

Rayven Crisafulli, CMP, CMP-HC

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ACADEMIC SERVICE

Instructor, Event Management Summer, Fall 2021 | Spring, Summer, Fall 2022 | Spring 2023

- Created lecture content and assignments for HFT 2750, Event Management. Redesigned course content to provide a broad understanding of the events industry, event studies, theories surrounding event planning, as well as foundational skills for planning and executing events of all kinds. Practical application of knowledge was emphasized and assignments were created with business application and ability for future use in mind. Students were given the opportunity to plan and execute a real event as a part of the class's course work and projects. Managed both a residential and online section of the course with an average of 100-120 students per semester. Extensive positive feedback has been received from student evaluations and emails to the professor and can be provided upon request.

Graduate Student Teacher of the Year Finalist Academic Year 2022-2023

- Nominated as a Graduate Student Teacher of the Year award, a University-wide and highly competitive award. One of 13 students notified of finalist status in December 2022. Final awards will be announced March 2023.

Accepted Speaker for The Special Event 2023 March 2023

- Accepted as a speaker for the Special Event, a national annual conference for event industry professionals. The annual attendance for this event averages over 1000+. Lecture topic: The Science Behind Event Experience: Elevating for Improved ROI & Attendee Satisfaction

THEM Department Service Excellence Award & Scholarship January 2022

- Awarded the THEM Service Excellence Award & Scholarship for creative teaching and communication efforts for the department.

Communications Coordinator, Dept. of Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management January 2021- Current

- Directed the communication efforts for the department, and supervised three student assistants. Created new marketing materials for the degree, updated website content, planned and oversaw social media content, designed and distributed two weekly newsletters. Also planned and managed department outreach events (Pizza with THEM) and participated in the planning and management of exhibit booths during University events and fairs. Currently working on a website refresh for the department, with a goal of increasing the number of students in the major. SEO optimization, website copy, and overall aesthetics for the department website will be updated in the coming weeks.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Convention Sales & Services Spring 2021

- Created lecture content and assignments for the HFT 4517, Convention Sales & Services under the supervision of Dr. Annamarie Sisson. Served as the unofficial instructor for the course for the duration of the semester.

Guest Lecturer, UF Field Experience Class – Douglas DeMichele, PhD Fall 2015 to Current

- Gave an hour-long presentation each semester to students in Dr. DeMichele's Field Experience class on *Transitioning from a Student to a Professional*. Conducted mock-interviews, resume review and job application coaching for students.

Senior Event Management Internship Supervisor Spring 2016

- Served as the senior internship supervisor for a UF event management student. Provided training in event logistics management including but not limited to budgeting, speaker management, graphic design, website design and management, email marketing, exhibit marketing, and venue contract management. Guided the student on best practices for professional client interaction. Supervised student onsite during events, providing opportunities for on-the-job learning and growth.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Conference Manager

September 2016 to December 2020

University of Florida Department of Continuing Medical Education, Gainesville, FL

- *Supervisory Experience:* Directed operations of the event services provided by the Department of Continuing Medical Education. Directly supervised and trained event planners, and onsite event staff for all events. Acted as main source of communication for clients throughout the planning process as well as onsite. Served as an Internship Supervisors for UF THEM students during their senior internship. Provided on-the-job training and instruction in all areas of event management for interns.
- *Event Management:* Supervised all planning and participated in implementation of 15-18 large conferences held throughout the U.S. each year. Planned and executed over 80 events since 2014. Designed exhibit marketing materials and coordinated exhibit solicitation. Recruited as many as 30 exhibitors per event, bringing in over \$275,000 in exhibit income in 2019. Oversaw grant submissions for all events, and obtained over \$154,000 in grant revenue in 2019 and \$189,000 in 2018. Managed website and marketing design and distribution for events. Created budgets for and oversaw over ~\$780,000 in event revenue and expenditures annually. Managed logistics for upwards of 100 speakers and upwards of 300 participants per event. Negotiated venue and vendor contracts, obtaining significant discounts on food and beverage and room rates on all contracts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, directed emergency operations procedures for cancelling events and created strategic plans to relocate live events to online platforms.
- *Benchmarking and Strategic Planning:* Conducted annual benchmarking of event services offered by the department. Developed and implemented new procedures that streamlined and improved services provided and increased the department's competitiveness in the industry. Implemented strategies to determine client, and sponsor perceived ROI, and developed plans to increase their ROI. Developed long and short-term financial goals for the events division and implemented plans to obtain those goals. Created strategic plans and resources for 2020-2021 events affected by the COVID-19 pandemic that facilitated their move to online platforms. Created and marketed new Virtual Event Planning Services for the department that increased anticipated event revenue for the year.

Owner, Lead Planner

May 2019 to Current

White Magnolia Weddings & Events, LLC, Gainesville, FL

- Founded and managed the daily operations of the business including workflow management, marketing and sales strategy, website design and copywriting, SEO strategies, accounting and financial strategy, and general strategic planning. Served as the lead planner for clients receiving wedding management services (day-of coordination) and full service wedding planning. Provided services including, but not limited to, client education on vendor hiring best practices and financial best practices, vendor sourcing and management, contract negotiations, budget creation and management, wedding design, timeline creation, and wedding day management. Provided a high-touch client experience throughout planning and execution of the wedding. Utilized Aisle Planner, a pre-eminent platform for planning weddings to enhance communication and the overall client experience Worked with UF event management students as volunteer wedding day assistants, and provided training and instruction during their time working with our team.

Gainesville Elopements, Gainesville, FL

September 2020 to December 2022

- Created a subset of White Magnolia Weddings & Events that provides couples with an all-inclusive elopement experience that includes all the vendors necessary for an elopement. Conducted market research to determine the best format for the elopement packages as well as best practices for marketing. Sourced local wedding vendors to participate, and worked with each vendor to design a package that helps offset revenue losses incurred by COVID-19 related event cancellations and postponements. Managed operations for the business as well as served as the lead planner for the elopements.

Conference Planner

January 2014 to September 2016

University of Florida Department of Continuing Medical Education, Gainesville, FL

- Coordinated the logistics for and executed approximately 8-10 medical education conferences in 4 cities each year. Duties included conducting pre-conference planning meetings, venue selection, contract negotiations, marketing, vendor contracting and management, speaker management, exhibit recruitment and management, grant solicitation, participant management, and on-site coordination for events with 50-250 participants.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE & INTERESTS

Research Awards & Conference Presentations

- 1st Place Award at University-wide Graduate Student Research Day Spring 2021
 - Received award for the Social & Behavioral Sciences Category. Research: Examining host community sentiment and destination perceptions of Tampa, FL after hosting Super Bowl LV
- Accepted Poster Presenter at the 2022 ICHRIE Conference August 2022
 - Research: Examining host community sentiment and destination perceptions of Tampa, FL after hosting Super Bowl LV
- Accepted Poster Presenter at the 2022 D.K. Stanley Research Symposium March 2022
 - Research: Examining host community sentiment and destination perceptions of Tampa, FL after hosting Super Bowl LV

Current Research Projects in Progress Thesis Advisor – Rachel J.C. Fu, PhD Spring 2021 - Current

- Examining host community sentiment and destination perceptions of Tampa, FL after hosting Super Bowl LV
- Evaluating Student Experiences and the Impact of COVID Safety Measures at Campus Events
- Determining Marketing Message Impact on Event Attendee Expectations and Experience
- Examining the Current State of Event Technology & Future Trends

Undergraduate Honors Thesis, Thesis Advisor – Robert Beland, PhD Fall 2013

- Conducted research on and wrote an undergraduate honors thesis on *Determining the Most Effective Use of Social Media Marketing for Events*.

Research Interests

- Use of artificial intelligence in hospitality & event settings post COVID-19
- Impact of service quality on events
- Event consumer behavior
- Impact assessment of events
- Sustainable business development in event industries
- Strategic planning and marketing for events and event businesses
- Social media marketing strategies for events and event businesses
- Impact of virtual events on the event, hospitality, and tourism industries

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Sidney J. Gefen, Barbara & Larry Jaffe Scholarship Earned 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 Academic Years

- Awarded this College of Health & Human Performance College scholarship based on academic performance & service.

Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute Scholarship Earned 2021-2022 Academic Year

- Awarded this Department of THEM scholarship based on academic performance & research proposal submission.

Brecht Scholarship Earned 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 Academic Years

- Awarded this State-wide scholarship based on academic performance.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Event Marketing Strategist Certificate | Meeting Professionals International Earned July 2021

- Participated in a certificate course designed to enhance knowledge of event marketing strategies through the use of technology, data analytics, and strategic planning.

Certified Meeting Professional May 2015 to Current

- Passed a rigorous certification exam that demonstrates understanding of and ability to implement best practices in the meeting management field.

Certified Healthcare Meeting Professional May 2017 to Current

- Passed a rigorous certification exam that demonstrates understanding of the laws governing healthcare related meetings and the reporting requirements of the federal Physician Open Payment “Sunshine Act”.

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Active Member**, North Florida Business Advocates September 2020 to January 2021
- Attended weekly meetings to discuss business growth strategies and network with other business owners in the North Florida area.
- Active Member**, Meeting Professionals International - North Florida Chapter May 2014 to Current
- Attended monthly continuing educational meetings, served on the Student Task Force Committee from May 2015 - May 2016.
- President**, Tourism, Recreation, and Sport Management Honor Society December 2012 to May 2013
- Presided over meetings, managed the overall budget, oversaw the work of other officers and committees, and planned socials and off-campus events for the organization.

EDUCATION

University of Florida

- Doctoral Degree in Health & Human Performance Anticipated Spring 2026
Specialization: Recreation, Parks, and Tourism
GPA 3.88/4.0
- Master of Science in Tourism & Hospitality Management May 2022
Certificate in Tourism & Hospitality Business Management
GPA 4.0/4.0
- Bachelor of Science in Recreation, Parks & Tourism December 2013
Specialization: Event Management
Graduated Summa Cum Laude, GPA 3.86/4.0
Honors Thesis: *Determining the Most Effective Use of Social Media Marketing for Events*