agreed that the curriculum should be compatible with the situation in Laos and the policies of the government of the P.D.R. Lao (4.12 and 4.17, respectively). The groups also agreed strongly on the value of the other academic activities included in the questionnaire (4.28 and 2.21, respectively). The respondents indicated that theory and practical knowledge were both necessary, with a very high rating (4.59 and 4.53, respectively), very closely followed by a desire for subject matter related to conservation and cultural preservation (4.57 and 4.51, respectively). Most respondents agreed that lecturers should come from university faculties (4.09 and 4.18, respectively), but they felt very strongly that lecturers from outside the university who possess specialized subject matter knowledge should be invited to instruct some subjects (4.46 and 4.48, respectively). The methods for evaluating students performance in the areas of theory and practical subjects was rated highly (4.58 and 4.55, respectively). Finally, the recommended teaching materials were rated moderately high by the two groups (3.80 and 3.78, respectively).

Both groups felt that the proposed tourism industry curriculum was appropriate for the current tourism situation in Laos (4.17 and 4.12, respectively). Within this area, the two

groups felt that preservation of Lao customs and culture were of key importance (4.39 and 4.32, respectively).

The results of this research were used to modify the proposed curriculum used in the survey and to prepare a curriculum for a bachelors degree in Tourism Industry Management for the National University of Laos. The modified curriculum is provided in the appendix.