

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)

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 the students' 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 both as a required class and 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.

HTM 4964 is required of all HTM students and is designed to gain supervisory experience, placement in management training positions, significant exposure to full-time management staff, or a combination of the above. This course requires a series of assignments plus 400 hours of supervised work experience. The HTM 4964 positions can be a rotational experience or concentrated within one area. It can be paid or unpaid.

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Course Pre-requisites:

- a. 300 hours of verified HTM industry professional experience, post high school. (Retail, banking, daycare, counseling, cashiering, concessions and lifeguarding does not count towards 300 hours hospitality related experience)
- b. Completion of two of the following classes: HTM 3414, HTM 3444, HTM 3524
- 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 prerequisite. Forms should be submitted no later than the following dates after which you have completed your prerequisite hours:

Summer – December 1 Fall – May 1 Spring – September 1 (start of fall classes?)

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. Please note that if you are using multiple positions for this requirement that you will need to complete a form for each job that you held.

*****Jobs that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to, retail, lifeguarding, daycare or day camp counseling, concessions, cashiering, and banking. *****

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Course Objectives and Position Requirements

Please download and review the appropriate HTM 4964 Field Study Position Requirements documents. These requirements are also reflected in the HTM 4964 Field Studies Agreement (Form I) documents.

The Structure of the Hospitality/Service Industries

Defined by the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management for the field study requirement, your position will need to have direct involvement in and/or working closely with management. The field study position must provide you with practical hands-on experience employment management and administrative skills. A position in the industry segments listed below will be considered for field study purposes:

Industry Segments

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

The following list of Job Functions is not all-inclusive. The Field Study Coordinator will ultimately determine if a position qualifies for field study.

Job Functions

Real Estate (Hospitality Focused)	Marketing (Hospitality Companies Only)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management • Brokerage • Development • Finance • Property Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising/Public Relations • Brand/Product Management • Market Research • Sales/Marketing • Social Media

HTM – 4964 Field Study General Information and Guidelines**Operations (Hospitality Companies Only)**

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

Please remember that just because a job is in an acceptable industry, it does not mean that it will qualify for field study. An example would be working as a lifeguard for a resort or private club. While you are working in a hospitality segment, because your job duties would not be exposed to management, it would not qualify for field study. Also, if you are the social chair for your fraternity or sorority and responsible for event planning, that position will not be acceptable for field study. The same thought pattern applies to this situation as well. The driving goal of field study is that you are exposed to management so that you can gain insight into the industry.

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General Guidelines

1. Students are encouraged to seek/apply for field study experiences as soon as they are academically and professionally qualified.
2. Students should seek field study experiences that are closely related to their professional and career objectives. Students are solely responsible for arranging the required field study experience.
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 your classes, you are required to pay tuition for the HTM Field Study class. If you are not taking other classes at the same time, you can request and receive a reduction of student fees, but not the tuition. To receive this reduction, students should submit a request for reduced comprehensive fees through the Bursar's website found here <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 work study begins. At least 150 HTM 4964 hours of the field study experience must be completed during the semester when the student registers. You can be enrolled after the start of the semester but need to be able to complete the 150 hours in the semester enrolled.
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, they will not receive their diploma until everything is completed and the passing grade submitted. They cannot participate in December graduation unless they have completed all 400 hours and required coursework by the last day of classes in December.
8. All forms, the mid-term report, and the final report must be word processed and submitted on or before the specified deadlines to the online course electronic dropbox. Students are

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required to keep a copy of all forms and papers. If documents are lost for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to produce another copy.

9. If a student anticipates ANY Field Study problems that may hinder graduation, he or she should make an appointment to see the professor-in-charge personally in the beginning of a semester. Do NOT wait until the middle or end of the semester to discuss your concerns.

Class Registration

1. To enroll in HTM 4964, students must complete the appropriate Field Study Agreement (available on the HTM website). Once approved, the students will be manually registered in the class by the HTM office. Students cannot course request or add field study. The will be registered by the HTM office once it has been approved.
2. The Field Study Professor will review the submitted Form I and, if approved, register you for the class. If it is not approved, he/she will notify you of non-approval and the reasons. **Do not start the field study prior to receiving approval!** Class approval can and will probably be after the official drop add date but should be done as early in the semester as possible to start hours.

Student Responsibilities during the Field Study Experience

1. Students must maintain a log, (Form II), of all work 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 must have prior approval of the course instructor.
3. The course instructor should be contacted in case of any questions or problems.
4. The course instructor may call or write to the supervisor of the operation in order to assess the satisfactory performance of the student.