

**Confidential Report**  
**Focused Excellence at the School of Hotel Administration<sup>1</sup>**  
**Revised November 2, 2009**

**Executive Summary**

The School of Hotel Administration's report on focused excellence is the result of a strategic planning process designed to develop recommendations to guide the school as it invests in programs, people, and infrastructure. Reshaping and restructuring SHA must begin with a clear and concise statement of SHA's mission and vision. The school's mission is to create and disseminate knowledge about hospitality management through teaching, research, industry relations and service. The core of this mission is *Hospitality Leadership through Learning*. SHA holds a unique position as the premier institution for educating future business leaders in the hospitality industry. The vision that follows this mission is for Cornell to continue to be the undisputed global leader in hospitality education. SHA's strategy focuses on two overriding goals: (1) continuous improvement of the student and faculty experiences, and (2) cost reductions through greater efficiency in the use of non-personnel related expenses and a reduction in non-academic staff.

**Recommendation 1: Grow the Global Platform**

SHA must grow its global platform for hospitality education and research in order to extend the school's global reach and influence, prepare students and faculty to excel in a global industry, capitalize on the school's global brand name, and drive the revenues needed to support its continued growth and preeminence for the next decade and beyond.

**Recommendation 2: Continue to Build the Faculty**

SHA must continue to build an excellent research and teaching faculty by recruiting and retaining professorial faculty in areas that play to SHA's strengths.

**Recommendation 3: Grow the Undergraduate Bachelor of Science Program**

SHA is in an ideal position to generate additional tuition revenues through a larger student body. SHA's desire to increase the size of its student body is based on three factors: enrollment demand for the undergraduate program; capacity to grow; and the need to grow to maintain Cornell's preeminence as the premier hospitality program in the world.

**Recommendation 4: Grow the MMH Program Pending Applications and the Growth of CNI**

Growing the MMH program remains one of SHA's primary options for revenue generation given current constraints on undergraduate admissions. The greatest challenge to increasing the size of the MMH program is growing the qualified applicant pool. Growth of the MMH program must also accommodate growth of the school's Cornell-Nanyang Institute in Singapore.

**Recommendation 5: Innovate through the Curriculum and Build Bridges across Cornell**

A core component of focused excellence must be continuous improvement and innovation in SHA's curriculum. A broadly inclusive undergraduate curriculum review has been initiated for academic year

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2010 with the anticipated outcome of reimagining and refining the current curriculum and further aligning resources with program goals. Since 2006 SHA has also embarked on an explicit strategy to build bridges with other management programs, schools, and colleges at Cornell, resulting in increased collaboration and course offerings with JGSM, AEM, ILR, and CHE.

**Recommendation 6: Improve Business Efficiency**

SHA recommends continuous improvement in the efficiency of its business processes and staffing to achieve its goals while helping Cornell address its structural budget deficit. Discussions will continue with other college and school business officers to explore potential financial and other benefits of “regional” models for delivering a variety of business services.

**Recommendation 7: Invest in External Affairs to Fund the Future**

SHA has made a significant investment in external affairs with a particular emphasis on growing its development capabilities to fund students, faculty, and programs. The recommendation is to continue to invest in external affairs as the payoff from such investment has been clear. By integrating communications and marketing, corporate and foundation affairs, alumni affairs, and development under a single Associate Dean for External Affairs, SHA seeks to leverage the synergy across these related areas of external outreach.

**Recommendation 8: Secure the Future of the Statler Hotel**

SHA recommends working with the university administration to lower the hotel’s cost structure while simultaneously engaging in focused fundraising to secure its economic viability. The Statler Hotel contributes to Cornell in two very important ways: (1) it serves as a living-learning laboratory for SHA students, and (2) it provides a valuable public service to the entire Cornell community. However, the financial responsibility for operating the Statler falls completely upon two sources, the hotel’s revenues and the school’s operating budget. The school and university must work together to lower the hotel’s cost structure and secure its future.

**Recommendation 9: Grow Hospitality Certifications through Executive Education**

SHA recommends that its Office of Executive Education (OEE) play a central role in growing the school’s global platform. The primary advantage of OEE is its ability to deliver first class hospitality programs in a scalable manner using technology-enabled learning, which can play a central role in delivering hospitality certifications within other schools’ degree programs.