

## **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 [hospitality@fau.edu](mailto:hospitality@fau.edu) or by telephone at 561-297-3666.

- 1) FAU's internship title varies compares to other institutions; students may either do a traditional internship or gain 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 and/or a guest service/customer care type of role, 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 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. Instead they are 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) 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 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.
- 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 listed above.
- 9) As far as the actual letters from the employer, they do not need to demonstrate the student's *performance*. Again, the goal is to have a minimum number of hours of experience working in the field of hospitality to demonstrate to future employers a baseline skill set. 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 2017 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's official letterhead.** 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](mailto:peter.ricci@fau.edu)

- 10) HFT 4941 (Internship in Hospitality Management) is an actual course that you will register for on your schedule. However, as stated elsewhere, it is 0 credit hours and there are no actual class meetings or tuition payments due. Once the program director documents your earned hours, you will receive permission to add HFT 4941. After that time, you will meet with the program director to detail your internship experience and also discuss career options. Once completed, the student will then be considered as having fully satisfied the Internship requirement (HFT 4941). The course is graded using a Satisfactory "S" or Unsatisfactory "U" grading policy. As long as the hours are completed and documented appropriately and the follow-up meetings with the program director have taken place accordingly, the student will receive a grade of "S". If the semester in which one enrolls ends and the minimum number of hours are not properly documented or earned, the student will receive a grade of "I" until all requirements are satisfied.