

# Iuliana (Popa) Theis

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University of Delaware | 14 W. Main Street, Newark, DE 19716

## EDUCATION

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- University of Houston | Conrad N. Hilton College** **May 2024**  
Ph.D. in Hospitality Administration
- University of Houston | Conrad N. Hilton College** **May 2021**  
M.S. in Hospitality Management
- University of Houston | Conrad N. Hilton College & Honors College** **May 2020**  
B.S. in Hotel & Restaurant Management; minors in Leadership Studies and Spanish
- University of Cádiz | Cádiz, Spain** **June 2018**  
Studied Spanish language and culture abroad for one month

## HONORS & AWARDS

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- Rama Scholarship for the American Dream** **August 2020**
  - American Hotel & Lodging Education Foundation (\$5,000)
- Graduate School Stella L. Ehrhardt Scholarship** **August 2020**
  - UH Graduate School (\$600)
- Tier One Scholarship** **August 2016 – May 2020**
  - University of Houston (\$69,835.26)
- Conrad N. Hilton Memorial Fund** **August 2019 – May 2020**
  - American Hotel & Lodging Education Foundation (\$3,000)
- Steven Hecht & Deborah Brochstein Endowment Fund** **August 2019 – May 2020**
  - UH Honors College (\$1,500)
- Four Seasons Scholarship** **August 2019 – May 2020**
  - UH Conrad N. Hilton College (\$1,000)
- Global Citizens Credential** **May 2020**
  - UH distinction for achieving global knowledge and skills through courses and activities
- James and Gladwin King Scholarship** **February 2019**
  - UH Honors College (\$750)
- International Education Fee Scholarship** **April 2018**
  - University of Houston (\$1,550)
- Hospitality Educators Association of Texas (HEAT) Scholarship** **January 2017**
  - Hospitality Educators Association of Texas (\$500)

## ACADEMIC RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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### Research Interests

- Human resources & organizational behavior
- Customer service interactions
- Employee stress coping & industry perceptions

- Diversity, equity & inclusion

### Refereed Publications

- **Popa, I.** & Madera, J. M. (2023). Job searching during the pandemic: The roles of job search constraints, stress, and coping on industry turnover intentions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*.
- **Popa, I.**, Lee, L., Yu, H., & Madera, J. M. (2022). Losing talent due to COVID-19: The roles of anger and fear on industry turnover intentions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 54, 119-127.
- Yu, H., Lee, L., **Popa, I.**, & Madera, J. M. (2021). Should I leave this industry? The role of stress and negative emotions in response to an industry negative work event. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 94, 102843.

### Book Chapters

- Waller, L. & **Popa, I.** (2024). Moving toward inclusion and belonging – the significance of belonging in hospitality. *Routledge Handbook of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Management in the Hospitality Industry*. Routledge.

### Manuscripts in Development

- **Theis, I.** & Madera, J. M. A systematic literature review of customer mistreatment. Target journal: *International Journal of Hospitality Management*.

### Refereed Conference Presentations

- **Popa, I.** & Madera, J. M. (2024). Just another Karen: The impact of warmth perception on customer compensation. *The 29th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism*. Miami, FL.
- **Popa, I.** & Madera, J. M. (2024). A qualitative investigation into customer stereotyping behavior among employees. *The 29th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism*. Miami, FL.
- **Popa, I.** & Madera, J. M. (2023). Still haven't found what I'm looking for: Industry turnover intentions among hospitality job seekers. *The 28th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism*. Anaheim, CA.
- **Popa, I.** & Madera, J. M. (2023). You say incivility, I say abuse: A systematic literature review of customer mistreatment terminology focus and usage. *The 28th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism*. Anaheim, CA.
- **Popa, I.**, Lee, L., Yu, H., & Madera, J. M. (2022). Pandemic-driven talent loss: How anger and fear affect industry turnover intentions. *The 27th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism*. Houston, TX.

## POPULAR PRESS COVERAGE OF RESEARCH

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### UH News & Events

November 2023

- “UH Study Finds Constraints Causing Significant Post-Pandemic Stress for Hospitality Job Seekers.” Bryan Luhn -- <https://uh.edu/news-events/stories/2023/november-2023/11022023-hilton-job-search-stress.php>

**Ethnic Media Services****June 2023**

- “Tourism Surges Post-Pandemic – But Will the Trend Continue?” (Media Briefing).  
<https://ethnicmediaservices.org/media-briefings/tourism-surges-post-pandemic-but-will-the-trend-continue/>

**Houston Public Media****January 2023**

- *Houston Matters* (Live Podcast). Michael Hagerty --  
<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/shows/houston-matters/2023/01/09/440631/texas-legislature-preview-jan-9-2023/>

**HCAMag.com****January 2023**

- “Anger drives laid-off hospitality employees to switch industries: report.” Dexter Tilo --  
<https://www.hcamag.com/au/specialisation/recruitment/anger-drives-laid-off-hospitality-employees-to-switch-industries-report/431940>

**Restaurant Business****December 2022**

- “Former restaurant workers are too angry to re-apply, study finds.” Peter Romeo --  
<https://uh.edu/news-events/stories/2022-news-articles/december-2022/12212022-hospitality-anger-study>

**UH News & Events****December 2022**

- “Anger Over COVID-19 Layoffs Keeping Hospitality Workers from Returning to Jobs.” Bryan Luhn -- <https://uh.edu/news-events/stories/2022-news-articles/december-2022/12212022-hospitality-anger-study>

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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**Lecturer****Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024**

- GHL 1367: Lodging Managements
- Face-to-face instruction
- Undergraduate level

**Guest Lecturer****Nov 2021, Apr 2023**

- GHL 2356: Communication Strategies for Hospitality Professionals
- Topic: E-Etiquette
- Face-to-face instruction
- Undergraduate level

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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**Research Assistant | University of Houston****Aug 2021 – May 2024**

- Assisted Dr. Juan Madera in conducting research on HR/OB, employee stress coping, and employee industry perceptions

**Lodging Consultant | Wanderstay Hospitality Group****Oct 2021 – Aug 2022**

- Analyzed occupancy and review trends for hostel property
- Advised CEO on concept, design, and pricing strategy for second hotel location
- Reached out to key identified local businesses to establish strategic partnerships
- Inspected property on a regular basis to ensure brand standards and safety compliance

**Operations Coordinator | Wanderstay Hospitality Group** **Sept 2020 – Aug 2021**

- Developed company risk mitigation policies and procedures
- Conducted job applicant screenings, phone interviews, and trainings
- Performed monthly reconciliations, chargeback rebuttals, review trend reports, and researched optimal cost-value inventory solutions

**Trainer | Wanderstay Hospitality Group** **Aug 2019 – Sept 2020**

- Represented company at the 2019 Hostelworld Conference in Chicago, IL
- Instructed new employees on proper work practices, standards, and procedures
- Evaluated applicants' working interviews and discussed personal feedback with company owner
- Administered and scored new-hire exams, and performed additional tasks/research for company owner

**Guest Service Associate | Wanderstay Hospitality Group** **Feb 2019 – Aug 2019**

- Coordinated quick check-ins and check outs; offered additional assistance to enhance guest experience
- Cleaned guestrooms and public areas, and ensured safety of premises and guest valuables
- Managed financial transactions for reservations and sundry sales

**Housekeeping Intern | Hilton University of Houston** **Feb 2017 – Apr 2018**

- Cleaned guestrooms and classrooms in the Hilton college and hotel
- Maintained overall appearance of hotel, college, and housekeeping department
- Organized linen closet to improve storage function and trained new interns on proper procedures
- Helped the front desk arrange room changes and fulfill guest requests
- Stripped rooms for housekeepers on busy days to improve the efficiency of the housekeeping team

**Rotational Intern | Houston Airport Marriott** **Sept 2015 – May 2016**

- Worked with mentors in Accounting, Concierge, Engineering, Events/Sales, Front Desk, Housekeeping, and HR
- Coordinated quick check-ins and checkouts; offered additional assistance to enhance guest experience
- Copied and alphabetized I-9 files to be uploaded to a new electronic format, and inspected timesheets for payroll
- Assisted housekeepers with room cleaning and sorted linens
- Monitored and upheld breakfast area for MClub members; ensured guest satisfaction

**SERVICE**

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**President | Hilton Doctoral Student Association** **May 2023 – May 2024**

- Responsible for organizing association meetings and events

**Graduate Student Liaison | Hilton College Alumni Board** **May 2023 – May 2024**

- Responsible for representing Hilton College graduate students to the Hilton College alumni board

**CHC Representative | GPSA** **May 2023 – May 2024**

- Responsible for representing the Conrad N. Hilton College of Global Hospitality Leadership to the UH Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA)

**Vice President | Hilton Doctoral Student Association** **May 2022 – May 2023**

- In charge of identifying funding opportunities for events and outreach
- Manage and maintain Hilton doctoral student Teams page to ensure up-to-date documents, course information, roster, and organization

**Board Member | Wander Abroad Foundation** **May 2020 – May 2022**

- Single-handedly chaperoned the foundation's second cohort of students for a week in Costa Rica
- Raised awareness of the foundation's scholarship opportunity by reaching out to over 600 universities
- Created informational student documents and planned orientation meeting timeline
- Helped interview and select scholarship recipients
- Scouted grant opportunities for organization

**Volunteer Judge | Texas DECA** **Feb 2022, Feb 2024**

- Engaged and evaluated high school hospitality students' performance in industry-based role-playing scenarios and prepared presentations

**President | Eta Sigma Delta** **May 2019 – May 2021**

- Responsible for organizational planning, activities, implementation of new events, and administrative activities
- Implemented an active membership points system to reward member engagement
- Represented chapter at the 2019 Eta Sigma Delta Conference in New York
- Doubled the average number of events held per semester

**Director of Membership | Eta Sigma Delta** **Spring 2019**

- Managed membership outreach and developed a strategy to increase member engagement

**Director of Operations | Houston Innovation Ventures & Entrepreneurship** **Spring 2019**

- Responsible for recording key points from meetings, informing and keeping members up to date with organization events, tracking member responsibilities, and other duties as necessary

**CERTIFICATIONS**

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- Certification in Advanced Hospitality and Tourism Analytics (CAHTA) **Apr 2021**
- Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics (CHIA) **Dec 2019**

**TECHNICAL SKILLS & ABILITIES**

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- Experienced in SPSS, AMOS, and MPlus statistical software
- Fluent in English and Romanian; conversational in Spanish