HFT 4517 – Convention Sales and Service - UFO

University of Florida
Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management
Fall 2021

Instructor
Brianna Blassneck

Email
bblassneck@ufl.edu

Office Hours
Wednesday & Friday: 9:30a-11:30a
or by appointment

Office Location
FLG 206i

Department Chair
Rachel Fu, PhD

Email
racheljuichifu@ufl.edu

Course Description

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of reaching and servicing the meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE) market from the perspective of the venue. Throughout this course, students will learn the roles of organizations and groups (planners and suppliers), strategies for marketing and selling to different group segments, negotiation and contract development, and servicing groups after the sale (i.e., food and beverage service, guest rooms, meeting and function rooms, registration, and security). Methods for tracking costs, billing and measuring event effectiveness are also outlined.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the scope of the convention, meetings, and trade show industry in terms of types of meetings, who holds meetings, and emerging types of meeting facilities.
- Describe considerations in the organizational design of a sales department and outline how a sales office interfaces with other departments.
- Understand the characteristics of association, corporate and SMERF group meetings that are important for selling to each market.
- Apply different sales initiatives best to reach different group markets.
- Distinguish between the elements of a letter of agreement or a contract.
- Apply knowledge of organizational roles to identify who should coordinate hotel service to groups, and the organizational relationships of the position of convention service manager.
- Understand the considerations needed when assigning rooms to meeting attendees, coordinating food and beverage, audiovisuals, and technology for events.
- Describe the typical function room furniture, meeting set-ups, and time and usage considerations for function rooms and be able to know which is best for different event type.
- Describe the functions of key trade show personnel and describe the elements of exhibit planning.
- Describe typical procedures for billing groups and for conducting a post-convention review.

Course Format

Location: online
This course uses a combination of web-based video material/lectures, online student discussion and reflection activities and assigned readings. In addition to the required textbook readings, you also will be responsible for reading articles provided by the instructor. All supplemental readings are available through the course website. UF's Canvas will be the official course management system for this course. It is important to keep up with the assigned readings to enhance your understanding of the course content.
Course Website: http://elearning.ufl.edu

Required Textbook

Abbey, J.R. (2016). Convention Sales & Service, 9th Edition, Waterbury Press: Las Vegas, NV.

Additional Materials

Additional (optional and required) readings will be assigned throughout the semester. These readings will be made available on Canvas for students to access.

Grading Scale

The University's grading system will be used for this course (for information about UF's grades and grading policies, please consult https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx). In accordance, a student's overall performance in this course will be graded as follows:

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Point Range	100-94	< 94-90	< 90-87	< 87-84	< 84-80	< 80-77	< 77-74	< 74-70	< 70 - 67	< 67 - 64	< 64-61	<60
GPA Points	4.00	3.67	3.33	3.00	2.67	2.33	2.00	1.67	1.33	1.00	0.67	0.00

Assessment Summary

Assessment Tool		% Value (Pt Value)
Active Learning Discussions	10 assignments x 5 points each	10% (50 pts)
Quizzes	5 module quizzes x 40 points each	40% (200 pts)
Site Visits	2 site visits x 25 points each	10% (50 pts)
Module Assignments	3 assignments x 25 points each	15% (75 pts)
Final Paper	1 final paper x 125 points	25% (125 pts)
Total		**100% (500pts)**

Assessment Overview

ACTIVE LEARNING DISCUSSIONS 10% (50 PTS)

Active Learning Discussions provide an opportunity for students to discuss course topics amongst one another and to demonstrate acquired knowledge through analysis and critique of industry topics, such as sales and meeting contracts, property press kits, convention press releases, banquet menus, sales strategies, etc. These discussions may include case studies, debates, internet exercises, or small activities relevant to the course material.

The discussions require both an initial post responding to the discussion prompt and a response post to a classmate. Students should be proactive and respond to the discussion prompt early to provide time for their classmates to contribute and add to their portion of the discussion before the deadline. Students will not be permitted to make up missed assignments without the appropriate documentation (see the Course Policies).

MODULE QUIZZES 40% (200 PTS)

- There will be five online quizzes, one per module.
- Quizzes will be available at 12:00am on Friday morning and will be available until 11:59pm Sunday night (72 hours to complete). You will be given a 1-hour time period to complete the quiz. Only 1 attempt will be allowed.

- Quizzes may consist of multiple choice, true and false, fill in the blank, and short answer questions.
- Quizzes are not cumulative.
- **Do not miss a quiz!** Make-up quizzes will be given only under the most serious circumstances (e.g., illness, accident, or emergency). Your reasons should be properly documented and may be verified. The instructor will follow the UF policy in deciding whether your circumstances grant a make-up.

SITE VISITS 10% (50 PTS)

- You will be required to complete two site visits to convention hotel and event venues during the semester.
- You will need to find two properties easily accessible to you that cater to group business. You should reach out to the property's Convention Services Manager or Convention Sales Manager to provide you with a tour and information about the property.
- **It is highly suggested that you select your venues well ahead of time to schedule your site visits before the deadlines.**
- You will need to complete the site visit discussion guide assignments based on your visit at each property.
- Each site visit is worth 25 points.

MODULE ASSIGNMENTS 15% (75 PTS)

Modules 2, 3 and 4 will have a Module Assignment that incorporates the material covered in the module. These are individual assignments and will go toward the final course project. Specifically, Module 2 assignment will be Part 1 of the final assignment. Module 3 assignment will be Part 2 of the final assignment. Module 4 Assignment will be part 3 of the final assignment. Content obtained in Module 5 will be incorporate into the final assignment but will not require a separate assignment on its own due to time constraints nearing the end of the semester. Instructions on each Module Assignment are provided in detail on the course website (Canvas). These assignments will be graded and returned so that students can make changes based on instructor feedback to submit for the final course project. Students who resubmit assignments without incorporating instructor feedback will receive point deductions.

FINAL PAPER 25% (125 PTS)

This assignment will be completed over the course of the semester. The final paper will include the revised Module Assignments as well as any additional information that is covered in Module 5. Full project details will be discussed at the beginning of the semester as well as provided on the course website (Canvas).

Course Schedule *(subject to change)* Due date times are 11:59pm unless otherwise specified.

Module 1: Introductory Module
Weeks 1-2. August 23 – September 5

In the Introductory Module, students will be introduced to the MICE industry from the perspective of the venue. This introduces students to industry terms, organizations involved in managing group events, meeting types and the types of organizations that hold meetings, different facility offerings and current trends in the MICE industry.

- Describe the scope of today's meetings market, including the various types of meetings hosted by the convention and meetings industry
- Define terminology specific to conventions and meetings industry
- Describe the various types of meeting facilities
- Describe trends in the meetings industry

Topics	Assignments
Course Introduction + Syllabus Review	ALD #1 (5 pts) **initial post 8/26, response 8/29**
Introduction to the MICE Industry	Module 1 Quiz (40 pts) **opens 9/3 closes 9/5**
Industry Terms	
Current Trends	

Module 2: Role of Organizations and Groups in MICE Events
Weeks 3-5. September 6 – September 26

In The Role of Organizations and Groups in MICE Events, students will learn the various roles that are necessary for a MICE event to function, the different groups that MICE events cater to and the organizational format of a sales office from a venue perspective.

Module 2: Role of Organizations and Groups in MICE Events *continued*
Weeks 3-5 September 6 – September 26

- Identify the different types of organizations that hold meetings and describe types of group customers
- Distinguish sales from marketing
- Explain the importance of a marketing plan, list the four steps of a marketing plan and describe how marketers conduct market research
- Describe how marketers select target markets, position their properties, establish objectives and action plans, review and monitor their marketing plans and put their marketing plans into action.
- Describe typical sales and marketing staff positions and outline the roles of regional and national sales offices and independent hotel representatives
- Explain how to manage the efforts of the sales team in terms of establishing standard operating procedures, conducting sales meetings, assigning account responsibility, and evaluating the sales effort

Explain the various records, filing systems and technological applications maintained by a sales office

Topics	Assignments
What organizations hold meetings?	ALD #2 (5 pts) **initial post 9/9, response 9/12**
The Marketing Function	ALD #3 (5 pts) **initial post 9/16, response 9/19**
Organizing for Convention Sales	Module 2 Quiz (40 pts) **opens 9/24 closes 9/26**
	Module 2 Assignment (25 pts) **due 9/24**

Module 3: Reaching and Selling to Different Group Markets
Weeks 6-8 September 27 – October 17

In Reaching and Selling to Different Group Markets, students will go into depth of each MICE group market, including their characteristics, different types, importance, how to reach each market and sell to each market. Students will also learn sales techniques including cold-calling, telephone sales, trade show selling and site inspections. Students will become knowledgeable on important negotiating skills from the perspective of the venue. They will learn the important terms relevant to drafting contracts for MICE events and apply these terms by drafting an event contract.

- Explain the importance of conventions to associations and identify factors that association meeting planners consider when making a site selection
- Identify factors that association/corporate meeting planners consider when making a site selection
- Describe the different types of association and corporate meetings
- Identify characteristics of association and corporate meetings that are important for selling to the association/corporate market
- Describe the tools salespeople use to locate associations/corporations and to find information about the meetings they hold
- Describe the nonprofit organizations market and explain how to sell meeting services and products to it
- Identify SMERF organizations and explain how to sell meeting services and products to them
- Explain the steps in making a personal sales call and how to conduct telephone selling effectively in meeting and convention sales
- Describe the convention and meeting sales techniques of sales blitz selling, trade show selling, selling with convention and visitors bureaus, site inspection selling and familiarization tours
- Describe how hospitality salespeople prepare to negotiate with meeting planners
- Identify the elements of a letter agreement, or contract, for meeting and convention sales
- Explain the effect of contract standardization and multiple-meetings contracts on the meetings and convention industry

Topics	Assignments
Selling the Association Market	ALD #4 (5 pts) **initial post 9/30, response 10/3**
Selling the Corporate Market	ALD #5 (5 pts) **initial post 10/7, response 10/10**
Selling Other Markets	Site Visit #1 (25 pts) **due 10/11**
Selling to the Meetings Market	Module 3 Quiz (40 pts) **opens 10/15 closes 10/17**
Advertising to the Meeting Planner	Module 3 Assignment (25 pts) **due 10/15**
Negotiations and Contracts	

Module 4: Servicing the Event
Weeks 9-12. October 18 – November 14

In Servicing the Event, students will move from trying to obtain group business to understanding how to service the groups once they have obtained their business.

- Describe the importance of serving convention groups well and discuss who should coordinate hotel service to groups
- Analyze the issues related to the transfer of responsibility for servicing a group account from a hotel salesperson to the convention service manager
- Describe the format and uses of the resume (specification sheet) and banquet event order (function sheet) prepared by the convention service manager
- Identify factors that hotel staff consider when assigning rooms to meeting attendees and managing room blocks.
- Describe the importance of good check-in/check-out procedures
- Describe function rooms and how they are managed, identify various meeting room setups and describe when each is commonly used. Summarize how function rooms are broken down, describe the rooms of the future and explain why it is important to monitor function room usage.
- Identify different types of food service and service-related issues for food functions
- Describe types of audiovisual equipment and their uses
- Identify issues related to providing audiovisual equipment and services and explain the impact that union regulations may have on the operation of audiovisual equipment
- Identify and discuss the elements of exhibit planning, including the duties and responsibilities of key trade show and exhibit personnel
- Describe registration, types of admission systems and other services used for meetings and summarize security issues

Topics	Assignments
The Service Function	ALD #6 (5 pts) **initial post 10/21, response 10/24**
Preparing for the Event	ALD #7 (5 pts) **initial post 10/28, response 10/31**
Guest Rooms	ALD #8 (5 pts) **initial post 11/4, response 11/7**
Function Rooms and Meeting Set-ups	Site Visit #2 (25 pts) **due 11/1**
Food and Beverage Service	Module 4 Quiz (40 pts) **opens 11/12 closes 11/14**
Exhibits and Trade Shows	Module 4 Assignment (25 pts) **due 11/12**
Audiovisual Requirements	
Admission Systems and Other Services	

Module 5: Post-Convention Topics
Weeks 13-15 November 15 – December 5

In Post-Convention Topics, students will learn how to track costs and prepare the final billing for the group. Students will also learn the importance of measuring event effectiveness and maintaining group business long-term.

- Explain how hospitality properties handle billing for conventions and meetings
- Describe typical procedures for conducting a post-convention review
- Explain the importance on maintaining relationships with clients after the meeting has passed

Topics	Assignments
Convention Billing	ALD #9 (5 pts) **post 11/18**
Post Convention Review	ALD #10 (5 pts) **initial post 12/2, response 12/5**
Maintaining the business long-term	Module 5 Quiz (40 pts) **opens 12/3 closes 12/5**

Module 6: Final
Week 16. December 6 - Term

Time allocated to complete final paper assignment. Students with questions should reach out to instructor as early as possible.

Assignment
Final Paper **due 12/13**

Additional Information

Course Policies

Students are expected to be professional, which requires them to:

- Actively participate. Active participation includes asking thoughtful questions, contributing knowledge and ideas relevant to the topic, volunteering answers to questions, and sharing relevant material from other readings, classes, newspapers and media sources.
- Be punctual with regards to assignments, readings and due dates.
- Be prepared. Students are required to read all assigned materials.
- Be courteous and respectful to your peers and the instructor.

Demeanor or Netiquette

Students are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students in all email messages, threaded discussions, chats or any form of communication. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion forums. Review the Netiquette Guide for Online Courses for expected student behavior.

Attendance Policy

Online learning can present significant challenges, particularly to individuals who are not self-starters or those who do not possess good time-management skills. The online classroom is available 24 hours a day.

Unlike traditional instructional settings in which each student gets the same class, the online setting means that every student will participate in the course that they choose to experience. This type of instruction should be more adaptable to a variety of learning styles. Everyone learns differently, so prescribing a "best" approach is difficult. However, you should note that this course is not self-paced. You are expected to adhere to the course calendar and timeline.

That said, sometimes personal circumstances arise that may interfere with the ability to meet a deadline. If such an event does happen, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. Proactive communication that informs the instructor of potential conflicts ahead of time will be met with more receptivity than retrospective requests for extensions without a compelling rationale.

Requirements for make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with the University's policies and can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments must be submitted by the deadline posted by the instructor. A penalty will be enforced if students fail to submit an assignment by the deadline.

- Assignments received within 24 hours after the posted deadline will receive an automatic 10% deduction.
- Assignments received within 48 hours after the posted deadline will receive an automatic 20% deduction.
- Assignments received 48 hours after the posted deadline will receive a zero.

Quiz Policies

Students will complete quizzes at the end of each Module. Quizzes will be made available on Canvas on 12:00am Friday morning until 11:59pm Sunday night, available for students for 72 hours. Students can take quizzes at any time during this period. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have access to the Internet and appropriate technology (computer, tablet, etc.) during this period to take the quiz. If students have any inquiries about quizzes after initial grading, please contact the instructor.

Email

Each of you has a UF email address. It is vital that you maintain an active UF email account and that you check it often. This tentative syllabus is subject to change, and any changes will be transmitted to you via your UF email account and Canvas (see below). Students should email the instructor if they have questions about any of the lectures, readings, assignments, or exams. You should expect a response within about 24-48 hours during weekdays. On holidays or weekends, expect a response in 1-2 business days. The instructor will reasonably expect similar time frames for responses to emails sent to students.

Recordings and Notes

It is not permitted to sell notes or recordings from this class without written consent of the instructor. Nor are students permitted to disseminate recordings of the instructor lecturing or post copies of assignments or exams on the internet.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism and cheating, will not be tolerated. Violation of the UF Academic Honor Code will incur serious consequences. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students Office. Plagiarism and cheating may be punished by failure on the exam, assignment, or project; failure in the course; and/or expulsion. There are no exceptions to this policy. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Resources

The University of Florida has support services available for all students. If you need additional support, you are encouraged to reach out to your instructor.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Offers services and resources related to a variety of personal concerns, including but not limited to test-related stress, anxiety and depression, substance use, relationships, and sexual orientation and gender. All services are confidential. If a student is having a mental health emergency, they may call 352-392-1575 to speak to a crisis counselor. Additional contact information: 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575. More information can be found at http://counseling.ufl.edu.

Office of Victim Services

Recognizes that few events, if any, that may occur in one's life can compare to the potentially traumatizing effects of being a victim of a crime. A victim advocate is available 24/7 to provide support for victims of actual or threatened violence. All services as free and confidential. You can speak to an advocate directly by calling 352-392-5648 during business hours (M-F, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) or 24/7 by calling the University Police Department's Dispatch Center at 352-392-1111 More information can be found at https://police.ufl.edu/about/divisions/office-of-victim-services/.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services

Is UF's campus health promotion department. Services include HIV testing, Quit Tobacco coaching, Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, Health Huts, and various other outreach/educational events. GatorWell also provides free condoms and other sexual health resources to students. Visit one of their three campus locations including their main location on the First Floor of the Reitz Union. More information can be found at http://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/.

UF Computing Help Desk

Is available to help students with technical issues, including CANVAS. You can call the UF Help Desk 24/7 at 352-392-HELP. More information can be found at http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/.

U Matter, We Care

Is an initiative committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if someone is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu. More information can be found at http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/.

Career Connections Center

Can help you across the lifespan of your career and is located on the First Floor of the Reitz Union. More information can be found at https://career.ufl.edu/.