**Coastal Carolina University  
E. Craig Wall, Sr. College of Business Administration**

**HRTM388: The Service Experience**

HRTM 388 - The Service Experience (3 credits) (Prereq: HRTM 101 or HRTM 150) The course covers the unique principles of managing and marketing the guest service experience. Students develop an in-depth understanding of service design, service quality, value co-creation, service culture and environment, employee training and motivation, planning and delivery of guest services, and service failure and recovery. F, S.

**Required Textbook: Students** will be tested on 14 chapters from the textbook and the textbook is **mandatory** in order to successfully complete this course.

* Primary Text: Ford, Robert C. and Sturman, Michael C. (2019) *Managing Hospitality Organizations: Achieving Excellence in the Guest Experience, Los Angeles, CA: Sage*.
* Case studies: There may be five (5) cases that students will be required to read and analyze, four of which students will purchase from Harvard Business Publishing and one of which is based on an episode of Hotel Impossible, a syndicated show aired on The Learning Channel. The episode we will study this semester is Season 1, Episode 1, ‘The Gurney’s Inn’. Students will need to purchase access to the video at the following site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=M71pHLeJDeg>

**Course Objectives**

1. Apply hospitality service strategy.
2. Evaluate how to staff hospitality services.
3. Design a hospitality service system.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply planning principles to service businesses at the unit level.
2. Explain how the service environment can impact guests and employees.
3. Relate an organization’s culture to service success.
4. Describe how to find and hire people who will give excellent guest service.
5. Describe training methods for hospitality organizations.
6. Explain how hospitality organizations motivate their employees to provide outstanding service.
7. Describe how, when, and why service organizations encourage or empower guests to help create their own service experience.
8. Explain how the service setting communicates information about the quality and value of the service experience.
9. Demonstrate how to design a service delivery system.
10. Explain solutions for managing the wait for service.
11. Discuss how to achieve continuous improvement in the experience provided to guests..
12. Describe how organizations should respond when the service experience fails to meet guest expectations.

**Evaluation**

Grading components will be weighted as follows in determining your grade for the course:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** |  | **Points** | **Weight (%)** |
| Chapter Quiz | 10 Chapter Quizzes\* (10 questions each) | 200 points | 25 |
| Final Exam | 50 Questions (2 points each) | 100 points | 13 |
| Case Analysis | 5 cases (40-60 points each) | 250 points | 31 |
| Applied Learning Assignments | 5 assignments (50 points each) | 250 points | 31 |
| **Total** |  | **770 points** | **100 %** |

**Chapter Quizzes:** There are 14 chapter quizzes in total.

**Example Active and experiential learning:** Students will engage in active and experiential learning through a combination of at least ten (10) cases studies and applied learning experiences such as, but not limited to, the following:

1. Mystery Shopper Experience: Select any service organization to visit as a mystery shopper. From the mystery shopping experience, write a paper about your mystery shopping experience. The paper should include an assessment that demonstrates how you reached your conclusions about the quality of that experience. In other words, identify specific factors, individually and collectively that influenced your conclusions about the service quality and value of the experience. , as well as provide a description in your paper about how those factors (individually and collectively) influenced your determination. Include a copy of a listing of factors you assessed in an appendix. .

2. Environmental Setting: Find an organization whose product is intangible or nearly all intangible and evaluate how it uses environmental design cues (servicescape) to make the intangible tangible. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

3. Strong Culture: Find a service organization that has a strong culture (not Disney or Gaylord) and find out how they create that culture (that is, what cultural cues, training, managerial/employee incentives/communications/etc are used to create and define the service culture). Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

4. Training: Find a service organization and find out how it trains and/or selects its employees to represent its brand experience. How do they determine what behaviors or actions employees must display to create an emotional bond with customers that make their experience memorable. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

5. Emotional Labor: Find a job that has emotional labor requirements and evaluate how the organization or the person doing the job has found a way to cope with the emotional labor requirements. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

6. Customer Co-production: Find a situation where the guest is required to co-produce the service experience (beyond the simple and obvious ones). Describe and evaluate how the organization prepares/supervises/evaluates its employees and its guests to successfully participate to coproduce the experience. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

7. Delivery System: Pick any one of the three options below.

a. Find a non-theme park waiting line and evaluate how well it is being managed both mathematically and psychologically by the organization using what we know about waiting lines. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve

b. Find an organization that uses forecasting techniques to predict their staffing and product supply needs and find out how it gathered the data, how it uses the prediction models, what statistical techniques it uses, and what it thinks its success rate is and why.

8. Service Quality: Take the service quality template from the book chapter (Berry et al) and apply it to any service experience you wish. Did the template capture the quality and/or value of your experience? Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

9. Service Failure & Recovery: Watch a service failure and see how the organization recovers from the failure. Evaluate the recovery strategy from the text’s standpoint. (Note: You are ethically bound to not intentionally cause or create a service failure to satisfy the requirements of this course). Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve so the organization doesn’t have this failure again?

10. Service Innovation: Find an organization that is innovating a service experience and assess its process for innovation. After describing how they developed and introduced the innovation, evaluate the effectiveness of the way in which the experience was innovated. Given your newly acquired knowledge what recommendations would you offer to them to improve?

11. Price-Quality Analysis

* Define the targeted quality level for the property in which you work, or your favorite property. Quality should be identified by industry segment (e.g. economy, mid-scale, upscale, luxury, etc.), as well as by quality level of tangible and intangible components of the products/services (e.g. utilizes only prime beef, provides highly personalized service, etc.)
* List the firm’s direct competitors as well as indirect competitor’s one quality-level above and below the firm.
* Explain how pricing impacts the perception of quality.  Shop pricing levels, utilizing the Internet and “shop calls”, for the firm and its competitors; determine if the pricing level is appropriate based upon quality and the level of value provided to the customer/guest.
* Determine if the firm offers different prices to different market segments; if seasonal, how does the firm alter it’s pricing during the off-season versus the peak-season
* What in your opinion is the lowest price the firm cam charge in order to drive demand for the business without negatively impacting the brand’s image?  Explain the reason for your decision.

12. HRTM Gap Analysis: In HRTM our business and community stakeholders, who are ultimately our HRTM customers, tell us they need workers with good customer service skills, and managers with the ability to develop successful businesses that serve the needs of both travelers to, and residents of, our resort destination area. In 1999 the Wall College of Business Administration at CCU created an academic concentration of courses within its Management major. In 2006 the curriculum was expanded to be a free standing major called Resort Tourism Management. The major includes 21 credit hours and requires students to take the entire CBAD foundation of courses and requires students to complete 390 internship work hours. In 2015, an 18 credit-hour minor was created for non-business majors who wanted to study HRTM.  In 2016 the name of the major and the minor were changed to Hospitality, Resort, and Tourism Management.

Based on your experience in industry and with the HRTM program give examples of each of the five gaps discussed below that you believe are reducing either the number of jobs industry is willing to offer to current students and graduates, or reducing the wages or other benefits that the industry and community is willing to pay the students/graduates. Assuming that the HRTM faculty and administrators are the managers of the HRTM program at CCU, and that the tourism industry and its partners in the financial sector and community government, are the HRTM program’s end customers, what recommendations would you make to HRTM program managers that you believe would reduce the service gaps below? Again, start by giving examples of each of these gaps below that the program may be experiencing. For example, what are the expectations of students? What are the expectations of management? What are the “specifications” with respect to the expected skills that management expects interns and graduates to have? What are the specifications of the HRTM program that HRTM students expect? What is the quality of the HRTM program, as perceived by students with respect to those specifications? How is that level of quality being communicated by the program both directly and indirectly?

*Gap 1:*  Consumer expectations and management perceptions

*Gap 2:* Management perceptions and specifications for services provided

*Gap 3:* Specifications and actual delivery

*Gap 4:*  Service delivery and external communications

*Gap 5:* Expected service and perceived service

**Example case studies include but are not limited to the following:**

* Hotel Impossible: The Gurney’s Inn, The Travel Channel
* Southwest Airlines’ Nonstop Culture…, Harvard Business Publishing (HBP)
* Ritz Carlton Hotel Co. (HBP)
* Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (HBP)
* Four Seasons Goes to Paris (HBP)
* Westin Hotels and Resorts (HBP)

**Grading Scale: score (percentage)**

91-100% = A (Excellent) 86-90% = B+ (Very Good) 81-85% = B (Good)  
76-80% = C+ (Above Average) 71-75% = C (Average) 66-70% = D+ (Below Average)  
61-65% = D (Poor) <61% = F (Fail)

**Example Course Calendar**

The pace of coursework is one chapter per week,

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Part #** | **Chapter** | **Topic of Discussion/Task** | **Due** |
|  |  | Mandatory Assignments (for never attended reporting) |  |
| 1 | 1 | Introduction and the nature of the service experience |  |
| 2 | Developing the service strategy and identifying Key Drivers |
| 3 | Creating the setting for service experience |
| Case | **Hotel Impossible: The Gurney’s Inn** |
| Article | **Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work (No submission required)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 4 | Culture |
| 5 | Staffing |
| 6 | Training |
| 7 | Motivation & Empowerment |
| 8 | Customer Co-Production |
| Cases | **Southwest Airlines, Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co.** |
|  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 9 | Communications |  |
| 10 | Delivery System |
| Cases | **Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd., Four Seasons Goes to Paris** |
|  | Applied Learning | **Price-Quality Analysis** |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 11 | Waiting Lines |  |
| 12 | Ensuring Service Quality |
| 13 | Service Recovery |
| 14 | Leading The Service Organization |
| Cases | **Westin Hotels and Resorts** |
| Applied Learning | **HRTM Gap Analysis** |
|  | December; 10-13 | **Final Examination due** |  |

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