

**METROPOLITAN STATE COLLEGE OF DENVER**

**HOTEL LEARNING CENTER**

**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
HOSPITALITY, MEETING, AND TRAVEL ADMINISTRATION**

**Faculty Team**

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**December 2006**

Metropolitan State College of Denver  
Hospitality, Meeting, and Travel Administration

**Hotel Learning Center**

Executive Summary

**Program Description:** The *Hotel Learning Center* (HLC) at *Metropolitan State College of Denver* (Metro State), to be located on the prime real estate of the Auraria Campus along Speer Boulevard between Auraria Parkway and Arapahoe Street, will include a full-service hotel, a multi-purpose conference center with full production, baking, and Garde Manger kitchens, a beverage management center with wine cellar to include beer and spirits production and service facilities. The facility, in addition, will include amphitheater-style, distance-learning capable classrooms and other integrated educational facilities.

**Organization Description:** Established in 1977, the Department of Hospitality, Meeting and Travel Administration (HMTA) at Metro State is the most comprehensive, cost-effective hospitality baccalaureate degree-granting program serving Colorado and any community within a 400-mile radius of Denver. Through the college's continuously updated hospitality curriculum and experienced faculty, graduates are prepared for management positions in a variety of industry-related fields. The program offers an individualized interdisciplinary major with emphases in hotel, restaurant, meeting, and travel administration. Each area of concentration is designed to provide graduates with the knowledge, skills, and practical experiences needed to be successful in the rapidly expanding hospitality industry.

**Goals:** The HTMA program at Metro State, through construction of the HLC, will:

- Offer a hospitality learning laboratory to the Denver Metro Area hospitality industry
- Expand available hospitality management courses to include experiential learning
- Direct advanced management training courses
- Conduct hospitality based research, study, and testing of products and services
- Offer continuing education and fun courses for the public
- Provide leased facilities for product testing, development, and promotion
- Make facilities available as a focal collection point for charitable events

**Outcomes:** The state-of-the-art Hotel Learning Center at Metro State will:

- Provide a comprehensive venue for teaching and learning at the undergraduate level and continuing education of adults and professionals, producing an expanded pool of highly trained, skilled hospitality professionals for the Denver region
- Maximize the learning environment for students, create comfort for hotel guests, and in due time, generate a return on investment for the investing management company
- Create a competitive advantage for an affordable HMTA program that already provides the best dollar value per credit hour of any hospitality school in Colorado

**Need:** The metro Denver area has grown into a primary inbound destination for the traveling public; the region has become a first choice for conventioners, group business, individual business people, and the tourist market. In the past decade, Denver invested more than \$8 billion in hospitality and tourism. This investment includes a new airport, three new stadiums, a convention center expansion, a new opera house, the Denver Art Museum expansions, and the Denver Zoo projects. The revitalized Denver downtown includes a new 1,100 room Hyatt Regency Hotel and at least eight new hotels in the construction or planning stages. With this industry expansion comes the accompanying need for educated and qualified professionals at the entry, supervisory, and managerial levels.

**Budget: \$34,698,965**

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**Metropolitan State College of Denver**  
**Hospitality, Meeting, and Travel Administration**  
**Hotel Learning Center**

### **The Need is Apparent**

The Metro Denver Area has grown into a primary inbound destination for the traveling public; the region has become a first choice for conventioners, group business, individual business people, and the tourist market. In the past decade, Denver invested more than \$8 billion in hospitality and tourism. This investment includes a new airport, three new stadiums, a convention center expansion, a new opera house, the Denver Art Museum expansions, and the Denver Zoo projects. The revitalized Denver downtown includes a new 1,100 room Hyatt Regency Hotel and at least eight new hotels in the construction or planning stages.

With this industry expansion comes the accompanying need for educated and qualified professionals at the entry, supervisory, and managerial levels; a need which will effectively be met by establishing a **Hotel Learning Center (HLC)** coupled with the **Hospitality, Meeting, and Travel Administration (HMTA)** program at **Metropolitan State College of Denver (Metro State)**. The HLC will provide a comprehensive venue for teaching and learning at the undergraduate level and continuing education of adults and professionals, producing an expanded pool of highly trained skilled hospitality professionals for the Denver region. The new HLC, to be located on the prime real estate of the Auraria Campus along Speer Boulevard between Auraria Parkway and Arapahoe Street, will include a full-service hotel, a multi-purpose conference center with full production, baking, and Garde Manger kitchens, a beverage management center with wine cellar to include beer and spirits production and service facilities. The facility, in addition, would include amphitheater-style, distance-learning capable classrooms and other integrated educational facilities.

This new state-of-the-art building will create a competitive advantage for an affordable HMTA program that already provides the best dollar value per credit hour of any hospitality school in Colorado. The HMTA program at Metro State is designed to prepare students for entry and middle management positions in hotels, restaurants, meeting facilities, and travel and tour operations throughout Colorado and beyond. Over the last eight years, the program's enrollment has grown 132% to 340, classroom credits hours taught have increased 76% to 2,273, and scholarships have reached \$60,000, a 900% increase. Metro State HMTA students balance theory and practice while maintaining a sense of service orientation and a hospitality attitude. The HMTA program produces students who get the job done, and 80% of its graduates stay in Colorado.

### **Vision, Philosophy, and Mission**

The vision, philosophy, and mission of HMTA at Metro State, coupled with the state-of-the-art HLC, will provide for the demonstrated leadership and excellence in teaching and learning through the development of state-of-the-art facilities, appropriate staffing of faculty and management, and a curriculum under consistent review, updating, and refining. Such an organized approach will ensure that graduates will be competitive and well prepared for employment and success in the hospitality industry, and in life.

- **The Vision of HMTA** is to be recognized as a renowned resource center actively serving the many participants of the hospitality industry through a strong sense of inquiry, an openness of discussion, a willingness to share information, and a deep commitment to do one's best, coupled with a refreshing hospitality attitude.

- **The Philosophy of HMTA** is to emphasize the development of professional hospitality management knowledge and skills through the study of theory in the classroom that, in turn, is experienced in practicum, coop, internship, supervisory, management, and team approached situations.
- **The Mission of HMTA** is to provide leadership and excellence in its baccalaureate, professional, and technical programs and to render service to the students, citizens, and hospitality industry through flexible and individualized interdisciplinary major programs in hotel and lodging, meeting and events, restaurant and culinary arts, and travel and tourism administration.

## Goals of the HLC

The basic spirit of the HLC business and education facility will be the reward for effort and innovation in education. The organization and individuals of the HLC will be encouraged that benefits and profits are incentives for creating revenue generating opportunities and possibilities through an entrepreneurial approach. The entrepreneur is defined as a capitalist or industrialist; the College's Center for Innovation defines the entrepreneur as one who creates opportunity for the student, faculty, and community. Entrepreneurial metric incentives can build an organization where people of different nationalities, genders, and cultures compete in an environment of intense competition and total courtesy. Metro State's leadership has recognized that the HLC will present its best faculty to implement the top ideas with ever higher levels of excellence, thus the creation of preeminence. The HLC will meet the College's leadership needs to listen to other people's ideas, specifically the younger generations, and it will tap the brilliance of young minds, including the faculty and students through the following goals:

- Offer a hospitality learning laboratory to the Denver Metro Area hospitality industry
- Expand available hospitality management courses, to include experiential learning
- Direct advanced management training courses
- Conduct hospitality based research, study, and testing of products and services
- Offer continuing education and fun courses for the public
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## Proven Rational

The rationale for the new HLC at Metro State is that it will provide for the future development and education of students and industry professionals. Such a successful learning environment is in place at various colleges and universities across the country. Examples include:

University of Delaware	Cal Poly Pomona-Collins School
University of Denver-Daniels School	Florida International University
Georgia State University	Johnson and Wales University
Oklahoma State University	Purdue University
University of Houston Hilton College	University of Maryland Eastern Shore-
Michigan State University-Kellogg Center	Henson Center
University of Nevada Las Vegas-INNOvation Village	

## Facility Structure

The HLC facilities will maximize the students' learning environment, create comfort for hotel guests, and in due time generate a return on investment for the investing management company. The HLC will feature all of the accommodations of a full service (revenue generating) hotel including 120 guest

rooms; a 48-seat public dining room; an events center/banquet area with a seating capacity of 150 people; two breakout rooms; a boardroom with executive setup; a full service laundry; and a guests parking facility. Teaching and student learning will take place in the table service dining room teaching facility; quantity food production laboratory; basic food production, safety, sanitation, sensory analysis kitchen laboratory; beer, soft drinks, spirits, and wine cellar dining room teaching facility; and three classrooms: demonstration-technology room, theater style room, and a standard classroom. In addition, the HLC will house 16 faculty and staff offices and residential learning double occupancy housing for 40 students.

## **Operations of the HLC**

The HMTA faculty and the chosen management company will work together to create, build, and manage the new HLC. Students—primarily juniors and seniors working in assistant management positions—will be eligible for in-house living arrangements. These arrangements will provide the management company with a ‘live-in’ staff possibly at a reduced pay-rate correlated with the housing benefit, where students will benefit from the unique learning experience of in-house residential living. The location of the faculty offices in the HLC can not be emphasized enough, as faculty need to be in touch with students, management, and the pulse of what is happening and developing at the HLC.

## **Responsibility of Management Company**

Daily operations of the facility will be primarily the responsibility of the management company. The following suggested positions will be included in the management company’s responsibilities:

### **Positions held by management company**

General Manager  
Executive Housekeeper  
Chief Engineer / Maintenance  
Events Manager

Front Office Manager  
Food and Beverage Manager  
Director of Sales and Marketing  
Office / Accounting Manager

Faculty appointments for some management company positions will be a possibility.

## **Responsibility of the HMTA Industry Advisory Council**

The HMTA Industry Advisory Council is comprised of industry leaders who realize that education is an asset which can give them a competitive edge and can improve their bottom-line. Advisory Council members are active in the teaching and learning aspects of the HMTA program and, thus, HMTA will seek the advice of its Industry Advisory Council regarding the daily operations of the HLC. Members include:

American Grassfed Association  
Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association  
Coors  
Denver Athletic Club  
Destination Hotels and Resorts  
Fazendin Classic African Experiences  
Hotel Colorado  
Hyatt Regency Denver  
Restaurant Kevin Taylor  
Shamrock Foods Company  
Southern Wine & Spirits of Colorado  
Stonebridge Companies

City of Arvada Food & Beverage Services  
*Experient*  
Cornelius Consulting  
Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Elite Expo Services  
Frontier Airlines  
Hotel Teatro  
Groople Travel Made Easy  
SAGE Hospitality  
Source Brand Development  
Southern Wine & Spirits of New York  
US Foodservice, Inc.

## **Responsibility of Respective HMTA Faculty**

The HMTA faculty are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, optimistic, and eager to serve in their teaching and advising, thus instilling in HMTA students the determination to be enthusiastic and confident as they pursue their own futures. The HMTA faculty are active and well connected with the various components of the hospitality industry: local, regional, and, to a degree, national. The HMTA graduates responded more favorably than graduates of other Metro State programs when asked to indicate the degree to which they interacted with faculty outside of class to discuss career issues, and also when asked to rate the degree of satisfaction with faculty advising.

### **HLC positions held by HMTA faculty**

- *Resident Instructor*: Overall supervision of students and student residential learning
- *Resident Instructor*: Daily supervision of students
- *Visiting Professors (two/year)*: Assist the facilitation of the learning environment
- *Current Full-time Faculty*: Overseeing course related learning of students

## **Responsibility of HMTA Students**

The demographic make-up and concerns of the HMTA student body are changing at Metro State. The average age of HMTA's student is 25.5 years with a median age of 23, and females dominate the enrollment at 66%. Most HMTA students work full-time in the hospitality industry while simultaneously carrying an average course load of 12-credit hours per semester. As is typical of most non-traditional, older students, HMTA students want to learn as much as possible about the industry, and they take their education very seriously. With the proposed HLC, students will receive hands-on supervised experience. Employers of HMTA graduates rated their employees higher in self confidence than did the employers of graduates of other Metro State programs. The HMTA graduates responded more favorably than graduates of other programs when asked to indicate the degree to which their experiences at Metro State increased their ability to think creatively, lead others, learn on their own, be self-confident, and realize their strengths and weaknesses.

### **Positions held by HMTA juniors and seniors on a rotating schedule**

Assistant General Manager	Assistant Front Office Manager
Assistant Executive Housekeeper	Assistant Food and Beverage Manager
Kitchen Manager	Beverage Manager
Front of the House Supervisor	Assistant Engineer / Maintenance
Assistant Director of Sales and Marketing	Banquet Manager
Assistant Events Manager	Assistant Office / Accounting Manger

### **Positions held by HMTA freshmen and sophomores**

HMTA students, per the direction of the HMTA Industry Advisory Council, are required to complete 1,200 hours of on-the-job-experience in order to integrate the theory taught in the classroom. Therefore, the freshman and sophomore student will work line positions on a rotating basis.

## Responsibility of Auraria Higher Education Commission

Given that the HLC will be located on the Auraria Campus; AHEC will be responsible for the following:

Security-campus police – 24 hours  
Supervision and operation of parking facilities

Note: maintenance and housekeeping responsibilities are suspect as AHEC responsibilities

## Classroom Education and Training Utilizing the HLC

Various courses offered by HMTA will be directly related to the hands-on interaction in the HLC. After sufficient preparation, students would move to the hands-on experience in the learning environment of the HLC. The learning experience would be facilitated by the faculty and the management personnel of the management company. Furthermore, the HLC will be home to the management training program of the management company.

### Suggested courses include:

HMT 1030	Principles of Meeting and Travel Administration
HMT 1050	Principles of Hotel and Restaurant Administration
HMT 1600	Food Production, Service, Sanitation, and Safety
HMT 1610	Kitchen Procedures and Production I
HMT 1620	Kitchen Procedures and Production II
HMT 2760	Meeting Administration I [Hotel Sales]
HMT 2830	Garde Manger
HMT 3510	Hotel Front Office Administration and Operations
HMT 3520	Hotel Housekeeping Administration and Operations
HMT 3570	Hospitality Marketing
HMT 3580	Hospitality Law
HMT 3590	Hospitality Administration of Profit [Accounting & Finance]
HMT 3600	Food and Beverage Cost Controls
HMT 3610	Enology: The Study of Wine
HMT 3650	Hospitality Property Management
HMT 3630	Catering and Menu Planning
HMT 3670	Food Service Purchasing
HMT 3680	Beer and Spirits
HMT 3750	Hospitality Promotion Materials: Analysis and Design
HMT 3760	Meeting Administration II [Special Events Management]
HMT 3810	Baking and Pastry Administration
HMT 4000	Internship Experience
HMT 4040	Senior Hospitality Research
HMT 4640	Hospitality Customer Service
HMT 4650	Hospitality Employee Resource Development
HMT 4660	Training and Development in Hospitality
HMT 4730	Principles of Negotiations
HMT 4810	Tour Management
HMT 4860	Security and Loss Prevention for the Hospitality Industry
HMT 4890	Seminar in Hospitality Administration

## **Competencies taught in the classroom and laboratories**

An increasing number of position announcements are asking for an organized leader and an outgoing, self-motivated individual to join a sales team. These future managers will need to know both how to lead and to effectively promote themselves in various situations. From a student's perspective, a career strategy is, or should be, to make oneself as valued and sought-after a professional in one's field as possible. Excellent attention to detail, written and verbal communication skills, and marketing and sales skills are truly essential as the various aspects of the hospitality industry become increasingly competitive. The ability to read and understand financial statements, coupled with the ability to understand how the organization makes the money that goes to the bottom line, are also necessities. Competencies at the undergraduate level would include the following:

- Management skills: plan, organize, direct, control, communicate, make decisions, motivate, lead, evaluate
- Fluency in Microsoft Word, Excel, sales and marketing software, and database management systems
- Accounting, budgeting and forecasting skills
- Sales and marketing expertise
- Understanding government processes and the importance of business law
- Effective communications skills: oral and written
- Visionary leadership
- An enhanced spirit of professionalism
- Good people skills
- Understanding consumer trends and influences
- An enhanced spirit of professionalism

## **Management Training Center Competencies**

Demand for life-long learning created by economic restructuring in the hospitality industry, rapidly developing technology, and continually changing job content will bring more adults and different demands to hospitality education. With the state-of-the-art facilities of the HLC and the enthusiastic, exciting, and effective teaching of the HMTA faculty, HMTA at Metro State will meet this demand with a focus on the following competencies:

- Improving knowledge and skills needed in a global society
- Developing success in a technological society
- Improving skills and attitudes to apply learned knowledge and skills
- Enhancing ethical behavior and professional development activities
- Perfecting speaking and writing with clarity
- Improving reading and listening critically
- Drawing conclusions from quantitative data
- Developing better recognition of senior management reasoning
- Organizing ideas
- Communicating with experts from this and other departments and learning from them
- Carrying an open attitude toward different approaches to problems

## **Faculty Development and Maintenance of Operating Facilities Endowment**

Given the assertiveness of the faculty in building the HMTA program at Metro State to preeminence and the projected potential of the HLC, the establishment of an externally funded faculty development and facilities fund will be needed to maintain and expand faculty development and expertise as well as to maintain and update the HLC facilities.

## SWOT Analysis for the Proposed HLC

### Strengths:

- Metro State College is committed to the local environment and community
- Metro State leadership is prepared to build acceptance of the HLC initiative
- The HLC initiative is a win-win situation for the local communities and politicians
- The HMTA program has a clear awareness of where the HLC fits within the hospitality industry
- The HMTA program has transfer agreements with four community colleges and 30 high schools across the state of Colorado, thereby fostering further opportunities for the recruitment and the development of future hospitality managers
- The HMTA program a unique and diverse, non-traditional student body
- Metro State has the largest number of minority students in Colorado supported by a diversity initiative

### Weaknesses:

- The image of HMTA is not considered prestigious
- Some prospective students consider HMTA a second-rate alternative to the more expensive schools
- Lack of funding
- Under-staffed and over stretched faculty
- Lacking state-of-the-art facilities

### Opportunities:

- Denver's business district, where the HMTA program at Metro State is located, offers a living laboratory in which to teach and study the hospitality industry
- Colorado is marketable as a year-round tourism destination, surpassing the competition due to its family-oriented image, great scenery, outdoor recreation (including skiing and camping), safe, friendly and relaxed atmosphere, affordable accommodations and dining, and interesting small towns
- Metro State is the college of opportunity with an open enrollment policy and the most cost-effective, valued hospitality baccalaureate degree granting program serving Colorado and, more specifically, any community within a radius of 400 miles of Denver
- The HLC will offer the opportunity for:
  - Innovation in classroom
  - Applying problem-solving hands-on learning for students and professionals
  - Innovative research
  - Growing careers in a realistic learning setting
  - Creating unsurpassed value for the HMTA concentrations of study across Colorado
  - Measurable success within the learning environment
  - Building strategic alliances with:
    - Corporate partners
    - Foundations
    - Other educational institutions
    - Corporate and individual donors
- The HLC can be developed as a unique, controlled learning environment focusing on under-represented and under-funded populations

### **Threats:**

- Resistance from area business and industry
- Resistance from Auraria campus
- Land availability not acquired for the project
- Corporate funding will not come to fruition
- Potential cutbacks in state funding before the HLC becomes self-sufficient
- Financial constraints and erosion of public confidence in traditional institutions of higher education are creating increasing pressures on hospitality education
- Government, in general, has not recognized the total impact the hospitality industry has on today's economy, specifically through the creation of jobs and tax revenues
- Colorado K-12 education sub-par performance
- Lack of financial incentives for faculty
- Competition for students across the Auraria campus, from Colorado's other colleges and universities, and from the growing number of virtual, for-profit, and corporate colleges and universities

### **Conclusion**

An assertive partnership between HMTA and the hospitality industry through the development of the HLC is imperative to address the industry's needs. The highlight for HMTA at Metro State is the promising future of the hospitality industry across the Denver metropolitan area, Front Range, mountain resorts, and Western Slope of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. With a curriculum that is in a state of continuous revision and updating, an experienced and expanding faculty, strong support of Metro State's administration, an active industry advisory council, and a geographic location unique to the hospitality industry, the HMTA program at Metro State is well positioned to develop a state-of-the-art Hotel and Learning Center. This Center will effectively supply the hospitality industry of Colorado and beyond with graduates prepared for management positions as HMTA continues forward into the 21st century.