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Graduate Study in Hospitality Management in the United States: Doctoral Programs

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ABSTRACT

The advent of doctoral programs in hospitality management is relatively recent, and programs are growing nationwide. With this growth, there is a need to supplement the foundation of knowledge related to doctoral education in hospitality management in the United States. In particular, gaps concerning admission requirements, degree requirements, and examination structures were identified through reviews of existing literature. This study served to fill those gaps in knowledge by collecting objective, secondary data and presenting it in a descriptive format. The results indicated a curriculum that was skewed toward research and methodology rather than hospitality-based subjects. In addition, there were subtle differences between institutions regarding preliminary exams and final dissertations. This information should be useful for doctoral program administrators and prospective students pursuing higher education in hospitality management.

Introduction

The discussion of hospitality graduate programs in academia has only recently evolved over the past few decades. The progress is relatively late, even considering the young nature of the hospitality management field in higher education. This evolution could be explained by the number of postsecondary institutions offering hospitality graduate programs multiplying fourfold in the past 30 years (Pearlman, Ryu, & Schaffer, 2010). Furthermore, the number of students enrolled in hospitality doctoral programs has been increasing, even though other business-related doctoral programs have been seeing declining numbers of graduates. The surge in graduate programs leads to a growing demand for credentialed faculty with research backgrounds and quality graduate programs (Khan, Lee, & Park, 2013). Current doctoral candidates will become the future faculty who lead hospitality management education. Thus, doctoral programs should be amply preparing them for the upcoming responsibility.

The delay in the establishment of hospitality doctoral programs could be explained by the rift between the hospitality field's practicality and graduate education's orientation toward research. It is widely known that professionals in the industry underestimate the value of graduate education in hospitality. However, those in doubt need to realize that graduate education evolved from the need for objective information, and most businesses utilize data provided by graduate programs for strategic planning (Bosselman, 1999). If academia and industry communicate what each needs and can provide, the growth in hospitality doctoral programs could promote or at least contribute to major advancements in the hospitality industry. Doctoral education is no longer only regarded as the disinterested pursuit of knowledge but is seen as an outlet for generating new information that can be an important strategic resource for the development of the economy as a whole (Kehm, 2006).

The hospitality management sector in higher education still only has a narrow knowledge base that must be broadened. The need for discussion on topics including institutional characteristics, degree requirements, student enrollment, and core curriculum can be justified with several reasons. Primarily, a graduate program curriculum provides an important reading of the field to assess the degree of fit between education and professional requirements, which may also become the foundation for larger comparative studies (Kuchinke, 2002). Also, due to the fact that hospitality management programs have inconsistent institutional affiliations, either as independent schools or as departments in larger schools and colleges (Scott, Puleo, & Crotts, 2008), there is a lack of

academic identity. Analysis of hospitality graduate programs and the growth in the body of knowledge would help establish a strong academic identity for hospitality management education. Furthermore, the varying characteristics of each institute affect which concentrations and specializations are offered to students in the field. Because of this, the core theories and concepts of hospitality curricula deviate from institute to institute, causing a lack of central identity. This justifies curriculum assessment in the body of knowledge for the purpose of building a concrete foundation for the hospitality major.

The purpose of this study is to assess the current state of hospitality doctoral programs in the United States and provide a descriptive overview. Institutional affiliation, core curriculum content, admission standards, and degree requirements are the main aspects in the focus of this research. By using only secondary data available to the public, this article seeks to provide an objective profile of doctoral programs in hospitality management education in the United States. In addition, we hope to assist prospective students in the decision-making process by summarizing details of entrance requirements and degree requirements. Program leaders and administrators can use these findings to position their programs among the competition and identify areas in need of further improvement or differentiation.

Literature Review

Despite academia's increased interest in hospitality management education, studies that are exclusively focused on graduate programs are scarce. As the hospitality management field has long been focused on undergraduate curricula and practical application, the discussion of graduate programs has just appeared over the past few decades (Barrows & Bosselman, 1999). Following the largest growth in hospitality programs in the United States in the 1980s (Rappole, 2000), scholars began to analyze and profile the characteristics of the rapidly blooming programs.

Zabel's (1992) study consisted of extensive data on 128 hospitality programs offering bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees. Programs' institutional locations, degrees offered, program inauguration date, enrollment numbers, plans to expand, areas of concentration, course requirements, and degree requirements were included in the study. According to Zabel, of the 38 hospitality graduate programs only 10 programs offered doctoral degrees. Moreover, the author forecasted major expansions of hospitality master's programs but inadequate numbers of graduate faculty to support the growth due to the low number of doctoral candidates.

Scott et al. (2008) emphasized the need for a strong academic identity in their research on the curricula of hospitality and tourism management programs located in business schools in the United States. The sample consisted of 23 business schools that offered majors, minors, or concentrations in hospitality tourism management. The findings showed a trend toward a core group of hospitality and tourism management courses. However, there was little consensus as to common content of the core curriculum.

Ayoun and Palakurthi (2008) conducted a study to provide information on the characteristics of doctoral students in hospitality education in the United States. Criteria were focused on general demographic profiles of the students, academic and professional profiles, sources of funding, career motivation, academic interests, intellectual productivity, and overall satisfaction with the doctoral programs. The study found that doctoral students in the United States are mostly interested in research topics on marketing or foodservice. The authors predicted that this narrowed interest would lead to a shortage of faculty in the ignored areas, resulting in a change in the hospitality education curriculum. Overall, the students expressed mediocre satisfaction with their doctoral programs. Although the students were highly satisfied with the student–faculty interactions, they were not happy with the lack of diverse course offerings and financial support.

A study that ranked graduate programs in hospitality management using longitudinal comparisons was carried out by Khan et al. (2013). The findings pointed out the changes in quality over time, and the authors' systematic efforts to follow up and measure the changes are highly commended. Identical primary criteria were used to assess 23 graduate hospitality programs over the course of 10 years. This method addressed the shortcomings of one-time ranking studies. The criteria included curriculum, student body, resources, and graduate faculty. The authors gathered data directly from the program directors for the most comprehensive and accurate information. In addition, in an effort to reduce bias from longstanding prestige, the authors separated relatively new programs into their own category. The consequent rankings appeared to change little over 10 years, with older programs that had larger facilities ranking higher.

Van Hoof, Wu, Zhang, and Mattila (2013) published a study presenting an overview of graduate hospitality programs with student-related information as the main focus. The authors collected data through surveys sent to 27 graduate hospitality programs in the United States. The study dealt with enrollment profiles, financial support provided to students,

placement after graduation, and admission and graduation rates. Results showed that although the majority of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students were international, about two thirds of them did not stay in the United States after graduation. Also, a concerningly low rate of master's students (3% of domestic students, 10% of international students) continued their education at the doctoral level. On a positive note, nearly all of graduating PhD students found job placements in research or teaching despite the economic downturn of the past few years.

Pearlman et al. (2010) attempted to address the shortcomings of program ranking studies, such as halo effects of older prestigious programs and effects of size, by utilizing only objective data to assess hospitality bachelor programs. Although various bodies have undertaken studies to provide information to prospective students, the validity of college rankings is highly debatable. Pearlman et al. eliminated subjective bias by using objective published data, not interview-based data, which may be subjective and based on personal perceptions. The authors utilized easily accessible objective measures such as faculty–student ratios, the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees, cost, and university resources. The exploratory study provided quality measures that future studies could weigh and add to for more objective and comprehensive assessments of hospitality programs.

The present study follows Pearlman et al.'s (2010) example by gathering and assessing only objective secondary data. For a more comprehensive view of hospitality doctoral programs, the assessment criteria in this study were admission requirements, degree requirements, core curriculum, and examinations required for completion.

Methodology

The population for this study was based on Khan et al.'s (2013) study because the subjects were established as leading institutions with hospitality doctoral programs in the United States. Another reason for the adoption was that the list did not include hospitality executive programs and online distance programs, focusing purely on face-to-face programs offering a PhD in hospitality.

The main objective of this study was to create a profile of hospitality doctoral programs using objective secondary data. Data were collected purely through a document review of Web sites and Internet-based brochures, handbooks, and bulletins of the sample institutions (see Appendix). Collected secondary data were then content-analyzed by multiple reviewers for the validity of categorization. Information regarding institution characteristics, curriculum, course descriptions, admission requirements, degree requirements, and faculty was collected through this process.

Results

After initial data collection, Clemson University and Indiana University were excluded from the study because their academic identity was more focused on recreation and tourism. Further exploration led us to include the University of Central Florida, the University of Missouri, Temple University, and Texas Tech University to the study. This was because of their relatively similar academic identity and the fact that their graduates are frequently placed as faculty in hospitality management programs. Moreover, the increased presence of doctoral students from these institutions at the Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism has proved their dedication to this field. The collected data were analyzed and tabulated in Excel. Table 1 contains the list of the resulting 16 doctoral programs.

Only four doctoral programs (25%) were individual colleges devoted to hospitality management. Half of the sample (n = 8) was affiliated with colleges of human science; three were located in colleges of business management; and one in the college of agriculture, food, and natural resources. As for program identity, one school offered a program in consumer sciences with a concentration in hospitality management, and another school offered a degree in business administration with a concentration in tourism and sport. The latter school provided coursework conjointly with the school of business, whereas another in the sample offered its program jointly with the food science program.

Admission Requirements

Table 2 contains the admission requirements of the sample. All programs accepted either GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) test scores as a measure of prospective students' academic capabilities. However, only eight programs specified actual scores in their entrance requirements. The required scores ranged from 1000 to 1350 for the GRE and 500 to 600 for the GMAT, with respective means being 1105 and 566. In relation to grade point average, 13 schools posted required scores ranging from 2.8 to 3.5, bringing the average to 3.08 on a 4.0 scale. For international students, English test scores were deemed mandatory by all institutions. All programs accepted TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores, and all but one program accepted IELTS (International English Language Testing System) scores as well. Scores

Table 1. Institutions offering doctoral degrees in hospitality management.

Institution	Program Name	Institutional Affiliation
Auburn University	Hotel and Restaurant Management	College of Human Sciences
Iowa State University	Hospitality Management	College of Human Sciences
Kansas State University	Hospitality Management and Dietetics	College of Human Ecology
Ohio State University	Consumer Sciences	College of Education and Human Ecology
Oklahoma State University	Hotel and Restaurant Administration	College of Human Sciences
Pennsylvania State University	Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management	College of Health and Human Development
Purdue University	Hospitality and Tourism Management	College of Health and Human Sciences
Temple University	Business Administration— Tourism and Sports	School of Tourism and Hospitality Management
Texas Tech University	Hospitality Administration	College of Human Sciences
University of Massachusetts Amherst	Hospitality and Tourism Management	Isenberg School of Management
University of Missouri	Hospitality Management	College of Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
University of Central Florida	Hospitality Management	Rosen College of Hospitality Management
University of Nevada at Las Vegas	Hotel Administration Hospitality Administration	William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration
University of South Carolina	International Hospitality and Tourism Management	College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Hospitality and Tourism Management	Pamplin College of Business
Washington State University	Hospitality Business Management	Carson College of Business

for the Internet-based version of the TOEFL were mainly used for analysis because of this particular format's mainstream usage across educational institutions. TOEFL iBT (internet Based Test) scores ranged from 77 to 100, and the mean was 84.75. Out of the 15 programs that allowed IELTS, most ($n = 10$) required a score of 6.5, whereas the lowest and highest requirements were 5.5 and 8.0, respectively.

Additional admission requirements included resumes, essays or statements of purpose, letters of recommendation, work experience, and even some prerequisites. All programs requested at least one to three letters of recommendation from either academic or employer sources. Only six programs desired previous hospitality work experience from prospective students. Of those, four programs specified that the experience was to be from managerial or supervising positions.

Degree Requirements

Degree requirements (see Table 3) showed that the mean for total course hours was 57.94 semester credits, with a minimum of 42 credits and maximum of 72 credits. Four programs stated that they would accept up to 30 credits from related master's coursework on the approval of the academic advisor. In contrast to master's hospitality programs, the core course hours of doctoral programs consisted of general courses, not necessarily courses specific to hospitality. Overall, most programs' degree requirements could be sectioned into general core, hospitality courses, statistical courses,

Table 2. Minimum admission requirements.

Institution	GPA[a]	GRE	GMAT	TOEFL (iBT)	Hospitality Work Experience	Recommendation Letters
Auburn University	3.0	X[b]	X[b]	79		3
Iowa State University	3.0	X	X	79	2 years managerial	3
Kansas State University	3.5	X	X	100	2 years managerial	2 academic, 1 professional
Ohio State University	3.0	1140	580	79		3
Oklahoma State University	3.3	X	X	79		3
Pennsylvania State University	3.0	1200	600	80	1 year	3
Purdue University	3.0	1000	550	77	1 year	2 academic, 1 professional
Temple University		X	X	100		2 academic
Texas Tech University	3.25	X	X	79		3
University of Massachusetts		X	X	80		2
University of Central Florida		X	X	91		3
University of Missouri	3.0	1000	550	80		3
University of Nevada at Las Vegas	2.8	1150	550	80	3 years managerial	2 academic, 1 professional
University of South Carolina	3.0	1000	500	80		2
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	3.0	1000	550	100	1 year managerial	Required
Washington State University[c]	3.25		600	92–93	Substantial industry experience (strongly preferred)	3
M	3.08	1070	560	84.75		

Note. GPA = grade point average. GRE = Graduate Record Examination. GMAT = Graduate Management Admission Test. TOEFL = Test of English as a Foreign Language. iBT = internet Based Test.
[a]GPA is on a 4.0 scale. [b]X indicates that the test is required but minimum scores are not specified. [c]Use a minimum admission index score of 1250 (GPA × 200 + GMAT).

Table 3. Degree requirements.

Institution	Total Course Hours	General Core Hours	Hospitality Course Hours	Statistical Course Hours	Support Course Hours	Dissertation Hours
Auburn University	60		34	16		10
Iowa State University	42[a]	4	9	12	2	15
Kansas State University	60[a]	13	17	11–12	18	30
Ohio State University	50	11	15	9		6+
Oklahoma State University	60	6	18–30	18–30		15
Pennsylvania State University	69	12	18	12	12	15
Purdue University	69	9	15	9–12	9	15–24
Temple University	48	6	12	9	9	3–13
Texas Tech University	54[a]	3	39	21	9	12
University of Central Florida	58	16	6	9	12	15
University of Massachusetts	63	12	6	18	9	18
University of Missouri	42[a]	20	15		15	6–28
University of Nevada at Las Vegas	60	21	15	6	6	12
University of South Carolina	60	8	12	12	12	16
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	60	9	6	6	9	30
Washington State University	72		13	12	24	30
M	57.94					

[a]Originally 72, 90, 84, and 72 hr, respectively, in which 30 hr from master's degree coursework is accepted.

support (elective) courses, and dissertation hours. However, the number of credits constituting each section differed greatly among the sample. Most important, the hours dedicated to dissertation writing varied from 3 to 30. It could be deduced that whereas some programs wanted students to adhere to a specific time structure when writing their dissertation, others gave freedom to their students to write at their own discretion.

Curriculum

As mentioned previously, the general core curriculum content did not primarily consist of hospitality courses (see Table 4). Given the varying titles of courses and departments administering them, the course descriptions were carefully analyzed to group similar content despite the course names.

Table 4. General core curriculum.

Course Title	No. of Programs Adopted	Percentage
Seminar in Hospitality Research Issues	9	56
Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations	6	38
Introductory Research Methodology	5	31
Advanced Research Methodology	5	31
Graduate Seminar (Presentations)	4	25
Seminar in Teaching/Grant Writing	4	25
Current Issues in Hospitality	4	25
Advanced Statistics	4	25
Research Project (for Publication)	3	19
Human (Consumer) Sciences	2	13
Services Marketing/Management Research	2	13
Administration of Hospitality Management	1	6
Economics	1	7
Ethics	1	7

The number and subject of courses selected as core content varied from one institution to another. Only one subject was selected as a core course by the majority of the sample. Nine programs agreed on hosting research seminars in which students analyze and discuss their fields of interest from reading to academic literature. Six programs opted for Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations to teach students a higher dimension of thinking and lay foundations for their research. A third of the sample ($n = 5$) offered rudimentary research methods courses, indicating that they received students from diverse backgrounds, not necessarily requiring master's degrees or research backgrounds. Another third of the sample held Advanced Research Methodology classes in which they not only covered extensive lists of methodology but evaluated their applications in research. An interesting finding is that four programs deemed separate graduate seminars mandatory in which students presented their own research to faculty and fellow colleagues. Career development courses, such as teaching or professional grant writing, were also chosen as fundamental courses by four programs. Statistics was relatively low on the list because most institutions had separate course hours, ranging from 6 to 30 credit hours, designated for this subject. The programs in the sample generally offered discrete courses on the different types of statistical methods so that students could choose depending on what methods they would utilize in their own research. Overall, it can be seen that the highest ranking subjects all aimed to prepare students for their dissertation writing and placement in research or education after completion.

Required Examinations

A unique characteristic of doctoral programs is the existence of preliminary exams usually near the end of coursework (see Table 5). These exams determine whether the students have completed the coursework adequately and retained sufficient knowledge from it. The majority of the sample ($n = 11$) required both written and oral exams. The content of exams generally covered research methodology, statistics, a major area focus in hospitality, and supporting areas of study. Three programs had additional areas of the exam in which students had to produce manuscripts or proposals of research. Of the programs that specified a time frame, all institutions except one asked students to complete the preliminary exam during the third year of study. In regard to doctoral committee makeup for the final dissertation, all schools required at least three graduate faculty members to be present. Furthermore, the majority ($n = 13$) recommended that graduate faculty members from outside of the hospitality program be invited on the committee to maintain objectivity and broaden the students' field of knowledge.

In addition, three programs specifically held qualifying exams before the preliminary exams were administered. One program stated that the exams should be at the end of the first year, and another stated that they should be at the end of the second year. The formats for the exams were either a written proposal of research or written exams on methodology, statistics, and hospitality knowledge. The purpose of these exams would be to assess the students' abilities to embark on dissertation research.

Discussion

Curriculum

On par with Scott et al.'s (2008) research stating the lack of identity in hospitality higher education, this study found great variation in institutional affiliations and core curriculum. Only a quarter of the sample were established as independent schools of study. The fact that two programs had to be conjoined with other departments to simply exist casts a shadow on the academic identity of hospitality management doctoral programs. As this academic field is relatively young, this matter can be understood by looking at the small number of students enrolled. Van Hoof et al.'s (2013) study showed that the average number of students enrolled in U.S. hospitality doctoral programs was 14, with program sizes ranging from 1 to 42. A driving factor in small enrollments is capacity. With the exception of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas and the University of Central Florida, the programs in this study do not typically have a large enough faculty to mentor and advise greater numbers of doctoral students, especially when guiding dissertation research.

The content analysis of the core curriculum revealed that the essence of doctoral studies is focused on research and publication. Programs mainly set research and theory-based courses and seminars as mandatory. This gives students the freedom to select hospitality, statistics, and other supporting classes based on their research interests. Although it may have its positive effects, the freedom to choose hospitality electives coupled with the modest sizes of the programs may result in limited course offerings. During data collection, the institutes' catalogs showed extensive lists of hospitality management courses in the fields of hotel/lodging, foodservice, event management, and so on. However, it may be that only a small fraction of the course list is actually offered to students. The study by Ayoun and Palakurthi (2008) showed that the number of courses offered each semester received the lowest satisfaction score from doctoral students. One can deduce that schools do not offer classes that have not been selected by a set number of students because of monetary and faculty issues. In the case of hospitality doctoral programs, program directors and administrators should consider more flexibility with student numbers and course offerings. Although there will naturally be financial restrictions, more courses should be opened to students for the sake of a positive marketing tool, if not just to benefit the students' learning.

Hospitality Industry Experience

Overall, admission requirements showed little variation other than in work experience. Although less than half of the sample institutions required industry experience as an admission requirement, most of those programs specifically demanded managerial experience. This finding indicates that more program leaders and administrators value peer learning among students in graduate classrooms through the dynamics of different industry backgrounds. This master's of business administration–style admission requirement can enhance overall classroom interactions and thus can be used to recruit qualified students who have adequate knowledge of the field.

In contrast, the fact that more than half of the sample did not require students to have industry experience is a concern. The students in doctoral

Table 5. Required examinations.

Institution	Preliminary Exam		Doctoral Committee for Final Dissertation
	Contents	Time	
Auburn University	Written and oral exams of area of emphasis, core hospitality management knowledge, and research methods (or grant proposal)		Four graduate faculty members, no more than one can be non-Auburn faculty with terminal degree in the major area
Iowa State University	Written exam (open book) with three questions on the major focus area, supporting area within program, and research methods	6 months before final defense, exam spread over 3 days, two attempts granted	Five graduate faculty members, including three from the major area; members from outside the program must be included
Kansas State University	Written and oral exams on foodservice and hospitality, research methods/statistics, program administration and higher education, and support areas	7 months before final defense	Four graduate faculty members, including one from outside the program; an additional outside chair will be designated by the graduate school
Ohio State University	Written and oral exams	Two semesters before completion, two attempts granted	Three graduate faculty members, including one chair from within the program
Oklahoma State University	Stage 1: take-home exam on writing, analysis, and synthesis Stage 2: production of a full-length manuscript targeted to identified academic journals to be completed		Four graduate faculty members, including one member outside the program and one member not related to the major area of study
Pennsylvania State University	Written proposal of research, oral presentation of proposal, and written exam on critical thinking and statistics	Within three semesters of admission	Four graduate faculty members, including one member outside the major area of study and one member outside the program of the committee chair
Purdue University	Written and oral exams on research methodology, specialization area, and general knowledge in related areas	Before the end of the third year, after 75% of coursework is completed	Four graduate faculty members, including one active and qualified scholar outside of the program
Temple University (TU)	Written exam on methodology, primary theory area, cognate research area, and applications	Third year first semester, each section is 4–8 hr, two attempts granted	Three graduate faculty members, including one from outside the program but from TU
Texas Tech University	Written and oral exams	After completion of coursework	Three graduate faculty members, including chair or cochair from within the program
University of Massachusetts Amherst	Written exam on major and minor fields of study (additional oral exam only if necessary)	Middle of the third year, two attempts granted	Four graduate faculty members, including one from outside the program
University of Central Florida (UCF)	Written exam on research methodology/statistics and specialization Oral exam on specialization	Written: 8 hr Oral: 1 hr	Four members, including three graduate faculty of UCF; one must be from outside the program or UCF
University of Missouri (UM)	Written exam on area of expertise or any area in food science, hospitality management, or agriculture systems management Oral exam determines whether students can think quickly and express themselves in English	7 months before final defense after completion of coursework Written: 14 days Oral: 2–3 hr	Four graduate faculty members, including one from outside the program but from UM
University of Nevada at Las Vegas	Written exam on major and minor areas of study, off campus	Last semester of coursework, submit within 48 hr	Four graduate faculty members, including three within the program and one from outside the program
University of South Carolina	Written and oral exams	60 days before completion	Four members, the majority being graduate faculty from the major area; one must be from outside the program
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	Written exam (traditional, in-chamber exam format, or portfolio/synthesis of literature) and oral exam	6 months before completion	Four members with doctoral degrees; members from outside the program are not required
Washington State University	Written exam on course material, body of work and literature, and emerging streams of research in major and supporting areas Oral exam on any topic in the major or supporting fields and/or relevant methodological issues	Fifth to sixth semester, for 6 to 16 hr	Three graduate faculty members from within the program; members from outside the program are not required

programs will become the future educators in hospitality. If these students do not have adequate knowledge of the practical side of the field, this can only result in a larger gap between the academics and operations of hospitality management.

It is understandable that the need to recruit doctoral students to hospitality programs, especially newer programs, necessitates fewer impediments to admissions. In order to recruit the number of students required to maintain a doctoral program,

hospitality industry experience as an admission requirement may be significantly reduced, only recommended, or eliminated to achieve a higher pool of doctoral program applicants. This doctoral admission practice, however, may eventually lower the pool of qualified faculty candidates who have substantial industry experience. Today's faculty candidates are required to demonstrate potential for mentoring undergraduate students, providing professional services, engaging with students outside the classroom through advising student organizations, and collaborating with industry partners on research and projects. These faculty qualifications in many instances can be effectively evidenced and supported through the faculty candidates' industry background. If industry exposure continues to be deemed valuable as a desirable faculty qualification, then faculty candidates without the industry experience desired will be in a disadvantageous position in the faculty job market.

This practice of increasing the pools of doctoral applicants and subsequently faculty candidates by reducing industry experience requirements presents a conundrum. Either program administrators must provide a push strategy by requiring industry experience before accepting applicants into doctoral programs, or they need to provide a pull strategy by requiring work experience as a condition of hiring new faculty. To examine these implications, it is helpful to look at how hiring practices in hospitality education have changed over time. Almost 20 years ago, a study by Wikoff (1997) found that hospitality education administrators preferred to hire PhD-qualified faculty with substantial industry experience almost equally. However, the reality at that time was that the shortage of qualified faculty in the United States required many hospitality administrators, especially at newer, smaller programs with fewer resources, to hire faculty with only master's degrees and some industry experience. To compound the problem, very few PhD programs in hospitality management were in existence in the mid-1990s (Wikoff, 1995).

Now, 20 years later, the landscape in hospitality higher education has changed dramatically. More hospitality programs offering PhD degrees are available in the United States for faculty preparation. Furthermore, because of more prescriptive accreditation criteria and the increased focus on research and grant funding in institutions of higher education, pressure to hire PhDs in hospitality management has been intensified (Phelan, Mejia, & Hertzman, 2013). Woods, Cho, and Schmidgall (2009) found that faculty applying for assistant professor positions need to focus on the following criteria in ranked order: (a) PhD or equivalent terminal degree, (b) research

(publication and presentations), and (c) hospitality industry work experience. As can be noted in recent studies, industry experience has taken a backseat to doctoral qualifications and research productivity.

To compound this issue, it is estimated that approximately half of current faculty in hospitality higher education will retire within the next decade (Griffith, 2011). The need to hire more faculty at a faster pace with mandated PhD and research requirements has shaped and will continue to shape how new faculty prepare to be competitive in the search process. In order to fill the growing need for new faculty, time spent earning the PhD and increasing research productivity will likely imply time away from attaining industry experience, causing a tradeoff.

Whether administrators and faculty use a push or a pull approach to encouraging industry experience as either a criterion for admission to doctoral programs or a criterion for hiring new faculty, it is the hospitality programs that must take responsibility for creating expectations of qualifications for new faculty. If the approach is to hire PhD faculty with more research and little or no industry experience, faculty may find it difficult to teach applied information in the classroom and conduct applied research for the industry.

Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is a major requirement for degree completion. That is why there is an emphasis on the importance of a student's doctoral committee. A doctoral committee exists for multiple reasons: to evaluate, review, and approve the student's dissertation research proposal; to develop the student's plan of study; to guide research activities; to oversee the writing and defense of the dissertation; to maintain high standards of scholarship and ethical behavior; and to administer correction and disciplinary actions when necessary.

The committee's crucial role in a student's degree completion was explained further in D'Andrea's (2002) study. In the study to identify obstacles to the completion of doctoral degrees in education, it was suggested that many students failed because they had difficulty effectively planning and writing their dissertations. Also, personal aspects such as procrastination, an inability to work independently, and unrealistic expectations of workloads contributed to the attrition of doctoral students. Regular doctoral meetings with the student and the recording of feedback being exchanged at the meetings would help diminish the identified obstacles, resulting in faster completion rates. Furthermore, the study mentioned that having a structured timeline and

setting goals also assist students in the writing process. This may explain why most of the sample in the present study required dissertation hours to be more than 25% of the total course hours. Having mandatory dissertation course hours would provide the structure that students need to reach completion efficiently.

Conclusion

This study's purpose was to compile a general profile of hospitality doctoral programs in the United States. Although each program has its own identity and unique curriculum, this article successfully summarized all details and thus provides a snapshot of hospitality doctoral programs in the United States. The findings of this article may be useful to prospective graduate students in choosing graduate schools and to graduate faculty and administrators in comparing programs and finding niches to develop a competitive edge. Further research on a national scale, or comparisons between the United States and other countries with well-known hospitality programs, could give deeper insight into hospitality higher education.

Moreover, although we endeavored to obtain the most current and accurate data, some discrepancies may exist because information was not updated on each institution's Web site. Finally, the relatively short review of the literature reflects the immature nature of the hospitality field in academia generally and assessments of the field in higher education specifically. Because this was an exploratory study, we anticipated a lesser need for extensive review of past studies, but we were also met with a shortage in supply. We hope that this study will make a significant contribution in the aspect of literature regarding hospitality management in higher education.

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Appendix

List of Program Web Sites

- Auburn University—http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/ndhm/
- Iowa State University—http://www.aeshm.hs.iastate.edu/graduate-programs/hm/
- Kansas State University—http://www.humec.k-state.edu/hmd/
- Ohio State University—http://ehe.osu.edu/human-sciences/graduate/consumer-sciences/
- Oklahoma State University—http://humansciences.okstate.edu/hrad/component/option,com_frontpage/Itemid,1/

- Pennsylvania State University—http://www.hhd.psu.edu/shm/graduate
- Purdue University—http://www.purdue.edu/hhs/htm/
- Temple University—http://sthm.temple.edu/cms/
- Texas Tech University—http://www.depts.ttu.edu/hs/hrm/rhim/academics_masters.php
- University of Massachusetts—https://www.isenberg.umass.edu/programs/doctoral/
- University of Central Florida—https://hospitality.ucf.edu/academics/graduate-programs/
- University of Missouri—http://hospitality.missouri.edu/graduate/
- University of Nevada at Las Vegas—http://www.unlv.edu/hotel
- University of South Carolina—http://www.hrsm.sc.edu/hrtm/
- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University—http://www.htm.pamplin.vt.edu/
- Washington State University—http://gradschool.wsu.edu/degrees/factsheet/1308/