Graduate Student Handbook

Master of Science in Hospitality Management

College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership

University of South Florida
Sarasota-Manatee

Updated April 2016

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THE M.S. IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

- The M.S. in Hospitality Management requires a total minimum of 36 credit hours.
  - The courses are offered during the Fall and Spring semesters only.
  - Thesis and project credits can be taken in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters.
- The M.S. in Hospitality Management degree may be obtained through a thesis track or a professional project track.
  - The thesis project involves original research and contributes to the hospitality body of knowledge.
  - The professional project involves problem solving and contributes to the hospitality practice.
- Students are required to decide their degree tracks after completing 18 credit hours.

CURRICULUM

- 18 Credit Hours of Hospitality Management courses (Core Courses)
- Students in the thesis option: 9 credit hours of electives (Specialization Courses), 3 credit hours of statistics, and 6 credit hours of thesis.
  - For students pursuing the thesis option, a graduate level statistics course must be taken.
- Students in the non-thesis option: 12-15 credit hours of electives (Specialization Courses) and 3-6 credit hours of professional project.
  - For students pursuing the non-thesis option, students have the option of taking a graduate statistics course in place of one of the electives.

CORE COURSES (18 CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED)

HMG 6246	Organizational Effectiveness for Hospitality
HMG 6296	Strategic Management and Competitive Strategy for Hospitality and Tourism
HMG 6477	Financial Management for the Hospitality Industry
HMG 6507	Hospitality and Tourism Information Systems and Technology
HMG 6586	Research Methods for Hospitality and Tourism
HMG 6596	Marketing Leadership for Hospitality and Tourism

THESIS OPTION (18 CREDIT HOURS)*

TBD	A Graduate Level Statistics course (with advisor's approval)
HMG 6972	Master's Thesis (6 credit hours)
3 Specialization Courses (electives) chosen from the list below	

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT OPTION (18 CREDIT HOURS)*

HMG 6916	Master's Professional Project (1-6 credit hours)
4-5 Specialization Courses (electives) chosen from the list below	

SPECIALIZATION COURSES

HMG 6257	Graduate Seminar in Hospitality Management
HMG 6259	Graduate Seminar in Lodging Management
HMG 6267	Graduate Seminar in Restaurant and Foodservice Management
HMG 6335	Graduate Seminar in Club Management
HMG 6756	Graduate Seminar in Convention and Exhibition Management
HMG 6908	Independent Study
HMG 6938	Special Topics in Hospitality
HMG 6946	Graduate Internship

- Students are required to decide their degree tracks after completing 18 credit hours.
- Students are required to complete the CHTL Project or Thesis Registration Approval Form (page 15) with the CHTL Graduate Advisor in order to register for the project or thesis.
- Curriculum progression and scheduling options are subject to change.

M.S. PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

Students who choose the non-thesis professional track must complete a professional project. The professional project is designed to demonstrate analytical skills that students have acquired during their graduate education. Ideally, the professional project should be a study of an issue that can be applied to the student's professional job. For example, students working in hotels may conduct an evaluation of some program or policy that is relevant to their hotels. A student who is not working in the industry may also complete the professional paper by evaluating a general issue in the hospitality industry (e.g., consumer behaviors, employee issues, sustainable development, technology adoption, etc.). The project involves comprehensive research and proposed solutions or recommendations to the issue based on the research. Some examples of projects that have been executed include: consulting projects for an organization, an analysis of a research question employing statistical analysis, and business plans.

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT FORMAT

The professional project format should be in a style related to the student's professional background. The specific format to be used, page requirement, citation method, etc. will be decided upon at the proposal meeting with your faculty sponsor and may vary from student-to-student based on the faculty sponsor's requirements.

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT SPONSOR

Discuss your professional project research idea with a member of the faculty from the College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership who you feel would be an appropriate person to be your project sponsor. This should be someone with whom you have taken courses and who knows your work.

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT REGISTRATION

Complete the CHTL Project or Thesis Registration Form (page 15 of this handbook) with the CHLT Graduate Advisor. Bring the form to your Faculty Sponsor for his or her signature and submit the form to the CHLT Program Advisor. You will be given a CRN number so that you may register for your project course.

M.S. THESIS

Students in the thesis track must complete a thesis. The thesis is designed to be a theoretically guided examination of a hospitality issue. It contributes to the hospitality body of knowledge through original research, which tests hypotheses derived from theories relevant to the hospitality industry. The thesis can be similar to a professional paper insofar as it may be an evaluation of a program or policy issue, but the evaluation should be based on results drawn from research involving data analysis. Ideally, the thesis outcome is similar to a journal article on a topic that makes a contribution to the field.

THESIS FORMAT

The thesis format is that of a journal article. It should begin with an introduction and literature review followed by a methodology section, a results section, and a discussion section.

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- The thesis advisor and at least two additional faculty members constitute the student's thesis committee.
- Two members must be from the College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership, including the thesis advisor.
- The Dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership must approve the supervisory committee.
- Upon completing 18 credit hours, M.S. students must have a thesis advisor and committee, and must submit the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Appointment Form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

THESIS REGISTRATION

Complete the CHTL Project or Thesis Registration Form (page 15 of this handbook) with the CHLT Graduate Advisor. Bring the form to your Faculty Advisor for his or her signature and submit the form to the CHLT Program Advisor. You will be given a CRN number so that you may register for your thesis course.

Step 1

Discuss your anticipated thesis topic with a member of the faculty who would be an appropriate person to be your thesis advisor. This should be someone with whom you have taken courses and who knows your work.

The student then **chooses a thesis advisor**, who must be a graduate faculty member in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Leadership. In consultation with the thesis advisor, the student then selects two additional faculty members to serve on their thesis committee (one of which must be a faculty member in the College of Hospitality & Tourism Leadership). Students will discuss their thesis with these two additional faculty members and ask them if they are willing to serve on their committee. Once three members agree to serve on the committee, the student fills out a Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Appointment Form (page 13), obtains appropriate faculty signatures, and submits the form in to the Graduate Program Coordinator (contact information on page 16).

This first step should be completed when the student completes 18 credit hours.

Step 2

Students should start working on their thesis proposal after they turn in the appointment form. The 6 to 10 page thesis proposal should contain the following: title page, introduction, literature review, methodology, and substantive working references.

Step 3

Students submit their 6 to 10 page thesis proposal to their thesis advisor and all other committee members. Students may be asked by their thesis advisor to give a presentation of their proposal to the committee for approval. Once all thesis committee members have tentatively approved proposal, the student must fill out the M.S. Thesis Proposal Approval form (page 14) with signatures from all committee members, and submit to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

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[1] *Thesis usually takes one year (two semesters) to complete. The timeline in this handbook is designed based on the one-year duration. However, the real time required may vary depending on the study topic. The students must discuss this with their major professors and set the appropriate timeline in order to graduate on time.*

Full-time students should have their proposals approved at least one semester before their planned graduation semester. For example, if you plan to graduate in the Spring semester, the Thesis Proposal Approval Form must be submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator by the end of previous Fall semester.

Step 4

The student **writes the thesis** with the thesis advisor's guidance and regular input from committee members. Typically thesis projects are **40 to 60 pages in length** (double spaced). Students should work closely with their thesis advisors, and meet regularly. It is advised that students work with their thesis advisors to create a scheduled meeting time that works well for both. Students must remember to share their thesis progress with other members of their committee as it is required to be deemed acceptable by all thesis committee members.

Step 5

During the semester the student wishes to graduate, he or she must be registered for at least 3 credit hours. **Be aware of the following deadlines:**

- Deadline for applying to graduate.
- Deadline for format check at Graduate School.
- Latest possible days for thesis defenses (you must allow your committee enough time to read your thesis prior to your defense and yourself enough time to make any changes as a result of your defense prior to depositing).
- Deadline for depositing (submitting) final copies of thesis to Graduate School (*it's usually the 12th week of the semester. Please check the Graduate School website for the exact date*).

Please check the Graduate School web page for appropriate forms and deadlines: http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.php

USF Tampa Graduate School Contact *(Please check graduate school website for updated contact information)***:** etd@grad.usf.edu

Step 6

When the thesis advisor believes the student is ready, the student shares the final thesis draft with the committee and **arranges an oral defense of the thesis**. Preparation and distribution of preliminary copies of the thesis are the responsibility of the student. The committee members should be given copies of the completed thesis **at least** two weeks prior to the scheduled defense date.

During the oral defense, the student presents his/her research. At the completion of the presentation, the committee members will ask questions of the student. Following the committee questions, the audience has an opportunity to ask additional questions. The student's thesis defense is open to public. Student must invite the CHTL faculty and graduate students to the thesis defense at least one week in advance.

The student's thesis committee has final approval of the oral defense presentation and the written product. Following the oral defense meeting, the committee convenes without the student present to assess the student's performance in defending the research. The committee may require modifications of the thesis following the defense and before granting its approval. If the modifications are extensive, the committee may ask the student to undergo another formal presentation and/or committee meeting.

Step 7

When the thesis defense is passed, the title page is signed by all committee members. **The student has sole responsibility for assuring that all forms related to the proposal and thesis are completed, and all work related to the thesis conforms to the accepted style and format of the USF Graduate School.** Specific thesis format requirements can be found at http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-Format-Requirements-Resources.php

Samples of approved theses can be found at http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd/

Step 8

After submitting the thesis to USF Graduate School, students are encouraged to edit the paper and submit it to an academic journal within 6 months, with the thesis committee members' approval. The student will be first author, followed by the thesis advisor, and other committee members. After 6 months, students automatically waive their rights to publish their theses as the first author. The thesis advisor will then prepare the paper and submit it to an academic journal as first author, and the student will be listed as second author.

4 Step ETD Submission Process Benchmarks and Checklist

Overview of Critical Steps
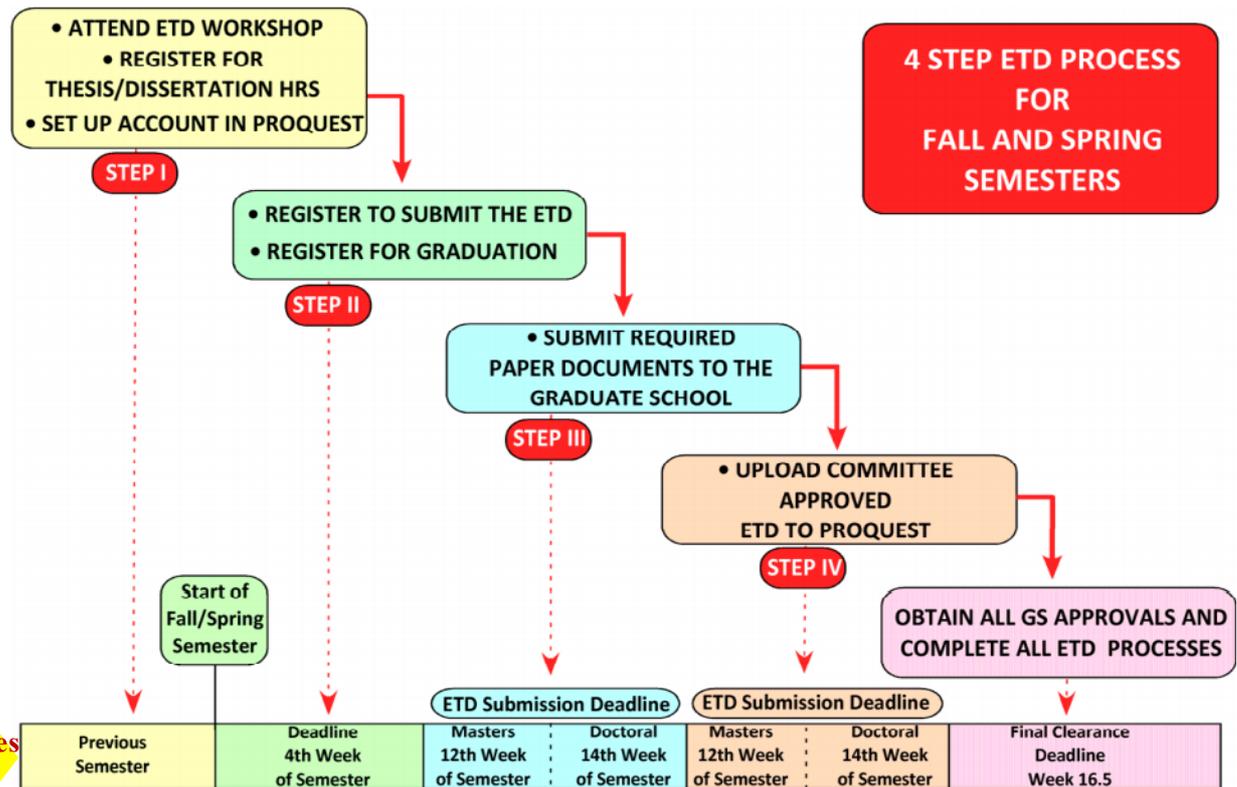
Updated Oct, 2012

Check USF Graduate School for the latest and most accurate information
http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.php

The student has sole responsibility to obtain the listed information from USF graduate school and follow the 4 step ETD submission process/deadlines.

THESIS PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The thesis proposal should be approximately 6-10 pages long, exclusive of title page, and references.

TITLE PAGE

Supply the proposed title of your thesis, your name, degree program, and the names of your director and two committee members (with signature/date lines for them to indicate acceptance of the proposal).

INTRODUCTION

Establish what question or questions you are trying to answer, and explain why those questions are significant to the field in which you are working.

This section should include both a **description** of your project and a **justification** for undertaking it. The justification should establish (a) the significance of your research agenda (why your question is worthy of attention); and (b) its relation to existing research in the field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relation to existing research should be explained by supplying a **review of the current scholarly literature** relating to your topic. Discuss the scholarly work you plan to build upon, as well as other work you plan to respond to and challenge. Specific works and their approaches or arguments should be discussed in some detail. Then locate your thesis within this scholarly discourse surrounding your topic. Finally, present your conceptual framework and hypotheses (or research questions) based on your literature review.

METHODS

Explain what method or methods you intend to employ that will best enable you to answer the question(s) you have chosen to investigate. Where relevant, describe the theoretical basis for the validity of your approach.

Identify the primary source material you plan to work with. Make clear how your sources will suffice to answer the questions posed by your thesis. If some of your sources are in archival or special collections, explain how you will access them within the timeframe of your thesis.

Discuss the proposed data analysis methods you plan to use to test your hypotheses or answer your research questions. Briefly present the anticipated results.

THESIS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT FORM

PART 1. STUDENT INFORMATION

Name		USF ID	
Email		Phone	

PART 2. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

(3 Committee Members Required, with 2 of them from CHTL)

Thesis Advisor's Name	
Signature	
Email	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

PART 3. DEAN APPROVAL

College Dean's Name	
Signature	
Date	

THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

Student Name	
USF ID	
Email	
Proposal Title	
Expected start date of data collection	

Thesis Advisor's Name	
Signature	
Email	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

Committee Member's Name	
Signature	
Date	

CHTL PROJECT OR THESIS REGISTRATION APPROVAL FORM

Student Name	
USF ID	
Semester & Year of Course	
Check One: ☐ HMG 6916 Master's Project OR ☐ HMG 6972 Master's Thesis	
Approved Course Credit Hours _____ credits	
Topic/Title	
Paper Submission Date	
Presentation Date (if applicable)	

CHTL Graduate Advisor Name	
Signature	
Date	

Faculty Advisor Name	
Signature	
Date	

Student Signature	
Student Email	
Date	

NOTE:
- **Master's Project/Thesis courses are set up as an Independent Study course. Faculty & Student will make appointments to meet.**
- **Send completed form to CHTL Program Coordinator Amanda Kulaw (SMCA319 or akulaw@sar.usf.edu) to have the course added to Banner. Once the course is created, the coordinator will relay the CRN # to Advisor, Faculty and Student. Student can then proceed to register for the course.**

   CRN#: _____ (to be given by the CHTL Program Coordinator)

CONTACT INFORMATION

CHTL Graduate Program Coordinator

Dr. Cihan Cobanoglu

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Office: A319

CHTL Program Coordinator

Ms. Amanda Kulaw

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Phone: 941-359-4710

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CHTL Student Services Advisor

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