



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Hospitality and
Tourism Management
College of Business

INTERNSHIP IN HOSPITALITY & TOURISM MANAGEMENT (HFT 4941)

All majors and minors must participate in hospitality and tourism management internship prior to graduation. Since many students have questions regarding this requirement, the following information will serve as a guideline to help answer those questions.

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

- 1) FAU's internship requirement is specifically to gain **experience in the field of hospitality**. It may vary from other institutions where a project-based internship is required. Any legitimate work in the services industry shall constitute the required work experience. The roles may vary based upon the student's interest(s) and may take place in any customer/guest/patient services role. Some frequent examples include hotel or resort front desk agent, reservations, call center, retail store, casino shore or onboard role, restaurant server or host, et al. Any position(s) *within* the hospitality and tourism (or broader services or retail) industry may fulfill this requirement. If you have questions about *your* specific role and/or job duties, please reach out to Dr. Ricci (contact information listed above).
- 2) The college of business and/or FAU's Career Center do indeed have an internship for credit; however, these are not mandatory. It is a possibility that students may pursue a for-credit internship course and simultaneously use those internship hours earned toward this requirement. For further information on this, please reach out to Dr. Ricci. These credit hours, however, do not count toward any hospitality specific course. They are instead considered an upper division college of business elective course. Remember, an internship for *credit* is not required – only actual work experience in the field of hospitality management.
- 3) Majors must accumulate a minimum of 1000 hours of suitable work experience prior to graduation; Minors must accumulate a minimum 500 hours of suitable work experience prior to graduation.
- 4) At the discretion of the program director, students may bring in work experience from their senior year of high school depending on the type of duties. In essence, if a student has begun working in the restaurant industry, for example, these hours may count toward their required internship hours. Please check with Dr. Ricci (contact information above).
- 5) 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 employers that add up to their minimum required 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. *Once you have the letters on hand, make sure you can attach them to an email to send the Program Director when you are ready to add the course.*
- 6) FAU offers HFT 4941 as a 0-credit course with no tuition cost for students; this is a definite cost-savings advantage over other hospitality & tourism management programs. This method permits students *not* to have to pay for credit hours just to gain work experience. For-credit internships, however, will require students to pay tuition; however, as stated above, for-credit internships are not required for the hospitality and tourism management minor or major *unless* the student desires to pursue these opportunities.

- 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 during one's 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 minimum number of required hours during that final semester, he or she will be prevented from graduation and will receive an Incomplete "I" grade until the hours are completed.
- 8) Students cannot enroll in HFT 4941 without getting permission from the Hospitality Management Program director, Dr. Peter Ricci. His contact information is listed above.
- 9) The letter(s) from the employer(s) does not need to demonstrate the student's *performance*. The goal is to have at least the **minimum** number of hours of work experience in the broad fields of hospitality, tourism, retail, customer or guest or patient service, etc. This will demonstrate to your future employer(s) post-graduation that you have the base competencies, skills, education, and desire to succeed in the services industry. We defer to the employers to assess performance and assume that a student will not be permitted to remain on board if he or she doesn't perform to minimum expectations.

Hence, a sample letter may be as simple as the following:

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 2022 through the current month. During her tenure at ACME Restaurant, she has accumulated 3,012 hours.

Should you have any further questions, please contact me at 561-XXX-XXXX or email me at jsmith@acmerestaurantgroup.com

Sincerely,

John Smith, General Manager
ACME Restaurant

Please make sure that letters are placed on the employer's official letterhead and that the name, title, email address, and phone number of the person sending the letter is included in the letter itself. If the company does **not** have official letterhead, the student may use an alternative arrangement to document hours. The student may then send a snapshot of paycheck stubs (EXCLUDING personal information) that demonstrate the *total hours earned*. If multiple company paychecks need to be sent, this is justifiable. Remember to send all documents as **email attachments** to peter.ricci@fau.edu

- 10) HFT 4941 (Internship in Hospitality Management) is an actual course that you will register for and add to your course schedule. However, as stated elsewhere, the course is 0 credit hours and \$0 cost. However, it is a **requirement** to graduate with major or minor in hospitality and tourism management. Once the program director verifies your hours earned, you will then receive permission to add HFT 4941 from the advising office. Once enrolled, you may view the course syllabus for any/all further details.