FIELD EXPERIENCE IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT (HFT 4941)

All majors and minors must participate in hospitality management Field Experience prior to graduation. Since many students have questions regarding this requirement, the following information should help to answer all or most of them.

Should you have further questions after reading this document in its entirety, please reach out to Dr. Peter Ricci, CHA, CHSE, CRME, CHIA, CHRM via email at peter.ricci@fau.edu or by telephone at 561-297-3666.

1) Field Experience work is not an internship. Rather, it is actual work experience in the field of hospitality management. Any work in the field is considered as “hands on” learning. The roles can be anything from front desk agent in a hotel to part-time reservations coordinator at a cruise line, from a restaurant server to a theme park ticket sales agent. As long as the position or positions are within the hospitality and tourism industry the hours earned will fulfill this requirement. If you have questions about your specific role or roles, please reach out to Dr. Ricci (contact information listed above).

2) The college of business center does indeed have an internship FOR CREDIT option. It is a possibility that students may pursue a for-credit internship course and simultaneously use those internship hours earned toward their Field Experience. For further information on this, please reach out to Dr. Ricci. These credit hours, however, do not count toward any hospitality specific course. Instead they are considered an upper division college of business elective course only. Remember, an internship is not required – only actual work experience in the field of hospitality management.

3) Majors must accumulate 1000 hours or more prior to graduation. Minors must accumulate 500 hours or more prior to graduation.

4) Students may bring in from their senior year of high school field experience hours. In essence, if a student has begun working in the restaurant industry for example, the hours will count from senior year in high school throughout their undergraduate degree timeline at FAU. Many students fulfill their requirement in Field Experience hours well before graduation.

5) In order to get permission to enroll in HFT 4941, the students must first complete their hours and get documentation from the employer(s). If there are multiple employers, the students need to only get documentation from the employers that add up to their necessary hours. For example, if a student worked at two hotels and accumulated 1000 hours at the first hotel, there is no reason to get a second letter.
6) FAU offers HFT 4941 as a 0-credit course with no fees whatsoever for students. This method permits students not to have to pay for credit hours just to gain work experience. Internships, however, require students to pay for credit hours.

7) It is preferable to have students enroll in HFT 4941 as close to graduation as possible. Normally, this occurs a semester before graduation or their final semester. Please do not wait until the last semester to start earning your hours. HFT 4941 is a requirement for graduation. If a student enrolls in HFT 4941 their final semester prior to graduation but does not complete the necessary number of hours, he or she will be prevented from graduation and will receive an Incomplete “I” grade until the hours are collected in total.

8) Students cannot enroll in HFT 4941 without getting permission from the Hospitality Management Program director, Dr. Peter Ricci. His contact information listed above.

9) As far as the actual letters from the employer, they do not need to demonstrate the student’s performance. Again, we are seeking a requirement of actual hours worked in the field of hospitality management, not an assessment of performance. Hence, a sample letter can be as simple as the following example:

Dear Dr. Ricci:

Jane Doe has worked as a hostess, server, and bartender at ACME Restaurant here in Boca Raton, FL for the period January 2010, through the current month. During her tenure at ACME Restaurant, she has accumulated well over 1000 hours on the clock.

Should you have any further questions, please contact me at 561-297-3000.

Sincerely,

John Smith, General Manager
ACME Restaurant

Please make sure that letters are placed on the employer letterhead.

10) HFT 4941 (Field Experience in Hospitality Management) is an actual course that you will register for on your schedule. However, it is 0 credit hours and there are no actual class meetings. Once the program director documents your earned hours, you will receive permission to add HFT 4941. After that time, you will be considered as having fully satisfied the Field Experience requirement. The course is graded using a Satisfactory “S” or Unsatisfactory “U” grading policy. As long as the hours are completed and documented appropriately, the student will receive a grade of “S”. If the semester ends and the hours are not properly documented, the student will receive a grade of “U”.