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UNH Thompson School To Launch Culinary Arts Program In Fall '08
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DURHAM, N.H. - Beginning fall 2008, the University of New Hampshire will offer a culinary arts program in its Thompson School of Applied Science (TSAS). This unique chef training program will allow students to partner with University Hospitality Services, where they will have the opportunity to cook meals at Holloway Commons dining hall and the university-run New England Center. It is the only such program in the Seacoast area of New Hampshire.

This new program launches at a time when television cooking shows and interest in dining out are becoming more popular. "It's a solid industry, and this program offers lots of hands-on experience," says Gino Alibrio, associate professor and chair of the food service management program.

The two-year program comprises 1000 hours of practical education. In addition to utilizing the cooking labs on campus as part of the regular curriculum, students will cook at the open kitchen in UNH's Holloway Commons, where customers watch their meals being prepared. At the New England Center conference center and restaurant, students will learn how to manage buffets, banquets, and a la carte menus. They will also take a fundamental baking class in the Thompson School kitchen, creating foods to support the two Thompson School-run dining venues, Stacey's Buffet and the Balcony Bistro.

"It's an exciting partnership," says Charlie Caramihalis, associate professor of food service management. "The students get great opportunities on campus and in the community to work in their field."

Another hands-on component of the culinary arts program will be the summer work experience, where students in the program work at a resort or restaurant. As part of the existing TSAS food service management curriculum, faculty have placed students at Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut, the Balsams in the White Mountains, and Cape Neddick Lobster Pound and Harborside Restaurant in Maine.

The integrated culinary arts curriculum allows students to take courses in the other majors within food service management, dietetic technician and restaurant management. After completing the culinary arts program, students can stay at the Thompson School for an additional year to get a second specialization in applied business management. Since students are already accepted at the Thompson School, all credits transfer for the third-year option.
"It's a great value and an excellent program with amazing facilities," says Nancy Johnson, assistant professor of applied nutrition at the Thompson School. Other faculty in the program have owned catering companies, managed restaurants, and worked in related fields such as dietetic and nutrition in the healthcare field.

The Thompson School of Applied Science at the University of New Hampshire offers the Associate of Applied Sciences degree in 14 specializations, including restaurant management, dietetic technician, and culinary arts (beginning fall 2008). Situated on the campus of University of New Hampshire in Durham, the Thompson School of Applied Science has a variety of classrooms with labs, barns, a greenhouse, a saw mill, an animal grooming facility, and two kitchens for a truly hands-on education. Visit www.thompsonschool.unh.edu for more information.

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