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Abstract

The expansion of the hotel industry and its related areas necessitates new educational training for those who will occupy positions of responsibility. Two-year colleges provide one possibility for this training. The authors propose a common foundation for all such programs in Florida.

Keywords

Herbert S. Lowe, Olin R. Thompson, Jr., Two-year programs, Grants, Competency, Council of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Educators (CHRIE), A.S. degree, A.A. degree, Vocational, Gordon Rule

A Proposed Hospitality Curriculum For Two-Year Colleges in Florida

by

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The expansion of the hotel industry and its related areas necessitates new educational training for those who will occupy positions of responsibility. Two-year colleges provide one possibility for this training. The authors propose a common foundation for all such programs in Florida.

In light of the latest economic trends, more and more hotels are in the planning and construction stages, and the demand for qualified and educated management personnel is obvious. Also, considering the expansion of companies dealing in contractual management, the need for better educated personnel is even more necessary. These companies are spreading into the areas of health care, recreational, industrial, and college and university food service, as well as hotel, motel, resort, and club management, all of which necessitate the supplying of food service directors, managers, and supervisors with basic and specific knowledge of general management that is sometimes lacking in present-day operations.

If these current managers and today's students are to rise through the ranks to positions of responsibility, and if they are to succeed in their chosen fields, they must be thoroughly educated, trained, and skilled in all facets of the hospitality industry. This grave responsibility chiefly rests in the hands of educational institutions.

In recent years, much attention has been focused on hospitality curricula nationwide. In Florida, the state chapter of the Council of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Educators (CHRIE) has called upon its members to review and re-evaluate their respective programs. The State Board of Education has provided grants to upgrade such programs along competency-based education guidelines. Foremost, though, has been the active participation of interested industry leaders in coordinating and monitoring hospitality education along with the concerned faculties.

Florida has 13 junior and community colleges currently offering two-year degree programs in hospitality management. Because of

an increased interest in two-year programs, a listing and comparison of the programs at Florida schools was compiled and integrated by course titles and descriptions to ascertain if a program could be designed with a common base.

Although the Florida statewide course numbering system has greatly assisted the clarification of equivalent credit, there still remains a lot of confusion regarding course titles, course descriptions, and degree titles offered in hospitality education. Much of this confusion can possibly be attributed to initial hospitality programs being developed by such diverse and unrelated departments as home economics, dietetics and/or nutrition, and business and/or business administration. Even the rare cases where independent departments for hospitality education were established, such programs are variously designated hotel-motel management, hotel-restaurant management, hotel-restaurant-institutional management, etc. In course titles, similar juggling with semantics is readily discernible and, in course descriptions, the picture is one ranging from brief to vague to obscure.

In the case of degrees, the associate of science (A.S.) degree, which is considered a terminal vocational degree for the student immediately entering the world of industry, is offered generally in the designated program name, hotel-motel management, hotel-restaurant management, or hotel-restaurant-institutional management, among others. One A.S. degree is even offered in business science by one of the 13 colleges researched.

Another problem arises at this point as to the various formulas whereby the respective schools distribute general education requirements for their degree programs. These aforementioned requirements are strictly spelled out by the Florida Legislature for the associate of arts (A.A.) degree and a follow-up baccalaureate degree. However, no specific guidelines for general education requirements seem to be observed by the junior and community colleges as far as the associate of science degree program is concerned. Consequently, as the result of these requirement variations, some four-year institutions do not even recognize the associate of science degree.

Another area of diversity is the number of credit hours allocated to the various courses. The State Board of Education requirements allocate one credit hour per hour of lecture and one credit hour per two hours of laboratory. Subsequently, many of the hospitality courses offering various laboratories reflect credit hours ranging from 1 to 4. For the student later transferring to another junior college or four-year institution, this variance can have a penalizing effect, especially at the four-year institution where three credit hours is a standard for all courses.

It is evident when analyzing the hospitality curricula of the various junior and community colleges in Florida that, individually,

certain institutions tend to focus toward a particular aspect or segment of the hospitality industry. Perhaps this directional slant is due to the background of faculty at the respective schools or is attributable to the specificity of the hospitality school. Another possible explanation for a school's inclination toward such curricular limitation is the school's restrictive resources such as types of laboratory facilities and equipment.

The point is certainly established to support the coordination of equivalency between the respective schools so that a student in northwest Florida economically handicapped from relocating to central Florida for two years could take one and a half years of a hospitality curriculum at a local college and be assured of full credit transfer when attending a central Florida college for a half year of specialized hospitality courses. Another point of relevancy that should be addressed at this time is that no proposed curriculum can be advised to abrogate the right of the respective schools to an individuality of instruction.

Curriculum Offers Two Tracks

The graduate of the two-year hospitality management program receives either an associate of science or an associate of arts degree, dependent on the track that is followed. Formal education may be continued at certain four-year universities, with the A.A. course work applicable toward a bachelor of science degree in hospitality management.

This program was established to meet the challenges of the changing patterns of travel habits and food service and to supply the need for men and women of integrity, personality, and good moral character to enter the hotel-motel-food service industries.

Educational institutions bear a responsibility to develop not only academic proficiency and business acumen in students, but also to encourage high standards of professional conduct and to accept only the best of a student's capabilities.

Two-year program graduates have a firm foundation in subjects designed to develop an in-depth understanding of the complex human and physical systems which make up the hotel and food industry. They are trained through practical lab experiences and on-the-job internships in the latest techniques and methods being employed by the vastly expanding and changing hospitality industries.

This program in hospitality management believes the realization of these aims in its graduates will provide the hospitality industry with more competent, flexible, and imaginative leaders and employees.

The objectives of the program are as follows:

- to provide semi-professional training in theory and practical information about selected areas of the industry;

- to prepare students with different capabilities and ambitions for immediate employment in satisfying occupations;
- to broaden the student's educational and cultural experiences in general education subjects;
- to supplement theoretical education with controlled practical work experience; and
- to provide industry with supervisory and managerial personnel.

Proposed Curriculum Provides Pattern

It is anticipated that the proposed two-year hospitality curriculum will present participating junior and community colleges in Florida with a prototype curriculum that reflects "the best of all possible worlds." In utilizing the term "prototype," the inference is intended that the proposed curriculum is offering a "pattern" and, in no way, is aiming at absolute standardization.

First, the title of the curriculum, hospitality management, has the effect of clarifying the current confusion extant in the various curricula and providing an umbrella coverage of all the diverse segments within the hospitality industry. The designation of the associate of science and associate of arts degrees in hospitality management further solidifies this concept.

Secondly, since the 1982 legislative "Gordon Rule" amended minimum requirements regarding general education courses, and since industry has criticized requirements leading to the A.S. degree, the prototype curriculum envisions the hospitality student taking 22 credit hours of general education courses in the A.S. track and, in the A.A. track, the credit hours required for an A.A. degree and intended matriculation to a four-year university for a bachelor of science degree.

The humanities emphasis should address the impelling effect of the behavioral sciences and interpersonal communications on the highly "personable" hospitality industry. As a matter of fact, in the selection process of general education courses for the prototype curriculum, determination was based on application and practicability to the hospitality industry *per se*—the necessary background basis that would afford a more cohesive transition into the world of the industry giant for the graduating two-year hospitality student and that would afford some diminution of the degree of difficulty to the hospitality student aspiring for a four-year baccalaureate degree.

Thirdly, the selection of the core hospitality education courses followed a similar determination logic—general overall importance to the basic background of a person entering mid-level management of a hospitality industry. As selected, the 14 A.S. degree core hospitality courses represent 40 credit hours of the two-year A.S. degree curriculum and are intended to provide thorough instruction in fundamental hospitality theory, as well as invaluable hands-on

**Hospitality Management A.S.
Freshman Year
Term I**

Course	Credits
Analysis of Hospitality Industry	3
Expository Writing	3
Food Microbiology	3
Food Microbiology Lab	1
American History	3
Spanish I or French I or Speech	3
Courtesy Training for Hospitality Personnel	3
Total	19

Term II

Technical Writing	3
Business Math	3
Hospitality Management Accounting	3
Hospitality Personnel Management	3
Psychology	3
Quantity Food Production	3
Total	18

**Sophomore Year
Term I**

Course	Credits
Concepts of Hotel-Restaurant Law	3
Purchasing/Menu Planning	3
Food Service Equipment/Energy Management	3
Hospitality Information Systems	3
Seminar and Introduction to Internship	1
Approved Elective	3
Total	16

Term II

Hotel-Restaurant Marketing	3
Layout and Design	3
Hospitality Management Systems	3
Internship	3
Approved Elective	3
Total	15

Electives (approval of program director required). Choose minimum of six (6) hours: Science of Housekeeping, 3; Dining Room Service, 3; Foods, 3; Wine Technology/Marketing, 3; Catering, 3; Travel and Tourism, 3; Bar Management, 3; Basic Nutrition for F.S., Procedures, 3; Health-Care Food Service Management, 3; Front Office Procedures, 3; Sanitation, Safety and Maintenance Management, 3; Condominium/Resort Operations Management, 3.
Total Credit Hours: 68

Hospitality Management A.A.

Freshman Year

Term I

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Analysis of Hospitality Industry	3
English Composition	3
Biology of Human Affairs	3
College Algebra	3
American History	3
Humanities Philosophy	2
Total	17

Term II

English Composition	3
Biology of Human Affairs	3
Hospitality Management Accounting	3
Introduction to College Chemistry	3
Quantity Food Production	3
Total	15

Sophomore Year

Term I

<u>Course</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Purchasing/Menu Planning	3
Food Service Equipment/Energy Management	3
Contemporary Literature	3
Elementary Statistics	3
Physical Science Survey	3
Humanities in Technical Society	2
Total	17

Term II

Hospitality Information Systems	3
Economics I	3
Hotel-Restaurant Marketing	3
Layout and Design	3
Hospitality Management Systems	3
Total	15

Total Credit Hours: 64*

*Physical Education may be an additional requirement.

application by means of laboratory training and internship experiences. Weighted emphasis has been focused on the critical aspects of accounting and management within the hospitality industry. In the A.A. track, the 27 credit hours of hospitality courses reflect a representative indoctrination into the general hospitality field.

In the case of the A.S. degree track elective courses which represent 6 credit hours and require the prior approval of the hospitality program coordinator or counselor, the 12 recommended courses furnish an expansive and comprehensive, but not all-inclusive, offering to the hospitality student. It is envisioned that certain junior and community colleges will be oriented to specific elective courses based on such factors as backgrounds of faculty, specificity of local area hospitality industries, and restrictive resources of laboratory facilities and equipment. This distribution of elective courses throughout the junior and community college statewide system should prove no handicap to the hospitality student in view of the continuity and equivalency coordination inherent in the proposed prototype curriculum. If anything, the respective institutions should be able to offer more meaningful quality instruction in particular elective courses, and hospitality students should be able to choose from a more comprehensive listing in charting their direction within a specific segment of the hospitality industry.

The sum total of credit hours for the prototype two-year A.A. curriculum amounts to 64. That includes 37 in general education, 27 in core hospitality courses, and no elective hours. The sum total of credit hours for the prototype two-year A.S. degree amounts to 68. That includes 22 in general education, 40 in core hospitality courses, and 6 in approved electives. This total of 68 is the same as that required by only one of the 13 junior and community colleges, with the remaining institutions' requirements ranging from 60 to 67; it is two credit hours more than the current requirement of 66 in order to obtain an A.S. degree.

Since a maximum student load per semester is generally pinpointed as 15 credit hours, the 68 required credit hours would necessarily dictate that a minimum number of credit hours be undertaken by hospitality students during the summer semester(s). The consequences of this dictum should have a three-fold effect: (1) students working in order to sustain their educational efforts will better be able to distribute curriculum credit hours over the summer semester(s); (2) the current slack enrollment during the summer semester(s) at junior and community colleges should be somewhat alleviated; (3) the current concern about maximum utilization of educational facilities over the entire year, as well as elongation of the present school terms, will certainly be addressed by the proposed hospitality curriculum. Further, to underscore continuity and

equivalency, each course was devised around a total of 3 credit hours as observed by four-year institutions. Only the microbiology lab, the seminar and introduction to internship, are exceptions and should present no major complications to the hospitality program student in either track.

In line with current trends toward competency-based education, it is recommended that certain competencies be developed for each of the proposed hospitality core courses and elective courses. However, this study does not purport to dictate specific competencies, their evaluations, or the exact textbook that should be utilized for each individual course; to do so would be attempting to formulate a standardization of instruction that would not only be abhorrent to a creative faculty but also totally foreign to the philosophy of free-thinking in the academic world. Also, an absolutely essential component of the identification and definition of competencies is the input from potential employers. It is of utmost importance that evaluative criteria be established by the respective faculties based on needs and expectations of local industries in order to effectively measure the devised student competencies. The evaluation activities should be self-evident from the course statements of learning outcomes. The same criteria should also be used in class as will be used by the future employers.

In this latter regard, it is imperative that the respective schools administering a hospitality program set up an advisory committee composed of industry leaders to assist the faculty in coordinating program development. The advisory committee can communicate with the department head and/or program coordinator to identify performance objectives and, as these objectives solidify, the committee can review the development of the evaluation design and materials. An industry task analysis should be conducted with prospective employers to learn what the employers expect of the job-entry employee, so that the program produces graduates who possess the competencies necessary for success in the occupation.

Even after the hospitality program has been implemented, follow-ups should be initiated by way of direct mail surveys and telephone inquiries soliciting responses from both actual employers and program graduates. Employers should be asked to evaluate the program graduates they have employed in terms of on-the-job competence, and program graduates should be asked to evaluate the training received as well as its direct relationship to the competence required on-the-job. The information obtained from such follow-ups can be invaluable in identifying program weaknesses. Subsequently, revision of the program should be continuous and involve the advisory committee, the employers, the graduates, and the faculty. In this manner, the effective implementation of the hospitality management program can be assured a measure of success.