Expected Outcomes: Academic Preparation

Students completing the Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management will be adequately prepared for successful careers in the hospitality industry.

Related typical general education outcomes:

Assessment methods

Method: Student Coursework Performance

At least 80% of HRMT graduates will complete their coursework with at least an overall 2.5 GPA.

Findings:

Out of the 47 HRMT graduates for the academic year 2011-2012, 46 graduates (97.9%) achieved an overall GPA score of 2.5 or higher.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Although the target level of GPA has continued to be met in the past, the HRMT program’s recent policy on a minimum of “C” as the passing grade in all HRMT courses is expected to increase the number of graduates with higher GPAs. The HRMT program will closely watch this trend in future years.

Additional comments:

None

Method: Knowledge of Hospitality Operations

Survey of Alumni: Through their academic education and training, and using a scale of “1=Insignificant preparation” to “5=Considerable preparation”, at least 80% of the HRMT graduates will rate “4” as being adequately prepared for work in the hospitality industry.

Findings:

A scale of 1 “Insignificant preparation” to 5 “Considerable preparation” was used to solicit feedback from graduates on the extent to which they think the HRMT program adequately prepared them for the hospitality industry. Of the 14 graduates who provided responses, 5 graduates (35.7%) rated “5”, 8 graduates (57.1%) rated “4”, and 1 graduates (7.1%) rated “3”. The rating average of all responses was 4.29, out of a total possible score of 5.

How did you use findings for improvement?

As part of the alumni survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments on the program. Through continued efforts of the HRMT program (including making available more “hand-on” opportunities, minimum work experience prior to graduation, a required internship, and better advising) have helped in resolving the concern raised by respondents in previous years, one concern continues to be in regard to the relevant information technology skills applied to the hospitality industry. HRMT students continue to request more industry-related IT applications during their academic career. HRMT faculty recently conducted a strategic offsite to discuss ongoing curriculum concerns and ways to eradicate duplication of
effort and improving course content to include more hands-on experience – in particular in the area of IT.

Additional comments:

Faculty responsible for all operations oriented courses HRMT2500, HRMT4300, HRMT3800 and HRMT4910 have given assurances that will better coordinate their efforts over the course of the next year to enhance this element of all courses taught. The HRMT4300 course in particular has worked with Knowledge Matters over the last few months to see the implementation and use of their PROSIM restaurant simulation package for students. Other changes will be reported as completed. An additional assessment meeting will be held over the course of the next year during which the HRMT faculty will discuss the findings of this assessment report. Faculty members will discuss possible ways through which students can be exposed to hospitality-industry IT software, with the HRMT 4910 Hospitality Practicum class being a possible class to address IT as used in the hotel industry. The HRMT program will also continue requiring HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology as a core

Method: Demonstration of Oral Communication Skills

Samples of Student Work: At least 80% of HRMT students will earn passing grades for the oral presentations of their coursework/projects in HRMT courses.

Findings:

Grades assigned by faculty for oral presentations by graduates in HRMT courses (HRMT 2300 Hospitality Law, HRMT 3200 Hospitality Financial Management, HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology, HRMT 4500 Strategic Hospitality Management, HRMT 5530 Science of Quality Service, HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality) were available for 42 graduates. Of the 42 graduates, 41 graduates (87.6%) achieved a passing score on the oral presentation of project samples using the ACHPA oral communication skills grading rubrics.

How did you use findings for improvement?

The HRMT program places a priority on building the communication skills of its students. The program will continue to make sure that all HRMT core courses contain elements that target the enhancement of communication skills of students. HRMT faculty have held a meeting in August, 2012, during which all communicative assessment requirements across all courses were reviewed with a view to identifying shortcomings and instigating improvement. This has covered both written and oral forms of communication.

Additional comments:

The program has recently developed and adopted a generic evaluation measure for both oral and written forms of communication. These new grading rubrics have enabled the possibility of comparing ratings assigned by faculty to student work relative to what alumni perceive how well the program was able to strengthen their oral communication skills. Eight graduates (57.1%) and 6 graduates (42.9) rated “very well” and “adequately”, respectively, when asked about the extent to which they think the HRMT program prepared them in their ability to communicate orally. Together, ratings by faculty and alumni’s perceptions provide strong evidence that the HRMT program is effective in building oral communication skills among its students.

Method: Demonstration of Written Communication Skills

Samples of Student Work: At least 80% of HRMT students will earn passing grades for effective written communication skills in samples of their HRMT courses.
Findings:

Grades assigned by faculty for written communication skills by graduates in HRMT courses (HRMT 2300 Hospitality Law, HRMT 3200 Hospitality Financial Management, HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology, HRMT 4500 Strategic Hospitality Management, HRMT 5530 Science of Quality Service, HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality) were available for 42 graduates. Of the 42 graduates, 40 graduates (95.2%) achieved a passing score on the written project samples using the ACHPA written communication skills grading rubrics.

How did you use findings for improvement?

HRMT faculty will continue to emphasize and require assignments and projects that enhance the development of writing skills in all HRMT courses. Working with the Office of University Writing, the HRMT program has completed the “Writing in the Majors” plan for the integration of HRMT program’s efforts in ensuring that writing skills are built into HRMT academic offerings.

Additional comments:

When we asked the graduates about the extent to which they think the HRMT program prepared them to write effectively, 5 graduates (35.7%) rated “very well”, 8 (57.1%) graduates rated “Adequately”, and 1 (7.1%) graduate rated “Neutral.”

Method: Development of Global Awareness

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of HRMT graduates who participated in the Study Abroad program and/or completed the HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality course will report that their global awareness has increased as a result of their participation.

Findings:

Out of the 14 graduates who participated in the survey, 4 (28.6%) answered that they did participate in the Study Abroad program prior to graduation. Four out of the 14 respondents (28.6%) indicated that they completed the HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality course prior to graduation. When asked about the extent to which they feel that these experiences have improved their cross-cultural awareness, and using a scale of 1 “No improvement” to 5 “Significant improvement”, 5 graduates (62.5%) rated “5”, 2 graduates (25%) rated “4”, and 1 graduate (12.5%) rated “3”. The rating average of all responses was 4.5, out of a total possible score of 5.

How did you use findings for improvement?

The percentage of students participating in these two experiences continues to increase, so is their overall perception of how their cross-cultural awareness has increased as a result. To ensure the continuation of this healthy increase, HRMT faculty who are advising students will emphasize to their advisees the importance of participating in the Study Abroad experiences, Study/Travel in NTRI, and enroll in HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality. HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality is currently an HRMT elective course. The HRMT program faculty will continue to invite experienced guest speakers to share with HRMT students their personal experiences with international business assignments. Additionally, the HRMT program is initiating multiple Study Abroad opportunities for HRMT students to further increase the percentage of students who will have international experience before graduation.

Additional comments:

None
Method: Development of Analytical Thinking Skills

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of the HRMT graduates will report being adequately prepared in their ability to think analytically and logically.

Findings:

When asked about how well they think the HRMT program prepared them in their ability to think analytically and logically, 7 graduates (50.0%) rated “Very well” and 7 graduates (50.0%) rated “Adequately”. No graduate rated “Not very well” or “Not at all”.

How did you use findings for improvement?

These findings continue to compare favorably relative to the findings obtained in the previous years. Revisions that are made to the HRMT curriculum, especially as a result to ACPHA accreditation, seem to have caused this improvement in the rating. Information collected from future surveys of HRMT alumni will be compared to the current results to identify further potential improvements.

Additional comments:

Data collected from HRMT faculty with regard to grades assigned to a total of 44 students on class assignments that address analytical thinking skills (HRMT 2300 Hospitality Law, HRMT 3200 Hospitality Financial Management, HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology, HRMT 4500 Strategic Hospitality Management, HRMT 5530 Science of Quality Service, HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality) indicate that 41 (93.2%) of the graduates earned passing grades on these assignments using the ACHPA analytical thinking skills grading rubrics.

Method: Development of Critical Thinking Skills

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of the HRMT graduates will report being adequately prepared in their ability to critically examine their own ideas and the ideas of others.

Findings:

When asked about how well they think the HRMT program prepared them in their ability to critically examine their own ideas and the ideas of others, 4 graduates (28.6%) rated “Very well” and 10 graduates (71.4%) rated “Adequately”. No graduate rated “Not very well” or “Not at all”.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Feedback provided by HRMT alumni with regard to the development of critical thinking skills was quite satisfactory. Information collected from future surveys of HRMT alumni will be compared to the current results to identify further potential improvements.

Additional comments:

Data collected from HRMT faculty with regard to grades assigned to a total of 43 students on class assignments that address critical thinking skills (HRMT 2300 Hospitality Law, HRMT 3200 Hospitality Financial Management, HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology, HRMT 4500 Strategic Hospitality Management, HRMT 5530 Science of Quality Service, HRMT 5570 Global Hospitality) indicate that 40 (93.0%) of the graduates earned passing grades on these assignments using the ACHPA critical thinking skills grading rubrics. As indicated previously HRMT faculty recently conducted a strategic offsite to address a range of curriculum related issues. One issue that came up with that pertaining to the development of critical thinking. All faculty have given an assurance that they will continue to work hard to develop this generic learning outcome in their in-class activities and out of class assessments.
Method: Development of a Proper Ethical Framework

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of the HRMT graduates will report being adequately prepared in their ability to understand and implement proper guidelines for ethical business practice.

Findings:

When asked about how well they think the HRMT program prepared them in their ability to understand and implement guidelines for ethical practice, 7 HRMT graduates (50.0%) rated “Very well”, 4 graduates (28.6%) rated “Adequately”, 3 graduates (21.4%) rated “Neutral”. No graduate rated “Not very well” or “Not at all”.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Although the feedback provided by HRMT alumni with regard to their preparation to understand and implement proper guidelines for ethical business practice was quite satisfactory, this issue will receive special attention in an exclusive HRMT faculty meeting to discuss the findings of these assessment findings. During the meeting, HRMT faculty will attempt to identify core courses which can cover ethical responsibilities and also establish methods to incorporate the issue of ethical managerial decision making in HRMT educational experiences. We will continue to administer the survey to monitor alumni perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the HRMT program in preparing its graduates to understand ethical issues in the workplace.

Additional comments:

None

Method: Development of Information and Technological Liter

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of the HRMT graduates will report being adequately prepared in their ability to apply information and technology to new situations.

Findings:

When asked about how well they think the HRMT program prepared them in their ability to apply information and technology to new situations, 5 graduates (35.7%) rated “Very well”, 9 graduates (64.3%) rated “Adequately”. No graduate rated “Not very well” or “Not at all”.

How did you use findings for improvement?

The findings of the alumni survey suggest that additional emphasis on professional technology skills may be needed for successful careers in the hospitality industry. The HRMT program will consult with its advisory board for assistance in identifying technology skills that are most advantageous to HRMT students. Moreover, the HRMT program will work with its industry partners, The Capella Hotel Group, to secure the relevant technology and information systems installed in the computer labs where the HRMT 3800 Hospitality Information Technology course is delivered. The HRMT program will closely monitor the improvements made to students’ abilities in applying information technology to hospitality business settings as a result of these efforts.

Additional comments:

None

Expected Outcomes: Industry Competency

Students completing the Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management will demonstrate their
Related typical general education outcomes:

Assessment methods

Method: Evaluation of HRMT Curriculum Content

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of HRMT graduates will give feedback that HRMT curriculum covered current issues and topics that they now experience in their current work positions.

Findings:

A total of 14 respondents provided feedback as to the extent to which the HRMT curriculum covered the important issues that they are facing in their current positions. A scale from “1= To a little extent” to “5= To a great extent” was used. Three graduates (21.4%) rated “5”, 7 graduates (50.0%) rated “4”, 3 graduates (21.4%) rated “3”, and 1 graduate (7.1%) rated “1”. The rating average of all responses was 3.79, out of a total possible score of 5.

How did you use findings for improvement?

The HRMT program continues to solicit information from relevant audiences with the goal of keeping its curriculum updated and in line with the industry. The HRMT program will solicit feedback from the members of the HRMT advisory board in the scheduled meeting in November 2012. Feedback solicited from the advisory board members will be used in future enhancement of the HRMT curriculum. The HRMT program reviews its strategic plan every 3-5 years; accumulative feedback made by participant alumni and advisory board will be taken into consideration when the HRMT curriculum is reviewed as part of this ongoing strategic planning activity.

Additional comments:

Direct student feedback from the recently formed Student Advisory Board has also led to a number of direct curriculum change proposals, which is it hoped will be implemented by the fall semester 2013. These are as follows: 1. All new students will be required to have a total of 600 work experience hours in-program prior to undertaking their internship program. 2. The current senior level hospitality practicum course has been moved to the sophomore year in order to better prepare students for their higher level courses and internship in particular. 3. The HRMT5460 Catering and Event Management class has been split over the fall and spring semesters in order to present students with a full year to prepare for the programs of the annual gala fundraising event which is undertaken as an in-class practical experience.

Method: Practical Preparation

Survey of Alumni: 100% of HRMT students will have relevant industry experience (at least 400 hours of work experience, an internship, or any similar experience) before graduation.

Findings:

Out of the 14 graduates who responded to this survey item, 14 graduates (100%) indicated that they engaged in a form of practical industry experience (completing at least 400 hours of work experience, internship, or any similar experience) prior to graduation.

How did you use findings for improvement?

Starting Fall 2011, all new HRMT students have been required to complete a 4-credit hour professional internship course. A pre-requisite of this course is having 400 hundred hours of relevant and recent work experience related to the larger hospitality industry. The 400 hour
hospitality-related work experience is also currently enforced as a pre-requisite for enrollment in HRMT 4910 Hospitality Practicum. HRMT faculty and instructors of HRMT 1010 Introduction to Hospitality Management and HRMT 2490 Professional Development will continue to emphasize the importance for students to get meaningful practical experience before graduation.

Additional comments:

Once again the faculty have proposed that all new students will be required to have a total of 600 work experience hours in-program prior to undertaking their internship program.

**Method**: Evaluation of Student Work Competencies

**Employer/Supervisor Feedback**: On a 5-point rating scale (from “1”-poor to “5”-excellent), at least 80% students enrolled in the HRMT 4910 Hospitality Practicum will be rated by their supervising managers from the Hotel at Auburn University as very good (4) or excellent (5).

**Findings**:

Ratings by supervising managers at the Hotel at Auburn University were available for 46 graduates, out of 47 graduates. Thirty-one graduates (67.4%) earned a rating of “5”, 14 graduates (30.4%) earned a rating of “4”, and one graduate (2.2%) earned a rating of “3”.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

These findings are quite satisfactory. Future information collected from the executive team in the Hotel at Auburn University will be compared to the current results to identify further potential improvements as needed.

**Additional comments**:

With the reintroduction of a formal internship program all students will be evaluated on their job performance by practicing industry professionals.

**Method**: Demonstration of Professional Work Skills

**Internship Supervising Manager Feedback**: As reported in the Professional Internship Final Performance Evaluation, at least 80% of the HRMT interns will receive Excellent or Good overall performance ratings by their supervisors.

**Findings**:

This method was not used due to the unavailability of internship reports. The internship course was offered as a professional elective choice when these graduates were still enrolled in the HRMT program.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

The HRMT program has mandated a professional internship for all HRMT students, starting Fall 2011. Part of the course requirement is submission of evaluation reports by the employer and the intern. Submitted evaluation reports will be used for future assessment, and proper program actions will be arranged based on the information reported by employers and interns.

**Additional comments**:

None
Students completing the Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management will demonstrate their competitiveness in the hospitality job marketplace.

Related typical general education outcomes:

**Assessment methods**

**Method**: Possession of Competencies Needed to Secure Employ

Survey of Alumni: All of HRMT graduates will be employed within the first year of graduation.

**Findings**:

When asked if they are currently employed, 13 graduates (92.9%) indicated that they are presently employed, whereas one graduate (7.1%) indicated that he/she is not employed yet. In a follow up question to the 14 graduates who indicated that they are employed, 9 (69.2%) of them mentioned that their current position is “highly related” to their undergraduate studies at the HRMT program, and 4 graduates (30.8%) indicated that their current position is “moderately related”. No graduates answered “slightly related” or “not related at all”.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

Although the HRMT program is satisfied with the feedback by HRMT graduates that they are finding jobs and being employed, we will continue to provide opportunities for students to gain relevant educational experiences that will make them marketable. The HRMT program will continue to encourage HRMT students to participate in opportunities to network with potential employers, including the HRMT annual career fair. The HRMT program will also discuss with the members of advisory boards for identifying potential employers for HRMT graduates. Additionally, the HRMT program will monitor this finding over several years in the future with the goal of identifying potential opportunities for enhancing HRMT graduates’ chances of being employed.

**Additional comments**:

The HRMT program is aware that some of the respondents have just graduated within the last few months and may not be able to secure a job in this short period. Since AU graduates will get to keep their AU email account, it is the intent of the HRMT program to solicit feedback from alumni who graduated in previous years for more accurate tracking of employment status.

**Method**: Demonstration of Competitiveness

Survey of Alumni: At least 80% of HRMT graduates will be on a management-track within the first year of graduation.

**Findings**:

Of the 12 graduates who responded to this question on the survey, 10 graduates (83.3%) indicated that they are in a management or management-track position, whereas 2 graduates (16.7%) indicated that their current job is not a management or a management-track position.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

This finding compares favorably with results from previous year. Recently, quality job placement has been particularly emphasized in the HRMT 2940 Professional Development course. HRMT 4910 Hospitality Practicum course has also been redesigned to better emphasize the leadership aspect of this practical experience. In addition to the work currently underway with regional and/or national employers through the annual HRMT career fair and other venues, the HRMT program will continue to more effectively leverage its advisory board to...
assist with (1) identifying suitable employers for students while on-program (2) negotiating more suitable work experience opportunities with these employers for students while on-program (3) acquiring relevant supervisory/managerial work opportunities for students on closing in on graduation.

Additional comments:

None