

WHAT CURRICULUM DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN HOSPITALITY PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED HOSPITALITY PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.

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Abstract *The purpose of this study is to address hospitality curriculum differences between a group of recognized as highly ranked schools and a group of schools that are recognized as not highly ranked. This study does not confirm that recognized, highly ranked programs perform better than less recognized programs; however, there is an indication curriculum structures are different between the two groups. This study reveals what hospitality educators may need to consider in developing or establishing a curriculum. There is no one right directional track that all hospitality programs need to follow; however, it would be beneficial for all stakeholders, if there is a standardized core of hospitality courses that hospitality programs can modify and adapt. This study finds the current curricular structure of hospitality programs still reflects a lack of standardized direction. There must be required standardized, courses that all stakeholders can agree with, and these standardized course classifications must apply to all hospitality schools. This study allows hospitality educators to compare their own curriculum with other programs and review the differences in courses to develop an appropriate program of study.*

Keywords: *Job Satisfaction, Work Attributes*

INTRODUCTION

It is generally understood that higher education institutions began hospitality programs in the 1920s. Hospitality programs at Cornell University, Michigan State University, and Purdue University started in the 1920s, while Penn State University and University of Massachusetts started programs in the 1930s (Barrows & Bosselman, 1999). With the completion of the U.S. interstate systems in the 1970s, the hospitality industry grew, requiring more business and service oriented professionals to meet the demand of customers and businesses.

There have been a number of educational hospitality programs established to meet demands within the industry. The National Restaurant Association (2012) state there are approximately 1,000 post-secondary education institutions which offer associate or bachelor degrees in hospitality around the U.S. Two primary accreditation's have been

established, one for four-year programs (Accreditation Commission for Program in Hospitality Management) and one for two-year programs (Commission on Accreditation for Hospitality Management).

The lack of implementation of a standardized hospitality curriculum has drawn attention from academia and industry professionals (Lewis, 2005; Dale & Robinson, 2001). Hospitality educators, industry professionals, and students may wonder if today's graduates are well prepared to enter a business environment that is getting more complex and diverse than ever before.

Along with other factors, relevant curriculum should be developed so students have the skills and knowledge necessary to enter a global and ever changing industry. Since there has not been an established curriculum hospitality programs can implement, divergences in hospitality education has been a constant topic for educators. The purpose of this study is

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to address curriculum gaps between schools having highly recognized hospitality programs (Brizek & Khan, 2002) and are not. In this study, two groups of programs are identified through previous studies (Brizek & Kahn, 2002; Gould & Bojanic, 2002) and an online directory of hospitality schools in the U.S. (Directory of Hospitality Schools in the United States, 2012).

In curriculum design, it is important to solicit views of professionals within an industry, students to ensure the curriculum is relevant to industry needs. Hospitality curriculum should be addressed in a systematic manner. Hospitality is multidisciplinary in nature; however, there should be uniformly acceptable and measurable academic curricula.

In this study, hospitality related courses, main subject areas, and areas that hospitality programs focus on are investigated. This study also identifies if there are any curriculum differences between two groups of hospitality programs: one that is recognized as highly ranked and one that is recognized as not highly ranked. This is not to rank but rather to address discrepancies in programs offered by each group. Based on the purposes of the study, two hypotheses are tested.

Hypotheses

H1: There are significant differences between two groups: one that is recognized as highly ranked (A) and one that is recognized as not highly ranked (B) in main subject areas

H2: There are significant differences between two groups: one that is recognized as highly ranked (A) and one that is recognized as not highly ranked (B) in courses offered

LITERATURE REVIEW

The hospitality programs in higher education, represent multidisciplinary areas offer services to people within a scope of business, home economics, human environmental sciences, and/or vocational areas (Buergermeister, 1983). It provides students with tentatively required knowledge for future careers in the hospitality industry. Pearce (2005) and National Restaurant Association (2012) identify colleges and universities offering hospitality and tourism programs. Knowles, Teixeira, and Eagan (2003) state program characteristics, and core competencies are also studied (Horng & Lu, 2006; Tsai, Goh, Huffman, & Wu, 2006).

Ranking has been a controversial issue (Burke, 2003); however, studies have continued to rank each program according to a set of criteria; curriculum, faculty, students, resources, and alumni (Brizek & Khan, 2002). International hospitality program ranking has been also studied in terms of journal publications (Severt, Tesone, Bottorff, & Carpenter,

2009). Ranking alone may play an important role in recruiting and public relations for the school (Gater, 2002); however, overall rankings do not clearly indicate specifics about hospitality programs (Hu, Bai, & Jang, 2003).

Including the studies that indicate the ranking of the hospitality program (Brizek & Khan, 2002; Gould & Bojanic, 2002), there have been numerous studies on hospitality education since the 1990s. Breiter and Clements (1996) and Nelson and Dopson (1999) indicate that hospitality programs need to be continuously re-evaluated. Bartlett, Upneja, and Lubetkin (1998) and Murphy (2001) state that educational efforts should be coordinated and collaborative, in order to accommodate both students and industry needs.

Hospitality programs are vital, as indicated by Goodmand and Sparague (1991), and designed to educate and train future professionals in the hospitality industry, which has grown in size and complexity over the last few decades (Dale & Robinson, 2001). Educators in the field may need to review differences in the courses to develop appropriate curriculum. Careful review of curriculum issues will further assist educators and industry professionals in improving the quality of primary courses.

METHODS

The populations for the study are hospitality programs offering baccalaureate degrees in colleges and universities in the U.S. Hospitality programs in this study refer to management programs which concentrate on at least one of hospitality, hotel, motel, restaurant, food service, meeting/conventions, travel/tourism, gaming/casino, or club management. Samples are divided into two different groups according to the previous study that ranked hospitality programs in the U.S. Seventeen top listed schools are initially identified and named as Group A, while Group B consists of 20 schools that are randomly selected from an online directory of hospitality schools in U.S. (Directory of Hospitality Schools in the United States, 2012).

Information in this study is collected via the different program homepages. All selected programs have their own websites, which provide detailed curriculum information. It is assumed in this study that the information presented on these websites is true and reflect the actual curricula of the programs sampled. Data collected from each program homepage is coded into Excel and exported to SPSS for the further analysis.

Collected information is divided into three distinctive sections; 1) General information on each hospitality program including program dependency, program name, program college affiliation, International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Education (ICHRIE) affiliation, total credit hours required, core hospitality credit hours required, and

Figure 1: Courses Offered in Hospitality Programs

	Courses		Main Subject Areas (no. of courses)
Food Services Purchasing Cooking/Baking Quantity Food Product Food Culture & History Institutional Food Services Research & Development Nutrition/Dietetic/Nutrition Bartending F&B Physical/Lay Out Design	Sanitation/Safety Cuisines in General F&B in General Hotel F&B F&B Control Kitchen/Experimental Foods Catering Contract Food Menu	Club Cuisine Service Classic Cuisine Advanced F&B Food Service Operations Food Science Culinary Management Restaurant Franchising Alcohol/Beverage	F&B (25)
Cost Control College Accounting Financial Accounting Managerial Accounting Project Evaluation In Finance	Financial Planning College Finance Financial Funding Cooperate Finance	Managerial Purchasing Casino Accounting Hotel Finance Hospitality Finance	Accounting/Finance (13)
Travel Club Management Aviation Travel Geography Tourism for ones w/disability Destination Mgmt. & Design	Eco-Tourism Cruise Leisure Tour Operation International Destination	Tourism Industry Recreational Tourism Sustainable Tourism Travel Abroad Tourism Economics	Tourism (16)
Meeting Planning Convention Marketing Green Meeting	Trade Show Entertainment Expo Festival	Special Event Conferences Wedding	Conventions/Meetings (9)
Business Statics General Management Entrepreneurship	Business Administration Service Management Strategic Mgmt	Productivity Mgmt Business/Product Dev Operation Mgmt	Management (9)
Room Lodging Services Hotel Development	Gen. Hotel Management Property Management Advance Hotel Management	Front Office Housekeeping	Hotel (8)
F&B Management Law Hospitality Law	Business Law Employee Law	Casino Law Tourism Law	Laws (6)
Work Experience Co-Op	Practicum Field Experience	Capstone Internship	Work Experiences (6)
Honors Creative Teaching Practice	Current Issue/Topic Seminar	Independent Studies	Special Topics/Seminar (5)
Gaming Casino Products	Casino Management Psycho-Social Issues in Gaming	Casino Tourism	Gaming (5)
Employee Relations Personal Management	Human Resources Training Human Resource Management		Human Resources /Em- ployee Relations (4)
Speech Writing	Management Communication Business Presentation		Communication (4)
Trend Analysis Revenue Analysis	Quantitative Analysis	Operation Analysis	Revenue Analysis (4)
Organization Service Consumer Experience	Sales Service	Guest Service	Customer Services (4)
Technology	Tourism Technology	Finance Technology	Technology (3)

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General Marketing	Hospitality Marketing	Internet Marketing	Marketing (3)
Career Development	Leadership	Speaker Series	Leadership/Dev. (3)
International Business International Hospitality	Culture Dimension	Diversity	International (4)
Fundamental Performance	Professional Development		Professional Dev. (2)
Vacation Ownership Resort	Resort Time Share		Property Mgmt. (2)
Research	Tourism Research		Research (2)
Intro. To Hospitality			Gen. Hospitality (1)

focused areas; 2) information regarding the areas programs focus on (main subject areas); and 3) hospitality courses the programs offer.

Collected data initially contained all the courses each program offered, which generated 138 different courses based upon the courses names. Figure 1 shows 138 initially

identified courses in this study. Similar courses are grouped by subject area, leading to 22 subject groupings based on an evaluation of 138 courses according to their relation of main subject areas.

In order to identify the key characteristics the programs being analyzed have, a descriptive analysis was performed.

Table 1. Characteristics of Selected Programs

		Frequency	Valid %
Dependency	Dependent to College	29	78.4
	Dependent to School	8	21.6
Name of Program	Hospitality & Tourism	15	40.5
	Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism	5	13.5
	Multiple (Under College)	5	13.5
	Restaurant, Hotel, Institution Management	4	10.8
	Family Consumer Sciences	3	8.1
	Human Ecology & Science	2	5.4
	Business (Management)	1	2.7
	Nutrition & Food	1	2.7
	Merchandizing & Hospitality Management	1	2.7
College Affiliation	College of Business	14	37.8
	College of Hospitality	6	16.2
	College of Agriculture	4	10.8
	College of Education/Human/Health	4	10.8
	College of Human Environmental Sciences	3	8.1
	Independent without college affiliation	3	8.1
	College of Professional	1	2.7
	College of Applied Sciences	1	2.7
	College of Human Sciences	1	2.7
CHRIE- Affiliations	ACPHA	13	35.1
	None	20	64.9
Credit Hours Required to Graduate	120 or less credit hours	17	45.9
	Between 121 and 126 credit hours	13	35.1
	127 or more credit hours	7	18.9
Core Hospitality Credit Hours Required	30 or less credit hours	11	29.7
	Between 31 and 50 credit hours	11	29.7
	51 or more credit hours	15	40.5

The independent sample t-test was used to explore any differences existing in courses offered and in the main subject areas between Group A and Group B.

ANALYSIS

As table1 shows, twenty-nine programs are affiliated with colleges as departments and 8 programs are free standing programs. Fifteen (40.5%) of the sampled schools contain Hospitality & Tourism in their department names while five (13.5%) contain Hotel, Restaurant, or Tourism. Seven (18.9%) of hospitality programs run under related departments, such as Business, Nutrition, Family Consumer Sciences, or Human Ecology.

Fourteen (37.8%) programs are under Business Colleges, while six (16.2%) programs are affiliated with Hospitality Colleges, and three (8.1%) programs are identified as independent programs without specific College affiliations. Four (10.8%) are affiliated with College of Agriculture, four (10.8%) with College of Education, and three (8.1%) with College of Human Environmental Sciences. Three programs are affiliated with College of Professional, College of Applied Sciences, or College of Human Sciences.

Thirteen programs (35.1%) are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA). Seventeen (45.9%) of the programs require 120 or less credit hours (units) to graduate compared to seven (18.9%) schools that require 127 or more credit hours (units) to graduate. Further research shows eleven schools (nearly 29.7%) indicate they require 30 or less hospitality related credited hours (units). Another 11 schools (29.7%) require between 31 to 50, and 15 (40.5%) schools require more than 50 hospitality related credit hours (units).

Table 2 indicates hospitality programs with focus fields. After making adjustments for these focused field names and course descriptions, 13 focused areas were identified. The majority of programs offer a field in general hospitality (21, 56.8%), in food & beverage (16, 43.2%) related, in hotels (12, 32.4%) related, and in meetings (10, 27%) related fields. Multiple schools also indicate tourism (7, 18.9%), club management (6, 16.2%), gaming (5, 13.5%), or international related fields (3, 8.1%) that students could choose; however, areas of vacation (1, 2.7%), time share (1, 2.7%), theme park (1, 2.7%), sports management (1, 2.7%), hotel planning/control (1, 2.7%), and hospitality technology (1, 2.7%) are rarely identified as a focused field.

Table 3 describes 138 courses that selected hospitality programs offer for students. Courses that are offered by more than half of selected schools are hospitality law (34, 91.8%), marketing (33, 89.1%), introduction to hospitality (32, 86.5%), hotel (31, 83.8%), technology (24, 64.9%), human resources (24, 64.9%), quantity food production (22,

59.5%)), food & beverage (22, 59.5%), finance (20, 54.1%), hospitality cost control (20, 54.1%), special topics (20, 54.1%), and financial accounting (19, 51.4%).

Table 2. Frequency of Focused Fields

Focused Fields	Frequency	Valid %
General Hospitality	21	56.8
Food & Beverage	16	43.2
Hotel/Resort	12	32.4
Meeting	10	27.0
Tourism	7	18.9
Club Management	6	16.2
Gaming	5	13.5
International	3	8.1
Vacation/Time Share	1	2.7
Theme Park	1	2.7
Sport Management	1	2.7
Hotel Planning/Control	1	2.7
Hospitality Technology	1	2.7

Bartending, restaurant franchise management, trade show, international destination convention marketing, green meetings, casino law, employee law, tourism law, Internet marketing, hospitality productivity, non-commercial contract services in hospitality, analytical method planning, project evaluation, funding, casino accounting, hotel finance, career development, psycho-social issues gaming, casino tourism, tourism economics, tour operation, tourism persons with disability, theme park, aviation, ecotourism, leisure and recreation, sustainable tourism, business presentation, guest speaker, teaching assistant, advanced tourism, and fundamental performance are identified as ones that at least offered by hospitality programs (1, 2.7%).

From 138 courses offered by selected hospitality programs, grouped by course title and description indicates. Table 4 shows that there are 22 main subject areas, including accounting/finance related, food & beverage, hotel management, law, marketing, work experience, convention/meetings, tourism, technology, human resources, seminar, customer related, management, leadership, gaming, communication, revenue analysis, international culture, professional development, property management, research, and international hotel related courses.

Among the 22 main subject areas, accounting/finance is offered by all 37 programs, followed by F&B (36, 97.2%), hotel room related (36, 97.2%), law (35, 94.5%), marketing (35, 94.5%), work experience (31, 83.7%), conventions/meetings (28, 75.6%), human resources/employee relations (28, 75.6%), tourism (27, 72.9%), technology (25, 67.5%), and seminar (19, 51.3%). Areas of customer related (18,

Table 3. Frequency of Courses Offered by Hospitality Programs

Names of Course Offered (no. of courses offered by programs)	Frequency	%
Hospitality Law (1)	34	91.8
Marketing (1)	33	89.1
Intro. to Hospitality (1)	32	86.5
Hotel (1)	31	83.8
Technology & Human Resources (2)	24	64.9
Quantity Food Production & F&B (2)	22	59.5
Finance & Hospitality Cost Control (2)	20	54.1
Special Topics/Current Issues (1)	20	54.1
Hospitality Accounting (1)	19	51.4
General Management & Sanitation/FB Safety & Facility Management (3)	16	43.2
College Accounting (1)	15	40.5
Tourism (1)	13	35.1
Restaurant Management (1)	12	32.4
Food Operation/System Management & Food Science/Nutrition & Capstone & Hospitality Marketing & Organization Behavior (5)	11	29.7
Meetings/Conventions & Festival/Attractions Mgmt. & Wedding & Strategic Management & Tour Tech. & Purchasing & College-Fin & Leadership & Advanced Hotel & Club Mgmt. & Seminar (11)	10	27
Catering & Gaming & Work Experience & Practicum (4)	9	24.3
Cooking/Baking/Cuisines & Sales Serv./Sales & College-Acct-II & Travel Abroad/International Tourism/International Tourism & Recreation (5)	8	21.6
Venture Plan/Restaurant Enterprise Project & Service Management/Managing Service & Resort Time Share & Professional Development & Capstone (5)	7	18.9
Special Events & Business Law & Entrepreneurship & Economics & Front Office & Cultural Geology/Destination Culture & Tourism Plan Destination Design & Independent Studies (8)	6	16.2
Advanced FB & Business Statics & HR Training & Speaker Series & Seminar & Research & Study Abroad & Foreign Language (8)	5	13.5
Food Culture & Contract Food Service Management & Physical Plant Design & Meeting Planning & Business Administration & Bus/Products Dev. & Operational Management & Employee Relation & Quantitative/Operational Analysis & Hospitality Security & Room/Housekeeping & Property Management & Diversity (13)	4	10.8
Food Services Purchasing & Menu & Culinary Management & Entertainment-Expo & Conference & Personal Management & International Business & Hospitality Finance & Hotel Development/Investment & Casino Management & Cruise & Managerial Communication & Writing & Tourism Research & Co-Op Education & Field Experience (16)	3	8.1
Analyzing Food Services/FB Control & RD in Corp. Test & Kitchen/Experimental Foods & Hotel FB & FB Law & Guest Services & Yield Management/Rev. Management & Trend Analysis & Culture Dimension & Business Ethics & Finance Technology & Housekeeping/Lodging Service & International Hotel & Vacation Ownership Resort & Ongoing Journey Home & Advanced Destination Management (16)	2	5.4
Bartending & Restaurant Franchise Mgmt. & Trade Show & Green Meetings & Casino Law & Employee Law & Tourism Law & Internet Marketing & Hosp. Productivity & Non-Commercial Contract Services & Analytical Planning & Project Evaluation Funding & Casino Accounting & Hotel Finance & Career Development & Psycho-Social Issues Gaming & Casino Tourism & Tourism Economics & Tour Operation & Tourism Persons with Disability & Theme Park & Aviation & Ecotourism & Leisure/Recreation & Sustainable Tourism & Business Presentation & Teaching Assistant & Advanced Tourism & Fundamental Performance (29)	1	2.7

Table 4. Frequency of Main Subject Related Courses Offered

Main Subject Areas Offered	Frequency	%
Accounting/Finance	37	100
F&B	36	97.2
General Hotel Management	36	97.2
Law	35	94.5
Marketing	35	94.5
Work Experiences	31	83.7
Conventions/Meetings	28	75.6
Human Resources/Employee Relations	28	75.6
Tourism	27	72.9
Technology	25	67.5
Seminar	19	51.3
Customer Related	18	48.6
General Management	16	43.2
Leadership	16	43.2
Gaming	10	27
Communication	9	24.3
Revenue Analysis	8	21.6
International Culture	8	21.6
Professional Development	8	21.6
Property Management	7	18.9
Research	7	18.9
International Hotel	6	16.2

48.6%), general management (16, 43.2%), leadership (16, 43.2%), gaming (10, 27%), communication (9, 24.3%), revenue analysis (8, 21.6%), international culture (8, 21.6%), professional development (8, 21.6%), property management (7, 18.9%), research (7, 18.9%), and international hotel (6, 16.2%) are offered by less than a half of selected hospitality program.

Among 138 different courses, 18 courses show that some statistical differences exist between Group A and Group B. Table 5 only shows ones that are statistically different between groups regarding courses offered. Among these identified courses that show significant differences, mean scores of group A are higher than of group B for club management, international hospitality management, marketing, human resources, finance, purchasing, cost control, speaker series, seminar, tourism management, research, and work experience. However, mean scores of meetings, hospitality law, hospitality marketing, strategic management, college accounting, and internship are higher for group B than for group A.

Table 6 shows statistical differences between group A and group B regarding main subject areas. Among 22 main

subject areas, significant differences between group A and group B are only revealed in areas of the food & beverage, accounting/finance, leadership, and tourism. Mean scores of main subject areas of group A are higher than of group B for food & beverage ($p=.028$), accounting/finance ($p=.029$), leadership ($p=.004$), and tourism ($p=.032$).

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the study is to address gaps existing in terms of curricula between two groups of hospitality programs. One group program is considered to be well recognized and the other one considered to be not well recognized. Hospitality programs educate and train future hospitality professionals as the hospitality industry expect.

Some hospitality programs in the U.S. may maintain higher visibility with ICHRIE than other programs. Some large hospitality programs may just have higher visibility than other small programs; however, size and visibility may have no correlation with graduate success, industry contributions, faculty quality or whatever metric one chooses.

Some programs naturally conforms itself to its unique service

Table 5. Results of T-test: Comparisons of Courses Offered

Courses Offered	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	p
Club Management	A	17	.35	.493	2.954	.009
	B	20	.00	.000		
Introduction to Hospitality	A	17	3.29	4.538	2.162	.046
	B	20	.90	.553		
Marketing in General	A	17	1.29	.588	2.263	.031
	B	20	.90	.447		
Human Resources	A	17	.94	.556	2.509	.017
	B	20	.50	.513		
Finance	A	17	.82	.728	2.085	.044
	B	20	.40	.503		
Purchasing	A	17	.59	.712	2.625	.016
	B	20	.10	.308		
Hospitality Cost Control	A	17	.94	.827	2.446	.020
	B	20	.40	.503		
Speaker Series	A	17	.35	.606	2.400	.029
	B	20	.00	.000		
Seminar	A	17	.29	.470	2.582	.020
	B	20	.00	.000		
Tourism	A	17	1.29	1.105	2.555	.018
	B	20	.55	.510		
Research	A	17	.35	.606	2.400	.029
	B	20	.00	.000		
Work Experience	A	17	.76	.831	3.792	.002
	B	20	.00	.000		
Meetings/Conventions	A	17	.06	.243	-3.047	.005
	B	20	.45	.510		
Hospitality Law	A	17	.82	.393	-2.196	.046
	B	20	1.05	.224		
Hospitality Marketing	A	17	.00	.000	-4.273	.000
	B	20	.70	.733		
Strategic Management	A	17	.12	.332	-2.042	.049
	B	20	.40	.503		
College Accounting	A	17	.06	.243	-2.344	.026
	B	20	.35	.489		
Internship	A	17	.29	.588	-3.386	.002
	B	20	1.15	.933		

Group A: Well recognized program, Group B: Not well-recognized program

Table 6. Results of T-test: Comparisons of Subject Related Courses Offered

Subject Areas	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Food & Beverage	A	17	7.88	4.742	2.290	.028
	B	20	4.90	3.127		
Accounting/ Finance	A	17	4.59	2.623	2.348	.029
	B	20	3.00	1.026		
Leadership	A	17	1.00	.866	3.228	.004
	B	20	.25	.444		
Tourism	A	17	3.71	3.820	2.301	.032
	B	20	1.45	1.432		

Group A: Well recognized program, Group B: Not well-recognized program

region. University of Nevada Las Vegas for example has a strong emphasis on the casino industry given its location and interaction with the Las Vegas casino industry. Similarly, University of Central Florida located near the Orlando theme parks and convention centers conforms its curriculum offerings to fit the regional need. It bears noting there are many factors that might have influence on hospitality programs, however, this study only explores hospitality curriculum's, and identifies curriculum differences between the two groups studied.

Generally speaking, courses offered in each program are not always the same, even if there are some similarities existing in terms of courses offered. Hospitality programs tend to be differentiated from the vocational based programs (Morrison & O'Mahony, 2003) and more affiliated with business colleges rather than non-business colleges such as those with home economics or human environmental sciences based colleges (Rappole, 2000).

Hospitality programs provide areas of general hospitality, food & beverage, hotel, and meetings for students to focus on. This study indicates that courses in areas of club management, gaming and theme parks offered are limited. Tourism and food & beverage represent a major part of the hospitality field. Accounting/finance also represents a large portion of the business field. More courses related to areas of food & beverage, accounting/finance, leadership and tourism are considered to be required and offered in those programs that are recognized as highly ranked, whereas less recognized programs do not. Despite there not being a clear indication of what courses should be required it is obvious that hospitality programs need to consider offering more courses which are related to food & beverage, tourism, accounting and finance, along with leadership.

Experiential learning methods have become common in marketing (Anselmi & Frankel, 2004) and business (McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006). This study corroborates Zopiatis (2007) opinion that work experience is necessary for all hospitality students. It is clear hospitality programs

require courses that can provide students the opportunity to gain work experience. This study also indicates programs implement courses that require work experiences before allowing student to take internship or work experience courses.

Lefever (1998) suggests that hospitality curricular needs to focus on human-resources skills and finance-related knowledge. Regardless of a program's affiliation most tend to offer business related courses such as accounting/finance, laws, marketing, human resources, and management. Limited programs offer courses related to specific hospitality areas such as casino related, analytical, purchasing, or globalization/diversity related courses. Results show there are limited courses relating to international business practices which may be a drawback to students having internships or work experiences overseas.

Hospitality programs offer courses that are directly related to general hospitality, hotel, food & beverage, meeting, and tourism. Limited courses, such as ones related to cultures and online communication are offered to meet individual interests within a scope of the hospitality field. Programs may be restricted with resources making it difficult to provide a variety of courses. In this case educators could chose to specialize in an area rather than offering a general hospitality program.

Some programs are more on business-oriented track while others focus on a home economic or consumer sciences-oriented track. There is no one right directional track that all hospitality programs need to follow; however, it would be beneficial for all stakeholders, if there is a standardized core of hospitality courses that hospitality programs can modify and adapt. This study finds the current curricular structure of hospitality programs still reflects a lack of standardized direction.

There must be required standardized, courses that all stakeholders can agree with, and these standardized course classifications must apply to all hospitality schools. Students,

faculty, and industry professionals can identify how many and which ones need to be taken based on standardized courses. For example, taking a few more classes on restaurant management cannot be classified as a restaurant focused program. Nor does taking one wedding planning class make one a wedding planning focused program or option. Employers can compare standardized courses with what students have completed before selecting potential employees. For instance, if a student plans to focus on hotel management, the student must take a certain number of the same or very similar courses that are designated for hotel management regardless of what school a student is in.

This study does not confirm that recognized, highly ranked programs perform better than less recognized programs; however, there is an indication curriculum structures are different between the two groups. This study allows hospitality educators to compare their own curriculum with other programs and review the differences in courses to develop an appropriate program of study.

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