

# HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT & TOURISM

||| NORTHWESTERN STATE

## Internship Policy for Hospitality Management & Tourism

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

Update Needed Date: October 1, 2025

### **Introduction**

This Internship Policy outlines the requirements and expectations for graduating senior students enrolled in the Hospitality Management & Tourism (HMT) program at Northwestern State University (NSU) seeking internship opportunities. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students gain valuable professional experience in the hospitality industry, receive mentorship, and have opportunities for career growth within the organization they select for their internship.

### HMT 4500 Course Description from NSU Catalog:

FIELD EXPERIENCE (6 to 12-0-0). Controlled work experience in the student's area of concentration, designed by host organization and university instructor to blend theory and practice. A minimum of 400 clock total clock hours required with periodic evaluations, special project(s) and portfolio presentation with weekly reports of all aspects of the experience. Prerequisite: Successful completion of ALL prior degree requirements.

### **The Academic Internship**

An academic internship is an approved and monitored in-field work experience of a pre-professional nature which meets specific learning goals and is related to the hospitality management field of study. The work at the internship site under the direction of a site supervisor is only a portion of the experience. The student also has a faculty instructor which oversees the academic portion of the field experience and assigns coursework for the student to complete.

## **Requirements for NSU Hospitality Management & Tourism Internships**

Students are responsible for locating internships, which are of a pre-professional nature, and are in the hospitality sector. Students must complete a full 12-hour internship; two semesters registered with six credits per semester, or one semester registered for twelve credits, depending on the number of hours per week and on the type and amount of academic work assigned by the faculty sponsor. Internships are graded on the normal NSU letter grade scale: Grades generally used are "A" (4.0 - excellent), "B" (3.0 - good), "C" (2.0 - average), "D" (1.0 - poor), and "F" (0.0 - failure).

A grade of "IP" (In progress) means that work in research or thesis course is incomplete, but in progress. Students enrolled in a course for which a grade of "IP" is allowed must remain continuously enrolled (except summer) or a grade of "F" will be given.

### **Required Contract Submitted by Students**

HMT students are required to submit a fully completed contract (provided by HMT) between the internship site representative and the student to their adviser. This contract is a binding document between the student, internship site, and HMT. The student is expected to fulfill all terms of the contract, starting date, ending date, job duties, etc.

### **Student Process for Submitting a Contract for Approval:**

1. Student works closely with HMT advisers to discuss internship opportunities that may be approved.
2. Student seeks, applies, and secures **approved** internship opportunities.
3. Student accepts internship opportunities and submits a completed contract to HMT adviser by the last day of classes the semester before they intern (last semester of HMT degree program).
4. HMT Faculty meets during final exam week to vote on approval or denial of internships.
5. HMT Faculty emails students to inform them of decision.
6. If contract approved, a permit will be issued for HMT 4500, then student registers for HMT 4500.
7. **If contract denied, it is the student's responsibility to secure an approved internship.**

**Additional requirements are outlined below:**

#### **1. Selection of Hospitality Organization**

Students must select internship sites that are recognized hospitality organizations, including but not limited to hotels, resorts, restaurants, event management companies, travel agencies, and tourism bureaus. The selected organization must offer opportunities relevant to the student's academic and career goals.

#### **2. Paid Internship Experience**

To ensure accountability between the student and internship site, students are required to secure paid internship positions within approved hospitality organizations. Acceptable rates of pay may include hourly, salary, or stipends. The rate of pay is between the student and the organization.

Academic advisers may assist students in researching current ranges of pay based on the student's expected position within the organization.

## **2. Minimum Clock Hours**

Internships must consist of a minimum of 400 clock hours of work. These hours should be fully documented with official payroll records from the host organization and submitted bi-weekly in the HMT 4500 course.

## **3. Mentorship**

Students must demonstrate that they will have access to mentorship during their internship. This mentorship can be provided by a designated supervisor or a senior staff member within the organization who will guide the student's learning and professional development.

## **4. Structured Training Program**

The selected organization must provide evidence of a structured and formal training program in place for interns. This program should cover various aspects of the hospitality industry and offer opportunities for hands-on learning.

## **5. Career Growth Opportunities**

Students should inquire and demonstrate to their academic adviser the potential for full-time career growth opportunities within the organization upon graduation. The host organization should be committed to nurturing and retaining talent from its intern pool.

## **6. Academic Course Enrollment and Successful Completion**

Students are required to enroll in HMT 4500 and complete all academic and work experience requirements to fulfill the Hospitality Management & Tourism degree requirements. The credits earned for an academic internship are not tied solely to hours "on the job," but to the amount and type of academic work the student completes during the internship. The academic assignments are due weekly and to be included in a final portfolio at the end of the term in which the internship is undertaken and will be evaluated by the faculty sponsor.

In these assignments, the student is to submit weekly reflections on their learning at the internship site and integrate this learning with topics or issues from their work role through weekly article readings and evaluations. The academic assignments should also indicate the student's accomplishments while working in the internship as well as areas for his or her future inquiry and study that lead from the experience.

As its name implies, experiential learning is based on activity that is then to be reflected upon. An internship assumes a certain amount of work and time spent at the internship site. The academic assignment must also be commensurate with the number of credits to be earned.

## **Integrating Learning from an Internship Experience with Academic Subjects**

**Reflective Journaling**—Students record daily or weekly impressions of the setting, activities, and areas of growth they are experiencing. Journal entries should relate back to the learning goals and responsibilities that were agreed upon with the site supervisor and recorded in the Learning Agreement. Additionally, the act of creating a written journal of what has been learned assists students in consciously reflecting on their work as interns and integrating their experiences with other learning. Rather than vaguely assimilating skills knowledge, students create an articulated record of their experiences.

**Final Portfolio**—Students create a portfolio to keep samples of written work, photographs, videos, reports, interview transcripts, summaries, certificates of training, reference letters and other documentation of the internship experience and their contribution to the work of the organization in which they were interns. The portfolio is to illustrate what the student has learned and how his/her skills or knowledge base has expanded through the internship.

### **7. Special Project**

As part of their internship experience, students must complete a special project in collaboration with their supervisors. Students must have approval from both site supervisors and HMT 4500 professor before moving forward with the special project. The due date for approval from the HMT 4500 professor will be posted in Moodle. This project should involve taking on leadership roles, such as planning and executing an event from start to finish, leading training efforts, or assuming managerial responsibilities.

### **8. Mid-term Evaluation**

Students will undergo a non-confidential mid-term evaluation conducted by their internship supervisor. This evaluation will assess their performance, progress, and areas for improvement. It serves as a feedback mechanism to help students make the most of their internship experience.

### **9. Final Evaluation**

At the conclusion of the internship, students will receive a non-confidential final evaluation from their supervisor. This evaluation will provide an overall assessment of the student's performance during the internship.

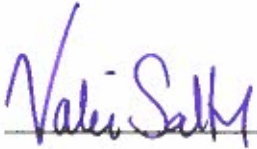
### **10. Final Self-Evaluation**

In addition to the supervisor's evaluation, students are required to submit a final self-evaluation. This self-assessment should reflect on the skills and knowledge gained during the internship, personal growth, and areas for future development.

By participating in the internship program, NSU Hospitality Management & Tourism students agree to abide by these policies and expectations. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the internship not being recognized for academic credit.

This policy is subject to faculty review and modification as needed to align with the evolving needs of the Hospitality Management & Tourism program and industry standards. Students should consult with their academic advisors for the most current internship requirements and guidelines.

**Voted on by Hospitality Management & Tourism faculty on Monday, September 26, 2023:**



Valerie Salter, Ph.D.

Coordinator of Hospitality Management & Tourism

Yea

Nay



John Carriere, CEC

Hospitality Management & Tourism Faculty

Yea

Nay



Rachel McKenna Opbroek, MBA

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Yea

Nay

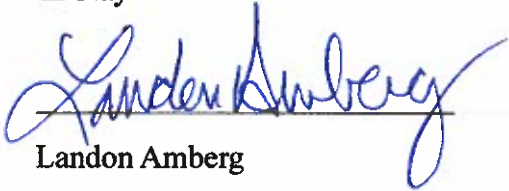


Thamsanqa Jongile, Ph.D.

Hospitality Management & Tourism Faculty

Yea

Nay




Landon Amberg

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Yea

Nay



Julie Wilkerson, JD

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Yea

Nay