

UNLV | HARRAH COLLEGE OF HOSPITALITY



**Doctor of Philosophy in Hospitality Administration
Graduate Student Handbook
2024-2025**



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Doctor of Philosophy in Hospitality Administration

Welcome From Dean Cárdenas

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality graduate programs. You are now part of one of the most prestigious hospitality management programs in the world – a position that comes with great opportunities as well as great responsibilities. It won't be easy, but it will be worth it!

As a graduate student you will certainly face new challenges, but you will do so in a nurturing, supportive environment. Our students work with a diverse group of faculty and students with varied skillsets and experiences. Together, we will support you as you progress academically through the program—helping you gain the latest skills, discover new opportunities, and connect with the future leaders of the hospitality business.

We will also provide you with the administrative assistance you need to reach your academic goals. The college's Office of Graduate Programs will guide you through our internal policies and processes and share regular updates about opportunities and resources available to hospitality graduate students. Plus, you'll have access to an award-winning Hospitality College Advising team, a dedicated librarian to help you navigate resources for research, and a Career Services Center that can connect you with mentorship, internship, and job opportunities. I also encourage you to get involved in graduate student organizations, such as our Hospitality Graduate Association, which often host network-building events.

I hope you enjoy your time at UNLV. If I can be of any assistance, please stop by my office located in the Dean's Suite of Hospitality Hall on the 4th floor or email me at david.cardenas@unlv.edu.

Thank you for choosing the Harrah College of Hospitality.

David Cárdenas, PhD

Dean, William F. Harrah College of Hospitality



William F. Harrah College of Hospitality

Vision

Our vision is to pioneer the advancement of global hospitality through innovative education, research, and service.

Mission

To fulfill our vision and achieve our top initiatives, our mission is to:

- Deliver resources and experiences that empower student, educator, and alumni success.
- Engage in cutting-edge research that advances knowledge and moves industry forward.
- Ensure our curriculum is responsive to the ever-changing needs of our constituents.
- Be the model of exceptional service to our college, university, and community.

Core Values

We will lead with our core values of being inclusive, driven, empowering, and adaptive.

Goals

1. Help students learn and grow through rigorous academics, relevant professional experiences and engaging social interactions.
2. Support and enhance faculty development, collaboration and performance.
3. Significantly increase resources to support and reward research, teaching and service.
4. Develop strong relationships and improve communications with the alumni, industry, stakeholders and community.
5. Enhance and expand facilities, resources and amenities to maintain a highly professional learning environment.
6. Establish a strong and sustainable financial structure to ensure stability and long-term success.
7. Improve the organizational and operational effectiveness of the College.

Harrah College of Hospitality Office of Graduate Programs

The Office of Graduate Programs is located in Hospitality Hall, room 347. This office provides graduate students the guidance and support needed to meet their educational goals. To learn about the policies and processes internal to hospitality graduate programs and how to connect with staff, visit [Hospitality Graduate Programs](#).

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or gradassociatdean@unlv.edu.

Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up-to-date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

Hospitality Ph.D. Program

The Ph.D. program is a 60-credit, multi-conceptual and research-based degree program designed to produce highly experienced hospitality and tourism educators and researchers. It not only focuses on preparing students to be excellent teachers at the university level, but also engages them in conducting scholarly research in hospitality and tourism management. Upon graduation, students will be able to teach and research at the university level, and work at industry and research institutions. The Ph.D. program is highly competitive, seeking motivated individuals who are committed to pursuing academic and research careers in hospitality and tourism. The program is partly supported by the Ace Denken Co. Ltd. Endowment.

A critical component of the program is the faculty. The William F. Harrah College of Hospitality includes a faculty with both research and practical experience in all facets of the hospitality and tourism industry. Faculty members regularly publish both scholarly and applied research articles and consult with the industry on operational problems and strategies.

Please refer to the Graduate College website for official deadlines:
[Graduate College Application Deadlines](#)

All documentation and application materials must be submitted through the online application system by the deadline. The admissions committee will start to review applications shortly after the deadline. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decision no later than March 15th.

[Graduate Catalog – College of Hospitality Ph.D. Hospitality Administration](#)

Contact Information

[Doctor of Philosophy - Hospitality Administration](#)

The Office of Graduate Programs in the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality is here to guide students through the degree program. Please reach out to our office or the Faculty Program Director with any questions or concerns.

Program Requirements



Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the Graduate Catalog](#).

Advisory Committee Guidelines

A doctoral advisory committee is mandatory for anyone in the Harrah College of Hospitality required to complete a dissertation for graduation. The committee must be chaired by a faculty member with full graduate standing and should include two or three additional faculty members from the Harrah College of Hospitality and one faculty member from outside the college who represents the Graduate College. The members of the committee should be chosen through consultation with the Director of the Ph.D. Program and be selected based on their area(s) of expertise in relation to the dissertation topic chosen by the student.

To confirm the members of a student's committee, the Graduate College form, "Appointment of Advisory Committee," must be completed and submitted via the Grad Rebel Gateway.

Degree Program Benchmarks

Qualifying Examination

After the first year of course work, but before the end of the fourth semester, a Qualifying Exam (Q- Exam) must be passed. This exam is based on the material covered in two courses required of all students over their first two semesters in the program: HOA 730 Statistical Analysis for Hospitality and HOA 735 Research Methodology, or their equivalent. The exam is administered based on the following:

- The Director of the Ph.D. Program solicits exam questions from the faculty teaching the required courses, conducts the exam, and distributes the completed exams to the faculty who wrote the questions for grading. The final grade determination will include a review by the Director of the Ph.D. Program.
- Students will be given two opportunities in the college computer lab without resources to pass the exam at a standard criterion of 75% on each question.
 - The first administration of the exam (two-½ days) will follow students' second semester in the program (May). Students that are determined to be below standard on one question of the entire exam will be given the opportunity to rewrite that question in a second sitting one week following the rewrite decision.
 - If the student does not meet the standard on the rewrite, the student will need to retake an entire new exam at a second administration (August) and will be placed on probation. Students retaking the exam at a second administration must meet the standard on all questions. There is not a rewrite option for those retaking the exam. Students who do not pass the exam on either attempt or do not meet their conditions of probation will be recommended to the Graduate College for separation from the Ph.D. program.

Degree Plan

The student must file an approved degree plan before the start of the third semester after admission to



the program. The degree plan must be developed in consultation with the student's Doctoral Advising Committee Chair, the Doctoral Advising Committee, the Director of the Ph.D. Program and the Executive Director of Graduate Studies and Research.

Comprehensive Examination

Simultaneous to the last semester of content-related course work (non-dissertation credits), the student must pass a major and minor area comprehensive exam. This exam is designed by the student's Doctoral Advising Committee under the direction of the Doctoral Advising Chair. This exam must be taken within five years of the admission date. The exam is administered based on the following:

- The form of the written comprehensive exam shall be committee-driven. That is, it is up to each member of the committee to decide how he/she wishes the student to demonstrate content mastery. However, a minimum of one question should address each of the student's major and minor areas of study as indicated in their approved program of study. Two to three questions must be solicited from each member of the committee. In the event that there is redundancy among the questions, the chair should request a replacement question(s) from the appropriate committee member(s). Should the committee members decide to do so, they may solicit questions from other graduate faculty members from whom the student has taken a class. Inclusion of any questions submitted by non-committee members is at the discretion of the committee.
- The written comprehensive exam will be offered two times per year at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters and may be completed off campus. After the committee chair has finalized the exam, it will be submitted to the Director of the Ph.D. Program. The Director will release the exam to the student at a designated date with a return of the completed exam to the Director within 48 hours. The director will then disseminate the exam to the committee chair, who will distribute to committee members. The grading system for the exam will be a satisfactory—unsatisfactory. Each committee member determines whether the student's answers are satisfactory. The Director will inform the student of unsatisfactory answers that require a rewrite. The rewrite will follow the same procedure as the original exam and in consultation with the student will take place within two weeks of the unsatisfactory notification. Unsatisfactory answers require a rewrite by the students within 48 hours after receiving feedback from faculty. Students who are not satisfactory after the rewrite will be placed on probation and will need to retake the comprehensive exam at the next available sitting. Students retaking the comprehensive exam the second time must be satisfactory on all questions. There is not a rewrite option for those retaking the exam. Students who are not satisfactory on either attempt or do not meet the conditions of probation will be recommended to the Graduate College for separation from the Ph.D. program. The committee chair shall inform the Director of the Ph.D. Program of the student's grade.

Dissertation

Students must successfully complete and defend a dissertation. The dissertation must be of substantial quality and length, original in thought and research, and make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in the field of hospitality administration. The dissertation process includes the following:



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- Students will be allowed to register for dissertation credits:
 - After satisfactorily completing the Comprehensive Examination
 - After presenting and gaining committee approval of the prospectus (Graduate College Form required: Prospectus Approval Form via Grad Rebel Gateway)
 - Students will be allowed to register for the second semester of dissertation credits:
 - After presenting and gaining committee approval of the College of Hospitality's Proposal Form.

NOTE: The Office of Graduate Programs helps students to secure a room location for their Final Exam. Students should email Valerie Calbert (valerie.calbert@unlv.edu) at least 3 weeks prior to exam date.

Program Timeline

Full-time students in the Doctorate in Hospitality Administration should expect to complete the program in three years. It is important for students to work closely with the Faculty PhD Program Director, their Dissertation Chair, and the Hospitality Office of Graduate Programs to ensure a timely graduation.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog. These policies should be read and understood prior to attending your first class.

Annual Review Procedures

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. [Formerly known as the Student Annual Review]. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead.

Faculty Advisors/Graduate Coordinators have the option to provide feedback to each students' submitted IDP and provide acknowledgement that they have reviewed the IDP.

Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner.

Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track UNLV metrics related to the annual productivity of all students.



Probation

If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the [Probation and Separation](#) section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

Additional Program Information

Internships

Students may choose to use an elective to spend up to two semesters completing an approved internship. Students are responsible for finding the company that will employ them (either paid or unpaid), finding a faculty member who can help mentor them through the process, and making scheduled reports on progress throughout the semester. Students must complete the Independent Study Course Registration form ([Hospitality Graduate Forms](#)) and obtain the proper signatures before being given permission to register for the Internship class. The completed form must be turned in to the Hospitality Office of Graduate Programs.

International students are required to discuss this with a representative of the Office of International Students and Scholars and complete the required forms prior to applying for this class.

Independent Study

Students may elect to use an elective to take an independent study. This class is completed through one-on-one work with a faculty member and usually focuses on a research topic of interest to both the professor and the student.

Students must complete the Independent Study Course Registration form ([Hospitality Graduate Forms](#)) and obtain the proper signatures to be granted permission to register for this course. The completed form must be submitted to the Hospitality Office of Graduate Programs.

Discipline Resources

Writing Style Guide

At the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality, students and faculty members use the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, affectionately referred to as the APA Style Guide. This guide dictates the overall format for content, citations and reference list, placement and titling of charts and figures, etc. All research papers are required to use this guide.

Important Journals

Research is an important factor in a student's graduate studies. There are many academic journals pertinent to the hospitality industry. The journals considered to be of highest value in the Harrah College of Hospitality are as follows:

- Annals of Tourism Research



- Cornell Quarterly
- International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management
- International Journal of Hospitality Management
- International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research
- Journal of Travel Research
- Tourism Management

Conferences

There are many conferences throughout the world that focus on hospitality and tourism. Faculty members and students attend conferences specific to their areas of study, but there are three that are most important in the Harrah College of Hospitality.

- The annual summer conference of the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (ICHRIE) is usually held in July of each year. In addition, this organization hosts an Asia Pacific CHRIE and a Euro-CHRIE conference.
- Regional CHRIE organizations host smaller conferences throughout the year. Harrah College of Hospitality faculty members and students participate in the West Federation Conference usually held in February.
- The main focus for students in the college, is the annual Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism, held the second week in January. This is an excellent opportunity for students to present their research with either stand-up presentations or in poster sessions. Travel to this conference is provided for master's level students on a case- by- case basis.

Organizations/Associations

The hospitality industry has many different components, and there is a professional organization (or two) for each of those individual sectors. Students are encouraged to become familiar with and join the association(s) that are closely related to their areas of interest. Many of these organizations have special membership fees for students and this is a good opportunity to become involved. A list of many of the industry organizations is on [the Harrah College of Hospitality website](#).

On campus, there are several student organizations – many related to the national/international industry associations. The [list of student organizations](#) is also on the website.

One student organization is particular to graduate students – the [Hospitality Graduate Student Association \(HGSA\)](#). All graduate students in the college are members. Activities, opportunities to travel to targeted conferences, and company tours are planned throughout the year by an active board.

Harrah College of Hospitality Resources

Office of Graduate Programs

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Location: Hospitality Hall, Room 347 **Phone:**
702-895-5413 | **FAX:** 702-895-2713



Staff Contacts: Hospitality Office of Graduate Programs Staff

Dedicated to “Graduate Student Success,” the Office of Graduate Programs provides support to all students as they move through their academic careers. Services include but are not limited to the following:

- Admissions and onboarding of new students.
- Tracking of graduate student progress and assistance with processing of different forms.
- Program advising.
- Assisting students through their dissertation defense: room scheduling, inviting faculty and students, and preparing forms for committee signatures.
- Graduate Assistantship assignments.

Bob Boughner Career Service Center

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 7:30 am to 5 pm

Location: Hospitality Hall, Room 125

Phone: 702-895-5554

Email: boughnercareerservices@unlv.edu

Working in tandem with UNLV Career Services, the Bob Boughner Career Services Center provides opportunities for Harrah College of Hospitality students and alumni to gain access to a broad range of employers, employment information, and opportunities.

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ● Job Announcements | ● Management Training Programs |
| ● Career Shift | ● Career Link |
| ● Hospitality Listserv | ● Career Counseling |
| ● Resume Review | ● Cover Letter Review |
| ● Mentor Program | ● Career Mixer |

Harrah College of Hospitality – Dedicated Research Librarian

The William F. Harrah College of Hospitality has their own dedicated research librarian, Lateka Grays (lateka.grays@unlv.edu or 702-895-2137) for students to connect as they are doing their graduate research. To learn more about the library resources, visit [Hospitality Graduate Student Resources](#).



University Resources

The Graduate Academy: Innovative Leadership, Professional, and Career Development The goal of the [Graduate Academy](#) is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

Academic Success Center

The goal of the [Academic Success Center](#) is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association

With an alumni base 140,000 strong, the [UNLV Alumni Association](#) offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the [commencement office](#) is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for [graduation on time](#) and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College [Student Services Team](#) and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College [RPC Team](#)

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the [Office of Diversity Initiatives](#) is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [DRC](#) is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive



appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

[International Students and Scholars \(ISS\)](#) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The [Jean Nidetch Women's Center](#) is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection

[The Intersection](#) is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries

[UNLV Libraries](#) has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The [Graduate & Professional Student Association](#) serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The [Office of Student Conduct](#) is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:



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- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
 - Establishing accountability for student choices;
 - Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
 - Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center

The [Military and Veteran Service Center](#) is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarship Office

The [Financial Aid & Scholarships Office](#) supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.



The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the [online reporting form](#), by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Revisions Update Log

Date of Last Revision	Revised By	Summary of Changes
May 16, 2018	Gael Hees	Changed name of college, vision, and mission.
February 18, 2020	Rhonda McElroy	Updated format and minor changes to various sections.
March 25, 2021	Rhonda McElroy	Updated general information throughout handbook. Faculty handbook approval: 4/6/2021 4 Yes and 0 No.
February 18, 2022	Rhonda McElroy	Only the handbook dates were updated to 2022-2023.
March 23, 2023	Rhonda McElroy	Updated the dates, office locations, and phone number.
March 25, 2024	Diane Wrightman	Updated Dean's Welcome