

## FIELD STUDIES IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

### GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The purpose of this document is to provide background information and requirements of the HTM Field Study Program. All information discussed here and the related forms are available on the HTM website ([www.htm.pamplin.vt.edu/undergraduate/fieldstudy.html](http://www.htm.pamplin.vt.edu/undergraduate/fieldstudy.html)).

#### Philosophy Behind the Field Study Experience

Experiential learning in supervised field study courses is a critical component of hospitality and tourism management (HTM) education. Due to our emphasis on hospitality operations management, experience in hospitality operations is key to your understanding of our course content and to its professional applications.

As with all of our courses, the goal of the HTM Field Study Program is to develop student hospitality management knowledge and capabilities. This requirement reflects our recognition of the educational value of an approved, supervised professional experience. Such experiences allow students the opportunity to learn from industry professionals, to observe “real world” management practices, and to implement the concepts and methodologies learned through their other coursework.

Moreover, HTM recruiters view successful completion of field study experiences as a necessary requirement for applicant consideration. When you complete your degree and apply for positions, every applicant will have a degree! Many will have good grades and extensive extra-curricular activities. So how do you distinguish yourself and get the job? Your professional experience, predominantly through field study / internships is extremely important! Thus, you should view the Field Study not only as a required class but as an important avenue to your career. Picking the right internship is important and should be considered as a key building block to your career goals.

While we recognize that virtual work in a post-Covid world is more common, even in hospitality, working remote will only be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exposure to management and learning how businesses operate is very difficult to accomplish remotely. In most cases, remote opportunities will NOT be approved.

**HTM 4964 is required of all HTM students.** Our goal is for you to gain supervisory experience if possible, placement in management training positions, and most importantly, significant exposure to full-time management staff (ideally a combination of the above). This course requires a series of assignments plus 400 hours of supervised work experience. The HTM 4964 field study position can be a rotational experience or concentrated within one area. It can be paid or unpaid, but our hope is that your employer values the importance of your efforts and makes it a paid experience.

## HTM – 4964 Field Study General Information and Guidelines

### **Course Pre-requisites:**

- a. 300 hours of verified HTM industry professional experience, post high school. (Retail, banking, daycare and lifeguard does not count towards 300 hours hospitality related experience)
- b. Completed two of the following classes: HTM 3414, HTM 3444, HTM 3524
  - Due to the special project and the cost/benefit analysis that will be required as part of the course, it is suggested that you complete HTM 3444 if possible prior to taking the field study class.
- c. Minimum Virginia Tech and in-major GPA of 2.0

### **300 Hour HTM Experience Prerequisite**

You should submit the Employment Verification Form (on HTM website) as soon as possible after completing your 300 hours work experience. Forms should be submitted no later than the following dates after which you have completed your prerequisite hours:

Summer – December 1                  Fall – May 31                  Spring – September 1

For example, if you completed your 300 hours in the summer, then you should submit the completed form no later than December 1. It is in your best interest to submit your hours soon after you've completed them to ensure that the hours will count for registration into HTM 4964. You can find the form on the field study page of the HTM website.

**HTM – 4964 Field Study General Information and Guidelines****Course Objectives and Position Requirements***The Structure of the Hospitality/Service Industries*

Defined by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management for the field study requirement, employment in any of the industry segments listed below will be considered:

**Industry Segments**

Airlines	Hotel/Resort (property and corporate)
Casino/Gaming	Managed Services
Conference Centers/Services	Property Management/REITS
Convention Facilities	Restaurant / Campus Dining Management
Cruise Lines/Tours	Spa (depending on position)
Destination Management	Sports/Entertainment/Leisure
E-Commerce in industry	Stadiums/Arenas
Event Planning	Travel/Tourism
Golf/Country Club and City Clubs	Winery

The following list of Job Functions is not all-inclusive. The Field Study Coordinator will ultimately determine if a position qualifies for field study. Work for a student organization is not considered an industry segment and will not be considered.

**Job Functions****Real Estate**

- Asset Management
- Brokerage
- Development
- Finance
- Property Management
- Real Estate
- Sales/Trading

**Marketing (Hospitality Companies Only)**

- Advertising/Public Relations
- Brand/Product Management
- Market Research
- Sales/Marketing

**Operations**

- Business/Campus Dining
- Catering
- Event Planning
- Facilities Management
- Finance/Accounting
- Front Office
- Food and Beverage
- Housekeeping
- Human Resources
- Reservations
- Retail
- Rooms
- Sales/Marketing

## HTM – 4964 Field Study General Information and Guidelines

### General Guidelines

1. While it can be accomplished sooner, Students are encouraged to seek/apply for field study experiences the summer prior to their final semester/year.
2. You should seek field study experiences that are closely related to your professional and career objectives. Students are solely responsible for arranging the required field study experience. It is strongly suggested that you attend the HTM career fairs.
3. Work hours will not be counted prior to submission and approval of the enrollment form (see class registration/enrollment). You cannot get credit for Field Study after the fact. In other words to receive credit you must sign up for field study before the work experience not after.
4. As with all of classes, students are required to pay tuition for the HTM Field Study class. If a student is not in Blacksburg for field study and taking no other classes at the same time, he or she can request and a partial waiver of student fees. For more information, visit <https://www.bursar.vt.edu/tuition-fee-rates/RequestReducedComprehensiveFee.html>.
5. As per university and Pamplin College of Business Guidelines, a student can start the field study experience prior to the beginning of the semester. Specifically, with approval of Field Study Agreement (form I), a student can start the field study starting after the last day of class in the previous semester / summer school term. Students cannot receive credit for work hours prior to the last day of class for the previous semester/summer school term.
6. Students must register during the semester / summer session when the field study work begins. At least 150 HTM 4964 hours of the field study experience must be completed during the semester when the student registers. A student can be enrolled after the start of the semester but needs to be able to complete the 150 hours in the semester enrolled. Per university policy, a student cannot be added to the course after the add/drop period has ended during the first week of classes for that term.
7. Assuming the minimum hours requirement is met, graduating students can apply to walk and participate in graduation ceremonies in the spring without having yet completed all of the required field study hours and assignments. However, he or she will not receive a diploma until everything is completed and the passing grade submitted. Students cannot participate in December graduation unless they have completed all 400 hours and required coursework by the last day of fall classes.
9. All forms, the mid-term report, and the final report must be word processed and submitted on or before the specified deadlines via Canvas.
10. Completing 400 hours is just one aspect of the field study. There are additional academic requirements and your supervisor will be required to complete an online evaluation of your performance. Keep in mind that you can still fail this class even if you complete 400 hours.

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### **Class Registration**

1. To enroll in HTM 4964, students must complete the appropriate Field Study Agreement (available on the HTM website). Once approved, the student will be manually registered in the class by the HTM office. Students cannot course request or add field study. They will be registered by the HTM Office once it has been approved.
2. The Field Study Professor will review the field study agreement and, if approved, register you for the class. If it is not approved, he / she will notify you of non-approval and the reasons, including what steps might be necessary to be approved (most often it revolves around exposure to management). Remember, your hours cannot begin to be counted until the agreement is approved and the prior term for which you are enrolling has ended.

### **Student Responsibilities during the Field Study Experience**

1. Students must maintain an electronic work log of activities undertaken and should be working toward meeting the approved objectives, in a satisfactory manner.
2. Any changes in the type of proposed work or in the objectives from the field study agreement submission must have prior approval of the course instructor.
3. Should your supervisor change or leave your place of employment, your new supervisor must review the existing field study agreement and sign off on it. The new field study agreement must be provided to the course instructor.
4. The course instructor should be contacted in case of any questions or problems.

For specific questions or if you need additional information, email [htm@vt.edu](mailto:htm@vt.edu) or call our office at 540-231-5515 and ask for the field study instructor