

January 2006

## Ranking of U.S Hospitality Graduate Programs: 2002-2003

Michael G. Brizek

*University of South Carolina*, null@sc.edu

Mahmood A. Khan

*Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/hospitalityreview>



Part of the [Hospitality Administration and Management Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Brizek, Michael G. and Khan, Mahmood A. (2006) "Ranking of U.S Hospitality Graduate Programs: 2002-2003," *Hospitality Review*: Vol. 24 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/hospitalityreview/vol24/iss1/1>

This work is brought to you for free and open access by FIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hospitality Review by an authorized administrator of FIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [dcc@fiu.edu](mailto:dcc@fiu.edu).

---

# Ranking of U.S Hospitality Graduate Programs: 2002-2003

## **Abstract**

Compared to other disciplines, graduate programs in hospitality and tourism management are in their infancy. Rapid changes within the business environment have prompted students in this field to drop a higher level of problem solving skills and scholarship. As the number of graduate programs in hospitality and tourism grows to meet this demand, the need also arises to evaluate each program k resources and contributions to graduate education. This study examines both masters and doctoral degree granting programs in hospitality and tourism management. All institutions were evaluated and ranked based on selected tangible criteria. Rankings of the programs, which were strictly based on their strengths and resources as reported by the surveyed institutions, are reported in this paper.

# Ranking of U. S. Hospitality Graduate Programs: 2002-2003

By Michael G. Brizek and Mahmood A. Khan

*Compared to other disciplines, graduate programs in hospitality and tourism management are in their infancy. Rapid changes within the business environment have prompted students in this field to develop a higher level of problem solving skills and scholarship. As the number of graduate programs in hospitality and tourism grows to meet this demand, the need also arises to evaluate each program's resources and contributions to graduate education. This study examines both masters and doctoral degree granting programs in hospitality and tourism management. All institutions were evaluated and ranked based on selected tangible criteria. Rankings of the programs, which were strictly based on their strengths and resources as reported by the surveyed institutions, are reported in this paper.*

## Introduction

Compared to other disciplines, graduate programs in hospitality and tourism management are in their infancy. Rapid changes and intense competition within the business environment demand students to graduate with thorough understanding of the application of theories and problem solving skills. This requires a unique blend of academic and research studies to be infused into graduate studies. Recently many institutions have developed graduate degree programs in hospitality and tourism to fulfill the needs of the academia as well as the industry. The quality of these programs is directly related to the available resources and research facilities. Since these resources vary from institution to institution, national rankings have been provided by several reputed organizations for other fields of study. Although several business-related programs are ranked, hospitality and tourism management is not ranked separately in those national rankings. Currently there is no other updated published source related to the ranking of hospitality and tourism management programs. The demand for ranking these graduate programs comes not only from prospective students, recruiting officers, but also from academic institution administrators who are responsible for the overall evaluation and improvement of their related programs. Taking into consideration the importance of ranking, this ongoing research work was undertaken.

Published research related to this subject has addressed the emergence of graduate education in hospitality and tourism. Khan and Olsen (1988) researched the present and future needs of institutional resources towards graduate programs in hospitality and tourism management. Khan (1992) commented on the "value-added" effects that graduate programs place on undergraduate education in hospitality and tourism. Bosselman (1999) commented on the emergence and strength of graduate programs within the last thirty years, including the quality and quantity of graduate research publications. Recently Tepeci, Seo, Upneja, and DeMicco (2001) researched the current supply and demand for hospitality and tourism faculty within the United States. Their study reviewed hospitality and tourism doctoral programs within the U.S. and the current state of doctoral graduates emerging from these programs. Their conclusions suggest that as the demand for terminal degrees within the field grows, more doctoral programs will continue to emerge and increase in size to address the demand issue and the quality of doctoral graduates in the field of academia.

Earlier studies were limited to rankings of undergraduate and graduate disciplines related to business, education, law, engineering, and allied health, that relied primarily on prestige rankings by deans and program chairs. Related information used in some rankings included program size, GMAT/GRE scores, graduation rates, and

size of the faculty. Similar qualitative assessment of institutional resources was addressed within the hospitality and tourism field by publications such as Calnan (1988) and Kent, Lian, Khan, and Anene (1993). Recently, research by Brizek and Khan (2002) and Gould and Bojanic (2002) addressed the evaluation and ranking of hospitality and tourism undergraduate programs by using quantitative assessment. They evaluated the individual strengths of undergraduate programs by replicating the previously published 1993 study and adding survey responses from industry recruiters. Attribute ratings were established and programs were ranked in order based on six attributes (curriculum, students, facilities, faculty, career services, and overall quality). The Brizek and Khan study examined results from previous studies conducted from 1988 and 1993 and developed a pre-tested questionnaire which was finally sent to deans, chairs, and directors of hospitality and tourism programs. Attributes included in this questionnaire focused on faculty, students, curriculum, resources and facilities, and alumni support. Responses were then compared using a pre-developed quality point scale, which translated data into actual quantitative value. Eventually, programs were ranked on the basis of the total cumulative quality point score. This method was used for both masters and doctoral level programs. This methodology was adapted from and is very similar to the ranking methodology traditionally used by the *U.S. News and World Report*. Their ranking of graduate programs is primarily based on GMAT/GRE scores; academic experience of graduate candidates; and graduation and employment placement rates. The researchers in this study added additional criteria to address commonalities associated with a graduate hospitality and tourism program such as alumni contributions and program's overall resources.

### **Methods and Determinants of Rank**

A pre-tested five-page questionnaire was distributed to forty-eight masters degree granting programs in hospitality and tourism management which were listed in the *International CHRIE Guide to Colleges and Programs (7<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Similar questionnaires were distributed to eleven doctoral programs offering Ph.D. degrees in related fields. These schools were identified through a previous study conducted by Tepeci et al., which focused on the supply and demand for hospitality and tourism doctoral graduates. Texas Tech University was added to the original list of programs, since the university had instituted a doctoral program in hospitality management.

The questionnaire used for master degree programs was similar to the one used in the 2002 study for undergraduate degree programs with added focus on three key areas: curriculum, the student body, and institutional resources. Curricular issues assessed included core/elective course offerings; and curriculum evaluation and development activities. The student body section focused on enrollment, admission requirements, assistantships offered, and institutional funding for student development. In resources section items evaluated library holdings, external funding support, and electronic/Internet services to faculty and students. These criteria were carefully selected after several discussions with colleagues and comments received from presentations of earlier studies by the researchers at national meetings and conferences. Moreover, criteria used are identical to what are used by the *U.S. News and World Report*.

For the doctoral programs, similar criteria used to investigate the master's programs, were used which included assessment related to the student body and available resources. However under each section questions selected solicited responses which are most appropriate for doctoral education. For example, greater emphasis was placed on research requirements of students, course requirements, and faculty involvement with students. In addition, teaching loads and number of doctoral advisors within the program were considered. The intent was not only to evaluate the competence of each doctoral program, but also the overall success of the program, in

relation to completed doctorates in the field and their scholarly contribution to the field of hospitality and tourism management during and after the student's residence within the program. Inclusion of above mentioned evaluation parameters addressed some of the questions and deficiencies mentioned by earlier authors such as Tepeci et al. pertaining to the quality of master's and doctoral level education in hospitality/tourism management.

The last section of the questionnaire focused on graduate faculty members and solicited information related to faculty members' qualifications; teaching loads; research responsibilities; and their overall contribution to research and scholarly activities; and grantsmanship both in writing grants and securing grants.

In summary, the questionnaire consisted of three distinct sections: master's degree programs, doctoral programs, and graduate faculty. Scoring on each question under each section was conducted using carefully allocated points. These points allocated for each question was carefully selected after receiving a variety of input from colleagues and comments received on our earlier surveys. These scores were predetermined and were applied uniformly to all questionnaires once they were received. Five undergraduate students from the Department of Hotel and Restaurant Management at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore evaluated and scored all of the returned questionnaires in order to provide for accuracy and to eliminate any possible bias by the researchers. Scoring was heavily based on strengths related to graduate studies. For example, two points were given to each journal listed under resource section and two points for graduate courses offered under curriculum section. Similarly, ten points were given for each faculty member who has an earned doctoral degree. This type of scoring system did not restrict scores to a maximum or minimum number of points since the number of courses offered, number of graduate students, or the size of faculty varied from institution to institution. Rankings were based on the highest points achieved by each program.

Respondents were also asked to rank the top six institutions strictly based on their perception of the status of the hospitality/tourism management programs. This "status ranking" for each graduate degree offering institution was used to validate and compare the evaluations from earlier studies. The "status ranking" was also used to mirror the methods used in the past by *U.S. News and World Report* for evaluating different graduate programs. To help avoid any bias, the name of the institution from which the responses came were deleted if those were included in any of the top six names. Scoring for status ranking was based on six points being awarded to institutions that were ranked first on the questionnaire, five points to the second, four points to the third, three to the fourth, two points to the fifth, and one point to the sixth. This system was similar to that used in earlier studies by Calnan and Brizek and Khan.

## **Results**

Of the forty-eight questionnaires that were distributed, thirty were received, yielding a response rate of 62.5%. Once the master's questionnaires were received, each one was reviewed and each response was scored using the predetermined quality points discussed above. Scores were added for each category and then an overall score was computed from each of the three sections to give an overall quality score for the program. Based on the total scores, each institution was ranked, selecting the top 20 master's degree programs and the top nine doctoral programs. The rationale for the rankings was based on two factors. First, when the master's degree scores were tabulated there was a distinct difference between the top 20 score and the following 21 to 25 scores. The doctoral degree in hospitality and tourism related field was offered by nine programs. One program, Texas Tech University introduced their Ph.D. program in the fall of 2002 and does not have established data to participate in this study at that time. To be as fair and inclusive as possible, institutions that had matching scores and

were placed in the top twenty (masters) and top nine (doctoral) were awarded the same ranking but did not displace another institution with a different score and ranking. This rationale was used in order to be as inclusive to all institutions as possible and to recognize the breadth of programs in this field. In a change from the undergraduate study of Brizek and Khan, the decision to add extra weight to scores in certain responses allowed for more dispersion in overall responses and fewer scores that recorded the same results. This decision was in response to suggestions made by administrators and educators during the ranking symposium at the International CHRIE conference in Orlando, Florida, 2002.

### **Master's Degree Programs**

The overall results of the master's degree program section show the top five institutions to be: University of Nevada, Las Vegas (390 points), Pennsylvania State University (292 points), Virginia Tech (286 points), University of Massachusetts-Amherst (282), and Purdue University (269) (Table 1). (*The tables for this article are located at the end of the article – editor*). It should be noted that adding graduate faculty points to the total scores have skewed some of the results. Therefore, the total scores for curriculum, student body, and institutional resources were also computed and listed in Table 1. On the basis of this score, Virginia Tech moves to rank one and University of Nevada, Las Vegas moves down to third rank. Similarly, other institutions will be able to compare their scores to other schools. All of these institutions were found to be consistent in the level and amount of courses offered, the quality and level of graduate faculty at the institution, and the amount and extent of their institutional resources. Slight differences were found in the results of the ranking compared to the previous perceptual studies and prestige rankings referred to in this study. What was different to note from previous research is the emergence of some other institutions of hospitality/tourism management that might not have been previously recognized or noted. Of particular importance are those institutions that are offering graduate degrees under different programs such as Human Resources, Consumer Sciences, etc. In addition, we witnessed multiple degree offerings or areas of concentrations at the graduate level. This was clearly evident from the majority of responses we received. Overall it is fair to assess from the total points received that the majority of hospitality/tourism programs ranked within the top 20 in this study are very similar in nature and based on enrollment size and amount of available resources, are growing and increasing in stature.

### **Doctoral Degree Programs**

Doctoral degree programs in hospitality/tourism are relatively new compared to doctoral programs in other disciplines. The need for higher credentialed faculty with research backgrounds has prompted colleges/universities to offer terminal degrees in hospitality/tourism. Although not many differences were found amongst doctoral program curricula in hospitality/tourism management, differences prevailed in the size of the doctoral programs, the number of students enrolled, and the nature of standards and requirements (qualifying exams, preliminary exams, refereed publications, residence requirements, etc.). Results of the doctoral survey in order of rankings and respective scores (Table 2) are: Virginia Tech (196), Pennsylvania State University (180), Purdue University (172), Ohio State University (168), Oklahoma State University (164), Kansas State University (163), University of Nevada, Las Vegas (154), Auburn University (151), and Iowa State University (151). It should be noted that the graduate faculty scores are not included in these rankings and are kept separate in order to highlight each doctoral program's resources and strengths.

Tables 3 and 4 show status rankings based on respondents' perceptions of Master's and Doctoral programs respectively. As mentioned earlier these evaluations were conducted in order to follow up on our earlier studies as well as other published

studies such as Kent et. al in 1993. Among the top five, Cornell University was consistently viewed by its peers as among the top two hospitality/tourism programs in the U.S. The following four: The Pennsylvania State University (master's and doctoral), Virginia Tech (masters and doctoral), Kansas State university (master's and doctoral), Purdue University (master's and doctoral) and Florida International University (master's) were viewed by its peers as top programs on the basis of responses received. In comparing the quantitative ranking with the perceptual ranking, it is important to note that for the most part the more detailed quantitative ranking enhanced the perception of an institution to a much greater extent by displaying each programs' strengths and weaknesses.

### **Limitations of the Study:**

During the annual I-CHRIE Conference in Orlando, Florida (2002) discussions were made during a panel symposium regarding ways to enhance the methods of this type of research. Comments such as determining categories based on the mission of the college/university and more weighted scores based on programs' strengths were discussed. It was observed during the conference that most researchers/educators favored this type of research in order to compare program resources; however, fine-tuning is needed to make the results of the study more applicable. For future surveys refinements will be made in order to make the survey instrument as reliable and consistent as possible. Some suggestions recommended by the panel included separate categories for each program's college or university's mission or historical background. Other suggestions or comments posed were an evaluation of the program's overall student body and comparisons of similar programs based on student body size. Finally, one scholar suggested an extension of the original ranking research to include an additional study to investigate a program's strength based on alumni data that would include career placement, longevity of alumnus in chosen career, and alumni advancement in the field.

As in the original 2002 Brizek and Khan's undergraduate study, more participation from other programs is needed in future studies in order to receive a true picture of all educational programs in hospitality/tourism management. It will need a concentrated effort by all administrators involved with International CHRIE to participate in these types of studies to ensure a greater representation of all programs and promote the discussion and comparisons of program resources.

### **Conclusions**

It is important to note that the 2002 undergraduate study and this graduate study were designed for administrators and faculty to evaluate and compare resources and program strengths in hospitality/tourism education. It is recommended that administrators view the criteria presented in this study and utilize parts of the results to evaluate/enhance their own programs and develop a comparative basis for the curriculum and resources already in place. The intention of this study is not to put one program higher than others, but to allow for a benchmarking tool for programs to measure themselves and compare with their peers. Our earlier studies were solicited and used by many higher level administrators to allocate resources and we hope this study will further help in building the strengths of hospitality and tourism management programs. As noted earlier, the body of research involving the evaluation and comparison of academic resources has developed over the past twenty years towards more sophisticated qualitative and perceptual measurements. As in the past, being the principal researchers of this topic, not only encourage debate on this topic but also future research to address advancement involving this area of research. Researchers will be glad to share specific information if desired, since it was not possible to discuss all sections in detail.

**References:**

- Bosselman, R. H. and Barrows, C. W. eds., Hospitality Management Education (New York: The Haworth Hospitality Press, 1999).
- Brizek, M. G. and Khan, M.A. "Ranking of U.S. Hospitality Undergraduate Programs: 2000-2001," *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education* 14, no. 2, (2002): 4
- Calnan, T. "As We See Ourselves," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 29, no. 2, (1988): 79
- Gould, S. L. and Bojanic, D.C. "Exploring Hospitality Program Rankings," *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education* 14, no.4, (2002): 24-32
- Kent, W.E. Lian, K. Khan, M.A. and Anene, J.O. "Colleges' Hospitality Programs: Perceived Quality," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, December, (1993): 66-72
- Khan, M.A. "Value-Added Impact of Graduate Programs on Undergraduate Education in Hospitality Management," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* May 4, no. 3, (1992): 66-72
- Khan, M.A. and Olsen, M. D. "An Overview of Research in Hospitality Education," *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* 29, no. 2, (1988): 51-53
- Tepeci, M. Seo. W. S. Upneja, A. and DeMicco, F. J. "Supply and Demand for Hospitality / Tourism Management Faculty in the United States," *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education* 13, no.2, (2001): 38-41

**About the Authors:** Michael G. Brizek, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina. Mahmood A. Khan, Ph.D. is a Professor in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University



**Table 1: Ranking of Masters degree program**

Rank	School	Department	Year Founded	Total	Grad Faculty	Curriculum	Student Body	Resources	Total (C/SBIR)
1	University of Nevada, Las Vegas	The William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration	1982	390	237	29	64	60	153
2	Pennsylvania State University	School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Recreation Management	1986	292	131	35	66	60	161
3	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Department of Hospitality Tourism Management	1991	286	123	36	67	60	163
4	University of Massachusetts-Amherst	Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Management	1974	282	132	35	60	55	150
5	Purdue University	Department of Hospitality Tourism Management	1929	269	138	26	50	55	131
6	Florida International University	School of Hospitality Management	1975	267	132	23	54	58	135
7	Ohio State University	Department of Hospitality Management	1983	266	139	25	56	46	127
8	University of Hawaii at Manoa	School of Travel Industry Management	1999	261	117	30	54	60	144
9	Auburn University	Department of Nutrition and Food Science	1990	259	136	29	37	57	123
10	University of Houston	Conrad N. Hilton College	1989	252	119	28	52	53	133
11	Oklahoma State University	School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration	1997	244	100	29	60	55	144
12	University of South Carolina	Department of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management	1991	241	104	28	58	51	137
13	Iowa State University	Department of Apparel, Education Studies, and Hospitality Management	1942	238	118	25	45	50	120
15	Johnson & Wales University	Alan Shawn Feinstein Graduate School	1986	231	84	37	55	55	147
Tie 15	Rochester Institute of Technology	School of Hospitality and Service Management	1981	229	96	33	40	60	133
Tie 15	Texas Tech University	Department of Restaurant, Hotel, and Institutional Management	1989	229	107	20	47	55	122
16	Kansas State University	Department of Hotel, Restaurant, Institutional Management, and Dietetics	N/A	228	104	24	47	53	124
17	Washington State University	The School of Hospitality Business	1985	226	115	23	41	47	111
18	Michigan State University	The School of Hospitality Business	N/A	222	103	31	40	48	119
19	University of Wisconsin-Stout	Department of Hospitality and Tourism	1985	212	101	27	33	51	111
20	Florida State University	Dedman School of Hospitality	2001	208	95	20	47	46	113

**Table 2: Ranking of Doctoral Degree Programs**

Rank	School	Department	Year Founded	Total	Curriculum	Student Body	Resources
1	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management	1991	196	53	129	14
2	Pennsylvania State University	School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Recreation Management	1988	180	51	115	14
3	Purdue University	Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management	1989	172	52	107	13
4	Ohio State University	Department of Hospitality Management	1948	168	48	107	13
5	Oklahoma State University	School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration	1998	164	51	100	13
6	Kansas State University	Department of Hotel, Restaurant, Institutional Management and Dietetics	1970's	163	54	96	13
7	University of Nevada, Las Vegas	William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration	1993	154	49	92	13
Tie 8	Auburn University	Department of Nutrition and Food Science	1994	151	52	86	13
Tie 8	Iowa State University	Department of Apparel, Education Studies and Hospitality Management	1947	151	53	85	13

**Table 3:**  
**Status Rankings of Master's Programs in Hospitality/Tourism**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Cumulative Points</b>
1	<b>Pennsylvania State University</b>	<b>212</b>
2	<b>Cornell University</b>	<b>201</b>
3	<b>Purdue University</b>	<b>185</b>
4	<b>UNLV</b>	<b>164</b>
5	<b>Florida International University</b>	<b>145</b>

**Table 4:**  
**Status Rankings of Doctoral Programs in Hospitality/Tourism**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Cumulative Points</b>
1	<b>Cornell University</b>	<b>230</b>
2	<b>Purdue University</b>	<b>195</b>
3	<b>Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University</b>	<b>180</b>
4	<b>Pennsylvania State University</b>	<b>176</b>
5	<b>Kansas State University</b>	<b>170</b>