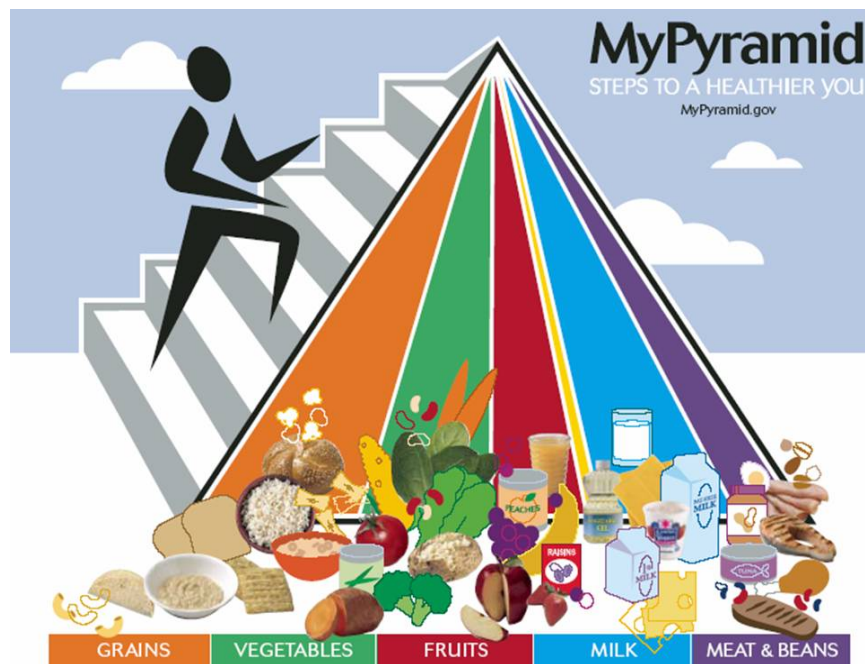


Student Manual
for
The Didactic Program in Dietetics
at
Rutgers University



RUTGERS
THE STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW JERSEY

School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Department of Nutritional Sciences
<http://nutrition.rutgers.edu>

Director, Didactic Program in Dietetics.....Barbara L. Tangel, M.S., R.D.
(732) 932-6525
bltangel@rci.rutgers.edu

Undergraduate Program Coordinator.....Adria R. Sherman, Ph.D.
(732) 932-6530
asherman@aesop.rutgers.edu

Interim Chair.....John Worobey, Ph.D.
(732) 932-6517, or -9224
worobey@rci.rutgers.edu

*Academic Advisor.....

*Each student is assigned an academic advisor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences after declaring the major. If you do not know who your advisor is, see Ms. Wendy Creevy in Room 220, Davison Hall.

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History of the Dietetics Program at Rutgers University

The Dietetics program at Rutgers University was established in 1947 in the Department of Home Economics in Douglass College. As a result of a reorganization of the university in 1980, the department was administratively moved to Cook College. The Department of Nutritional Sciences was formed in 1989 from a merger of the Departments of Home Economics and Nutrition. Since a physical space large enough to accommodate the enlarged department was unavailable, Nutritional Sciences has remained in two separate buildings, Davison Hall, on the Douglass Campus, which houses the faculty in community nutrition, and Thompson Hall, on the Cook Campus, housing the biological faculty.

The American Dietetic Association approved undergraduate dietetics programs until the late 1990's when a decision was made to move from approval to accreditation of didactic programs in dietetics by CADE, the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education. The self study and site visit for the Rutgers Didactic Program in Dietetics took place in 2003, when the program was granted initial accreditation by CADE.

Didactic Program in Dietetics
Department of Nutritional Sciences
School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Davison Hall
26 Nichol Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Commission on Accreditation of Dietetics Education
American Dietetic Association
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
(312) 899-0040, ext. 5400
www.eatright.org

Welcome to the Dietetics option in the Department of Nutritional Sciences in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. This manual was prepared for students who have elected to major in the Didactic Program in Dietetics, which is accredited by CADE, the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association (ADA), 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995, (312) 899-0040, ext. 5400. The mission of the program is to provide its students with a broad educational background and with the knowledge and skills that will lead to professional competence in the field of dietetics and nutrition. The program intends to prepare women and men who are capable of functioning in entry-level positions in health care, industry, and community agencies and in supervised practice programs in dietetics (dietetic internships.) In addition, it provides its students with the necessary breadth and depth of understanding so that with experience and graduate study, they can assume leadership roles in the dietetics and nutrition profession.

Once students have completed all Bachelor of Science degree requirements for the Nutritional Sciences, Dietetics option major, they will receive 6 copies of the ***DPD Verification Statement***. These documents are valuable; they certify that you have successfully completed the foundation skills and competencies which are required in a didactic program in dietetics as prescribed by CADE. Effective with the class of 2009, students must earn a “C” or better in all required courses in the nutritional sciences major.

As a new student in the department, it is important that you seek the advice of your academic advisor early in your academic career. S/he will guide you in course selection as you progress through the curriculum, as well as counsel you in work or volunteer experiences which will be valuable as you apply for supervised practice in dietetics, the next step in becoming a Registered Dietitian (R.D.) Refer to this manual when you have questions about the Dietetics program or profession. Use the manual as a supplement to the university catalogue and consult your academic advisor with further questions.

The goals of the Didactic Program in Dietetics are as follows:

- The Didactic Program in Dietetics will provide the framework for the undergraduate student to complete his or her bachelor’s degree through courses in the life and social sciences and specialized courses in dietetics.
- The program will follow a sequence of courses which builds upon a strong, comprehensive foundation knowledge base which later expands students’ understanding of the complexities of nutrition care.
- Through completion of the program, graduates will be prepared for supervised practice in dietetics, graduate school, or employment by

focusing upon the biological, social science and community principles of food and nutrition in required coursework to earn a bachelor's degree.

- The program will ensure teaching effectiveness through regular student evaluations.
- The program will ensure effective, quality academic and career advising by faculty in the Department of Nutritional Sciences.
- The program will prepare students to demonstrate a commitment to the development of leadership and management skills with the practice of dietetics.
- The program will maintain an on-going method of self-assessment leading to self-improvement, through ongoing curriculum development and evaluation.

If you have questions about the Didactic Program in Dietetics, or the professional field, please contact your program director, Barbara L. Tangel. She can be reached at:

Department of Nutritional Sciences
229B Davison Hall
26 Nichol Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-2882
(732)932-6525
bltangel@rci.rutgers.edu



Glossary of Terms

American Dietetic Association: With more than 67,000 members, the American Dietetic Association (www.eatright.org) is the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA serves the public by promoting optimal nutrition, health and well-being. ADA members are the nation's food and nutrition experts, translating the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living.

Students in the dietetics option are encouraged to join ADA as student members. As student members, you receive copies of *JADA*, and are eligible to apply for scholarships offered by the American Dietetic Association. As student members of ADA, you are automatically members of NJDA, allowing you to attend professional meetings at reduced rate and network with nutrition professionals in New Jersey. Membership applications are available in Davison Hall.

Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE): ADA's accrediting agency for education programs preparing students for careers as RD's and DTR's (dietetic technician, registered.) The purpose of CADE is to serve the population by establishing and monitoring eligibility requirements and accreditation standards that guarantee the quality of nutrition and dietetics education programs. CADE accredits the programs, which meet the standards of education. CADE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. (www.eatright.org)

Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD): An academic program, in a regionally accredited college or university, that is accredited by CADE, the Commission for Accreditation of Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995, (312) 899-0040, ext. 5400, www.eatright.org. The program meets the academic requirements for acceptance to supervised practice programs in dietetics. The dietetics option in Nutritional Sciences at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences is an accredited Didactic Program in Dietetics.

Supervised Practice in Dietetics (Dietetic Internship): A formalized post-Bachelor's degree educational program accredited by CADE. The curriculum and clinical experiences are designed to meet the foundation skills and competencies of the supervised practice component of dietetics education. Upon successful completion of supervised practice in dietetics, the candidate is eligible to take the national registration examination for dietitians.

Registered Dietitian (R.D.): A dietitian who has completed the registration eligibility requirements established by CADE, successfully passed the Registration Examination for Dietitians, and meets continuing education requirements.

Registration Examination for Dietitians: The R.D. exam, a national computerized multiple-choice test that covers 5 domains of the profession of dietetics. Upon successful completion of the examination, candidates may use the credential “R.D.” to verify expertise in the field of nutrition.

**Registration Examination for Dietitians Test Specifications
Effective 1/1/07**

<u>Domain</u>	<u>% of Exam</u>
I. Food and Nutrition Services	12%
A. Food Science and Nutrient Composition of Foods	
B. Nutrition and Support Services	
II. Nutrition Care Process and Model	40%
Simple and Complex Conditions	
A. Nutrition Screening & Assessment	
B. Nutrition Diagnosis	
C. Nutrition Intervention (Planning & Intervention)	
D. Nutrition Monitoring & Evaluation	
III. Counseling, Communication, Education & Research	10%
A. Assessment & Planning	
B. Implementation & Evaluation	
C. Research	
IV. Foodservice Systems	17%
A. Menu Planning	
B. Procurement, Production, Distribution, & Service	
C. Sanitation & Safety	
D. Facility Planning	
V. Management	21%
A. Human Resources	
B. Finance & Materials	
C. Marketing Products & Services	
D. Functions & Characteristics	
E. Quality Improvement	

The Department of Nutritional Sciences: An Overview

The undergraduate major in Nutritional Sciences in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey is comprised of 3 options: Dietetics, Nutrition, and Food Service Administration. The undergraduate program provides students with a strong background in the biological, physiological, clinical, behavioral, sociological, and psychological dimensions of human nutrition. All students complete the core requirements in biology and chemistry and then pursue the specific coursework pertinent to the option they have chosen.

The Faculty of the Department of Nutritional Sciences

Dawn Brasaemle, Ph.D.	brasaemle@aesop.rutgers.edu
D. Carol Byrd-Bredbenner, Ph.D., R.D., FADA	bredbenner@aesop.rutgers.edu
Joseph Dixon, Ph.D.	dixon@aesop.rutgers.edu
Nurgul Fitzgerald, Ph.D., R.D.	nfitzgerald@rcrc.rutgers.edu
Daniel J. Hoffman, Ph.D.	dhoffman@aesop.rutgers.edu
R. Ariel Igal, Ph.D.	igal@aesop.rutgers.edu
Debrah Palmer, Ph.D.	dpalmer@aesop.rutgers.edu
Peggy Policastro, M.S., R.D.	peggyp@rci.rutgers.edu
Sue A. Shapses, Ph.D., R.D.	shapses@aesop.rutgers.edu
Adria R. Sherman, Ph.D.	sherman_c@aesop.rutgers.edu
Judith Storch, Ph.D., R.D.	storch@aesop.rutgers.edu
Barbara L. Tangel, M.S., R.D.	bltangel@rci.rutgers.edu
Malcolm Watford, D.Phil.	watford@aesop.rutgers.edu
Harriet S. Worobey, M.A.	harrietw@rci.rutgers.edu
John Worobey, Ph.D.	worobey@rci.rutgers.edu

Dietetic Option

The discipline of Dietetics involves knowledge of food and its role in maintaining health, and in some instances, used to treat disease. Knowledge of the nutrient composition and functional food properties, as well as the role of food, food habits and cuisine in the lives of individuals and groups provides a basis from which dietary advice can be formed. In addition, an understanding of the metabolic pathways, both biochemical and physiological completes the knowledge base of the entry-level dietetics professional. Simply stated, Dietetics is both science and art. Inherent in the profession is a strong background in biology, chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, and physiology, as well as an understanding that humans do not consume nutrients, but foods and food combinations, which must be palatable and satisfying, in addition to fulfilling

cultural or ethnic food needs. The Dietetics option emphasizes nutrition and foodservice and prepares students for careers as clinical dietitians and nutritionists, nutrition educators in the community, health promotion facilitators, and consumer specialists in food and nutrition.

As a CADE accredited DPD, the Dietetics option prepares students in the 101 foundation skills and competencies, that are required in the academic setting. The coursework and requirements are designed to fulfill CADE requirements building upon foundation knowledge learned in the basic, core requirements. Students are required to take 2 semesters of general biology, 2 semesters of general chemistry, plus 1 semester of chemistry lab, one semester of elementary organic chemistry and lab, biochemistry, microbiology and lab, and physiology and lab. Social science requirements are economics, psychology, and sociology or nutrition and behavior. Advanced courses in nutritional sciences stress human nutrition and its application to diet and health, through an understanding of metabolism and application of nutrition knowledge in counseling and communication. Students complete a scholarly project in experimental foods, where they test a hypothesis in which an ingredient of a recipe is altered to evaluate the palatability of the new product. Students take 2 specialized courses in foodservice management, where they learn menu planning, food production, distribution, service, procurement, financial management, and facility planning.

Upon completing the Dietetics option, most students elect to apply for supervised practice in dietetics. The application process begins at the beginning of the senior year. The dietetic internship application process is designed and implemented by DEP, the Dietetic Educators of Practitioners Group of the American Dietetic Association. The majority of dietetic internships throughout the country use the same application designed by DEP. All accredited internships participate in a national “match” which is conducted through D & D Digital, Inc., Ames, IA. There are 2 match times each year, September 25 due date for applications for a November match to start the supervised practice program in January of the following year; and February 15, for the April match, for programs starting in August or September. The application process is not difficult, however, it is tedious and detail-oriented, which warrants the need to start planning early. See your DPD Program Director with questions about the process.

Nutrition Option

The Nutrition option emphasizes the metabolic aspects of how organisms use food. It includes knowledge of how food is digested, absorbed, and used for energy and growth; how and why nutrient requirements change over the lifespan and under stress.

The option provides sound training for those intending to go to graduate school in any of the life sciences, conduct biomedical research, or pursue preprofessional (medical or dental) studies. The option prepares students for entry-level jobs in biomedical research in industry and academia.

Food Service Administration

The option in Food Service Administration is intended for students whose career goal is to manage or market a foodservice facility. This option uniquely prepares students in food service management, with a strong background in chemistry, biology, and nutrition, providing a valuable skill set to employers in the U.S. Program graduates have found employment in school lunch facilities, acute, chronic, and rehabilitation healthcare, contract feeding companies, and industry.

Minor in Nutrition

A minor in Nutrition is available to all students enrolled at the university. The minor requires a basis in biology and chemistry, plus additional courses in biochemistry and advanced nutrition.



Nutritionist or Dietitian: What's the Difference?

Seeking good health, nutrition, and fitness is a way of life for many people today. Eating right and feeling good are top priorities for consumers in the U.S. The increased awareness of health and nutrition, as well as the much publicized obesity “epidemic” has led to a need for nutrition professionals who can offer reliable and sound nutrition information. Finding legitimate information is sometimes confusing to the public, since there are a variety of names describing people who claim to possess knowledge in the field of food and nutrition.

The term “nutritionist” is ambiguous, since there is no legal definition of the word. Anyone can call himself or herself a nutritionist, nutrition counselor, or nutrition advisor, regardless of their education or credentials. Academic credentials do not necessarily determine expertise, if someone calling himself a nutritionist has an advanced degree in history! Any professional acting as a nutrition counselor should have at least an undergraduate degree in nutrition, or at the least biochemistry, and an advanced degree in nutrition from an accredited college or university. As an additional safeguard, membership in professional organizations, such as the American Society for Clinical Nutrition, the American Society of Nutrition, the American College of Nutrition, or the Society for Nutrition Education provide legitimacy to the expertise of the nutrition counselor.

The term “Registered Dietitian” is a legally protected title nationally recognized as providing expertise in food and nutrition, having met the following:

- Completion of the Didactic Program in Dietetics with a Bachelor’s degree from a U.S. regionally accredited college or university.
- Completion of a supervised practice program in dietetics accredited by CADE.
- Successful completion of the registration examination for dietitians.
- Maintenance of a Professional Development Portfolio by completing 75 hours of continuing education every 5 years.

Individuals who have completed the Didactic Program in Dietetics, but have not completed supervised practice, or the registration examination can use the term “dietitian”. While the professional term “dietitian” does not ensure appropriate nutrition advice, it is the most reliable way to eliminate unqualified or disreputable individuals. To date, 46 states have licensed dietitians (L.D.) who are required to meet defined educational and professional standards. As of 2007, New Jersey remains one of the four states that have not enacted licensure for dietitians.

The employment outlook for dietitians is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through 2014, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Factors which are cited as driving forces behind this prediction are the continued aging of the population, an increased emphasis on disease prevention through improved diet, and the need for increased efforts in health education.

In 2007, The Phase 2 Future Practice and Education Task Force of the American Dietetic Association surveyed dietetics professionals, government agencies employing dietitians,

and professional associations to collect information about future practice roles of entry level and advanced level practice in dietetics. Although these practice settings are preliminary, they do represent consensus of employment locations of dietitians in the future. The probable RD practice roles identified were:

- in **wellness and disease prevention**, in positions as community nutritionist or public health nutritionist, lifestyle coach, corporate nutritionist, sports nutrition specialist, nutrigenomics specialist, community culinary delivery program specialist, child nutrition specialist, or nutraceutical and supplement advisor.
- in **food and foodservice**, as food safety specialist or customer relations specialist, new product development, developer of software for foodservice systems, food security specialist, environmental dietitian, consumer cooking school director.
- in **communications**, in food and nutrition communication business or as an E-nutrition specialist, consumer or wellness journalist
- in **healthcare**, in extended care—step down, convalescent, rehabilitation; general nutrition practice in ambulatory and clinical areas for nutrition education, as a member of a multidisciplinary healthcare team.
- in **outpatient services**, since more clients will require nutrition counseling through reimbursement through Medical Nutrition Therapy Act, as well as education in healthy lifestyle planning.
- in **public policy**, as nutrition policy consultants in local, state, and federal government, paid lobbyist, global dietitian, nutrition policy advocate
- in **education and research**, as study coordinator or program directors working closely with principal investigators or as principal investigators. (Stakeholder Input of Vision of Dietetics Practice in 2017, DETF, 2007)



How do I become a Registered Dietitian?

Entering the profession of dietetics as a Registered Dietitian is a 3-step process: 1) complete a CADE accredited didactic program in dietetics; 2) complete a CADE accredited supervised practice program; and 3) successfully pass the registration examination for dietitians.

1. Complete a CADE accredited didactic program in dietetics.

The Didactic Program in Dietetics consists of the 101 foundation skills and competencies defined by CADE, (the Commission for Accreditation of Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association) and a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from a U.S. regionally accredited college or university. The program provides all of the academic background to serve as the foundation of knowledge for the profession and results in the student earning a Bachelor of Science degree. At Rutgers, completing the degree requirements for the Dietetics option in the Nutritional Sciences major will fulfill the DPD requirement. Program graduates receive a **DPD Verification Statement** as proof of completion of DPD requirements.

For students who already have a Bachelor's degree in another discipline, coursework completed will be evaluated to determine DPD foundation skills and competencies met and unmet. Depending upon the number of credits needed to meet DPD requirements, students may be advised to enroll as second-degree Bachelor of Science student, since the university limits the number of credits that nonmatriculated students are allowed to take. On occasion, students will take DPD required courses at another college or university and apply those credits toward the DPD, with the approval of the DPD Director.

International students who have earned degrees in countries other than the U.S. must have their degrees evaluated for U.S. equivalency to at least a baccalaureate degree. Coursework must be evaluated as well, to determine credits and grades earned in U.S. equivalents. Individuals who are Registered Dietitians from countries with which the American Dietetic Association has reciprocity, must have completed the entire process of becoming an R.D. in that country in order to be eligible to take only the R.D. exam in the U.S. If any part of the dietitian preparation process was not completed in the home country, the individual must follow the transcript evaluation process as other students.

Students who are returning who already have a degree in another discipline and international students who hold U.S. equivalent baccalaureate degrees are required to complete those DPD foundation skills and competencies unmet in order to receive a **DPD Verification Statement**. In addition, regardless of prior coursework, the department of Nutritional Sciences policy for verification statements is that in order to receive a **Rutgers DPD Verification Statement**, the student must complete at least 4 courses at Rutgers, 11:709:400, 401 Advanced Nutrition I and II, 11:709:344 Quantity Food Production, and 11:709:498 Nutrition & Disease.

2. Complete a CADE accredited supervised practice program.

After completing the DPD and receiving a DPD verification statement, the program graduate is eligible to begin a supervised practice program in dietetics, otherwise known as a Dietetic Internship. Supervised practice programs are located throughout the country and are listed alphabetically, by state, on the website of the American Dietetic Association (www.eatright.org). Each specific internship is linked to the national website listing, so that obtaining information about dietetic internships is easily obtained. During the fall semester of senior year, the application process is outlined in 11:709:405 Professional Issues in Dietetics. Dietetic internship placement is highly competitive, and acceptance is based primarily upon academic achievement (GPA 3.0 or better), work or volunteer experience in dietetics, recommendations, a personal statement of career goals, and interview. Almost all dietetic internships charge tuition, and depending upon the sponsoring institution, financial aid may or may not be available.

After the completion of the supervised practice program in dietetics, the program graduate receives a **Supervised Practice in Dietetics Verification Statement**.

3. Successfully passing the registration examination for dietitians.

The registration examination for dietitians is a national exam designed to test entry-level competence of the dietetics professional. It is computer based, the database of questions is ~1200, covering the 5 domains explained on page 7 of this manual. The level of difficulty of each question is weighted to determine the level of competence of the test-taker in each dietetics domain. It is recommended that the test be taken between 3-12 months after completion of the supervised practice program in dietetics to allow sufficient time to study and not too much time to forget information. Material, which is tested on the R.D. exam covers information learned in both the Didactic Program in Dietetics *and* the supervised practice program in dietetics. You will need to provide copies of both the DPD and the supervised practice in dietetics verification statements to take the exam.

Upon completing the exam, you will know immediately whether you have passed. Congratulations on the culmination of approximately 5 years of work! If you do not pass, it is recommended that you wait 3 months before you retake the exam.



What is the salary range for Registered Dietitians?

According to the 2004 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the overall median income for Registered Dietitians nationwide was \$43,630, with the highest 10% earning \$63,760. The national largest employer of dietitians, general medical and surgical hospitals reported an annual salary of \$44,050.

The results of the American Dietetic Association 2007 salary survey are not yet available; however, in 2005, median income varied by practice area:

- \$53,800 in consultation and business
- \$60,000 in food and nutrition management
- \$60,200 in education and research
- \$48,800 in clinical nutrition/ambulatory care
- \$50,000 in clinical nutrition/long-term care
- \$44,800 in community nutrition
- \$45,000 in clinical nutrition/acute care.

Salaries varied by years of experience, advanced degrees, geographic area and community size.

Nutritional Sciences
SEBS Area Requirements

- _____ I. College Mission: Interdisciplinary Critical Analysis (5-6 credits)
11:__:__ a junior/senior colloquium (3)
- _____ II. Introductory Life and Physical Sciences (7-13 credits)
- A. 01:119:101-102 General Biology (4,4)
- B. 01:160:161 General Chemistry (4)
- _____ III. Humanities and the Arts (6 credits)
- _____ IV. Multicultural and International Studies (6 credits)
- _____ V. Human Behavior, Economic Systems, and Political Processes (9 credits)
- A. Human Behavior
01:830:101 General Psychology
- B. Economic Systems (one of the following)
01:220:102 Intro to Microeconomics
01:220:103 Intro to Macroeconomics
01:220:200 Economic Principles and Problems
11:373:101 Economics, People and the Environment
11:373:121 Principles and Applications of Microeconomics
- C. Political Processes (one of the following)
11:374:102 Global Environmental Processes and Institutions
11:374:279 Politics of Environmental Issues
11:374:313 Environmental Policy and Institutions
01:790:105 American Politics: Public and Private
01:790:201 American Government
01:790:237 Political Economy and Society
01:790:305 Public Policy Formation
01:790:318 Comparative Public Policy
01:790:341 Public Administration: American Bureaucracy
01:790:342 Public Administration: Policy Making
01:790:350 Environmental Politics—U.S. and International
- _____ VI. Oral and Written Communication (6 credits)
01:355:101 Expository Writing I and one other writing course
- _____ VII. Experience-Based Education (0-3 credits)
11:709:344 Quantity Food Production (D)

8/07

**COURSE LIST FOR THE DIETETICS OPTION
ACCREDITED ADA DIDACTIC PROGRAM IN DIETETICS
NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES COURSES (709)**

_____ 201,202	Introduction to Foods and Nutrition, Lab (3,1)
_____ 255	Nutrition and Health (3)
_____ 344	Quantity Food Production (4)
_____ 349	Management of Food Service Systems (3)
_____ 400	Advanced Nutrition I (3)
_____ 401	Advanced Nutrition II (3)
_____ 402 +	Advanced Nutrition I: Readings (1)
_____ 403 +	Advanced Nutrition II: Readings (1)
_____ 405	Professional Issues in Dietetics (1)
_____ 441	Nutrition Counseling and Communication (4)
_____ 442	Community Nutrition (4)
_____ 489	Experimental Foods (3)
_____ 498	Nutrition and Disease (3)

Additional Requirements:

_____ 119:101-102	General Biology (4,4)
_____ 119:131,132	Microbiology for the Health Sciences, Lab (3,1) or
_____ 01:119:133,134	Introduction to Microorganisms, Lab
_____ 146:356,357	Systems Physiology, Lab (3,1)
_____ 160:161-162,171	General Chemistry (4,4), Lab (1)
_____ 160:209,211	Elementary Organic Chemistry, Lab (3,1)
_____ 694:301	Intro to Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (3)
_____ 373:341	Management: Human Systems Development (3) or
_____ 830:373	Organizational and Personnel Psychology (3)
_____ 640:115	Precalculus (4) or equivalent
_____ 960:401	Basic Statistics for Research (3)
_____ 373:101	Economics, People, and Environment (3) or other economics course
_____ 830:101	General Psychology (3)
_____ 709:452	Nutrition and Behavior (3) or
_____ 920:101	Introduction for Sociology (3)

Effective: Class of 2007

ORDER OF COURSES: Many courses have prerequisites. See catalogue descriptions. For example, 709:344 should be taken after 709:201,202 and 709:255. 709:344 is a prerequisite for 709:349. Students must achieve a "C" or better in all required biological sciences, biochemistry, chemistry, and nutrition courses before taking 709:400, 401, and 498.

+ Recommended, but not required

revised 2007

How do I better my chances of being accepted by a Dietetic Internship?

The application process to a dietetic internship is a tedious process, but there are steps that Nutritional Sciences students can take to make the application process less stressful. In the past several years, several dietetic internships have closed, and in effect this has reduced the national rate of acceptance to supervised practice in dietetics. In 2007, the national “match rate” for dietetic internships in the spring was 60% for those applicants seeking positions. Rutgers match-rate to dietetic internships has consistently surpassed the national rate, in 2007; the Rutgers match-rate was 70%. The reputation of the Rutgers DPD and the successes of our program graduates are well known throughout the Northeast, making an applicant from Rutgers a viable candidate in the pool of applicants to an internship.

The steps to preparing to apply for supervised practice in dietetics cannot be accomplished quickly. It is important to take note of them and follow the recommendations over the time you remain as a student in Nutritional Sciences.

Step One: Take academics seriously. The application process is competitive, and the higher your GPA, the better your chances. Take note; however, that grade point average is not the only criterion to be accepted, and without a complete application packet the 4.0 student may not be accepted to the program of his or her choice! Although it is difficult to generalize, in most cases, a 3.0 overall GPA is usually required to be accepted to most programs.

Dietetic internship admissions committees will analyze the academic record of an applicant in several ways. They will certainly look at and weigh heavily the applicant’s overall GPA. The overall GPA is not only earned at Rutgers, but from all other colleges and universities that you may have attended. Rutgers will accept credits from other institutions, but it does not accept grades, so that the Rutgers GPA only reflects an average of the courses you have taken at Rutgers. In the supervised practice application, it will be your responsibility to calculate your overall GPA if you have transferred any required courses to Rutgers. If you take chemistry or biology at a community college, for instance, strive to do well, since an “A” or a “B” will greatly enhance your overall GPA on your supervised practice application.

The supervised practice application includes a section in which the applicant lists all of the courses taken which meet the didactic program in dietetics. In this section, the applicant must calculate his or her DPD GPA. The DPD GPA is evaluated by internships as indicative of potential success in the supervised practice program. Strive to do well in all Nutritional Sciences courses (709) and the other courses, which are required for the major, see pages 16-17 of this manual.

Some dietetic internships will evaluate separately the science GPA of the applicants to their programs. Since grades in the sciences will affect both the overall and DPD GPAs, this statement may be redundant, but do take note, the sciences are believed to be extremely important indicators of future success as a dietitian. Several dietetic internship admissions committees will

calculate the science GPAs of the applicants to their programs. Your grades in general biology, general chemistry, intro to experimentation, elementary organic chemistry + lab, biochemistry & molecular biology, systems physiology + lab, and microbiology for the health sciences + lab are important.

To summarize Step One: 3.0 overall GPA + 3.0 DPD GPA + 3.0 science GPA = a solid, competitive applicant for supervised practice in dietetics.

Step Two: Get experience in dietetics. The second evaluation criterion of most dietetic internship admissions committees is the knowledge of the applicant of the field of dietetics. There are many different types of experiences, which are valuable and equally beneficial to prepare an individual for a dietetic internship. Experience is not limited to hospital dietary department exclusively, but can be in chronic care or rehabilitation facilities, in community nutrition, or foodservice. Having experience in a variety of dietetics-related facilities increases the depth of knowledge you have to offer as a dietetic intern. The experiences may be paid or volunteer, and can be accumulated over the course of your undergraduate career either during the academic year, summers, or both.

It is advisable to gain some experience, either volunteer or paid, in an acute care hospital. Although not mandatory to be accepted into an internship, most internship directors look for applicants who have an understanding of the function of a diet office, communication between patient floors and nursing with dietary and food production, and the communication between the diet office, food production, and tray service.

Shadowing a dietitian for some time has been an excellent opportunity to learn the duties and responsibilities of a professional in dietetics. Look for shadowing opportunities in acute and chronic care facilities, outpatient and community nutrition locations, and dietitians in private practice.

Foodservice experience in food preparation or distribution is valuable to the supervised practice program applicant. Knowledge of food production, sanitation, service, menu planning, inventory management, supervision, and leadership is provided in foodservice experiences. If you have worked your way up in a foodservice hierarchy, such as, you were hired as a sandwich maker, but over time have been promoted to assistant manager or supervisor, the promotion is particularly valued by internship admissions committees.

There are a number of dietetics related experiences available on campus. Within the Department of Nutritional Sciences is an opportunity for students to work for the RU Healthy Dining Team. Funded by a grant from Rutgers Division of Dining Services, students work under the supervision of an R.D. writing newsletters and conducting nutrition education projects in the 5 dining halls on campus. The benefits of this experience have been cited numerous times by dietetic internship admissions committees as providing sound nutrition education experience. In the Department of Health Education, the Nutrition Advocates act as preprofessional nutrition experts in service to the university student body. The focus of their work centers upon providing nutrition information and diet analysis to student groups in dormitories, student clubs, fraternities,

sororities, and campus dining halls. Under the supervision of a registered dietitian, the nutrition advocates provide peer nutrition counseling to the Rutgers student community. The SEBS Cooperative Education Program is an opportunity for students to gain work experience in dietetics, as well as earn credits. Students have had paid acute care hospital experience and earned 3 or 6 credits through coop.

There are opportunities for students to work in nutrition research at the college, as well as in the department of Nutritional Sciences. Students in the top 15% of their class as juniors are invited to participate in the George H. Cook Honors Program in which the student prepares a hypothesis, conducts research and defends the results before a committee. In the department, students have worked in lipid research and obesity projects, the Rutgers Infant Nutrition & Growth Project (RING), and Get Healthy NJ, to name just a few opportunities.

The Nutritional Sciences Preschool offers unique exposure to 3- and 4- year old children and the opportunity for the college student to plan and deliver nutrition education sessions to the children.

The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program was implemented in 1997 through funding from USDA to deliver nutrition education to food stamp eligible individuals and families. The program is active in twelve of New Jersey's 21 counties, with the centralized administration housed in Nutritional Sciences, Davison Hall. Volunteer experiences or employment in this very active group of community nutritionists and paraprofessionals provides an understanding of food and nutrition services in New Jersey counties.

Nutrition Club membership provides exposure to the interests of the student body in nutrition, and provides opportunity for students to network. Active membership in the Nutrition Club provides valuable leadership experience.

To summarize Step Two: Get work experience, paid or volunteer, in dietetics (healthcare, community, foodservice, on campus). The length of time necessary is indefinite, but one year is good. Have more than one experience, if possible.

Step Three: Develop and cultivate professional relationships. Dietetics is a person-oriented profession; there are numerous interactions between the dietitian and his/her clients, employees, supervisors and manager, and peers. The supervised practice application requires 3 recommendations from professionals who are able to comment upon qualities other than your abilities as a student who did well in a particular class. Dependability, ability to work individually and as a member of a group, adaptability, and reaction to stress are some of the personal characteristics that are asked of the person who is writing in your behalf to comment upon. It is difficult to comment upon these qualities if they have never been observed!

The majority of dietetic internships require 3 letters of recommendation, and specifically ask that the applicant have 2 letters from faculty of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, and one from a work supervisor. All faculty of the Department of Nutritional Sciences are open to

writing in your behalf, and the better they know you, the better the recommendation. A topic of discussion among the educators in dietetics programs in the past year dealt with the topic of internship applicants who fail to ask R.D. faculty to write recommendations. The consensus opinion of the educators was that the R.D. has a superior perspective from which to evaluate the professional potential of the dietetics student. It would be advantageous to have at least one of your faculty references be an R.D. While it is understandable to be apprehensive to approach faculty and start a conversation, the faculty of the Department of Nutritional Sciences desires to know its students, and all members would welcome getting to know you even a little better.

As you get work experience in the field of dietetics, you will likely be working alongside, or have an R.D. as your supervisor. S/he too would be an excellent choice for writing a recommendation in your behalf. If you leave a job for another, or to return to school, maintain contact with your work supervisor to plan to ask him or her for a recommendation at the time when you will be applying for supervised practice in dietetics. Let them know what you're doing, how the semesters are progressing, so that they can write an informed letter which reflects what you are currently doing.

To summarize Step Three: Don't be shy, tell us about yourself. If you take advantage of some of the paid or volunteer experiences on campus, you can better accomplish steps two and three!

Step Four: Keep a professional history and diary to be used when writing your goals statement. Every Dietetic Internship requires that an applicant write a statement about themselves, what got them interested in dietetics, what they've done over the years to prepare to become a dietitian, and what they've learned and how they've grown from a series of experiences. The personal statement is one of the most difficult papers that a college student ever writes, so that keeping notes over time may assist you when you need to write proactively without sounding boastful. During Professional Issues in Dietetics, you will write 2 drafts as required for completing the course, but students often redraft their personal statements many times until they feel that it really expresses what they want to say about themselves.

To summarize Step Four: Keep notes of professional experiences and your reactions to the experiences. Refer to them when writing your personal statement.

Step Five: Prepare yourself for a personal interview. The majority of supervised practice programs will require either a personal or telephone interview. In addition, a number of programs in the geographic area will ask for a writing sample or mathematical calculation before the interview begins. Many program interviews are conducted as behavioral interviews, the interviewer describes a hypothetical example scenario and asks the applicant to discuss what would he or she do if placed in the situation.

Rutgers Career Services provides students with several options to improve interviewing skills. Mock interviews and videotaping are available to students by appointment. Take a look at the Career Services website: <http://careerservices.rutgers.edu>.

To summarize Step Five: Practice interviewing.

Step Six: Set realistic goals. When applying for supervised practice in dietetics, look for programs, which set admission standards in line with the characteristics, which you possess. Some programs are more difficult to match, while others appear less difficult. Due to the computer-matching feature of acceptance, neither the dietetic internships nor the didactic programs in dietetics know where students will be attending until “Match Day.”

To summarize Step Six: Be realistic in applying to dietetic internships. Without a strong academic record and experience in dietetics, it is very difficult to match.

There is no magic number of applications, but with a 3.0 GPA, 5 applications are recommended.

Substitutions for Required Courses

To be certain that dietetics students meet DPD requirements as directed by CADE, students are encouraged to complete DPD requirements at Rutgers. Students who wish to substitute equivalent courses for required classes must receive approval for these substitutions. All students are encouraged to discuss course substitutions with their academic advisor or DPD Director prior to seeking official school approval.

1. Approval for courses taken at other schools:

Matriculated students who plan to take required courses at another college or university must have approval from SEBS to transfer the course. Students should contact the Office of Academic and Student Programs in Martin Hall for information.

Nonmatriculated students completing DPD requirements must have prior approval from the DPD Director. Students should send a copy of the course description to the Director's office in Davison Hall.

2. Approval for courses taken at Rutgers:

All students, matriculated and nonmatriculated who seek approval to take a Rutgers course in substitution for a DPD required course must discuss the substitution with the DPD Director prior to enrolling in the course. A note will be added to the student's file indicated approval for the substitute.

Note: More advanced courses in math, science, and other disciplines (e.g. 01:160:307, 308 Organic Chemistry) are always acceptable substitutes. Students may elect to take more advanced courses if they are considering graduate study in nutritional sciences or biochemistry or medical/dental School. Consult your academic advisor for further information.

What do I need to do if I already have a Bachelor's Degree?

Physical Sciences	Biology, a full year course (2 semesters) with lab (4,4 cr) General Chemistry, Inorganic, a full year (2 semesters) with 1 semester lab (4,4,1 cr) Organic Chemistry, one semester course with lab (3,1 cr) *Biochemistry, one semester (3 cr) Microbiology, one semester with lab (3,1 cr) Human Vertebrate Physiology, one semester with lab (3,1 cr) or 2 semesters of Anatomy & Physiology with lab
Social Sciences	General Psychology (3 cr) General Sociology (3 cr) 1 semester of Economics (3 cr)
Mathematics	1 Semester of Statistics (3 cr)
Foods	1 semester of introductory foods with lab (3,1 cr) 1 semester of food science or experimental foods (3 cr) with organic chemistry as prerequisite
Nutrition	1 semester of basic human nutrition (3 cr) 2 semesters of advanced nutrition with biochemistry (3,3 cr) as prerequisite Community Nutrition, 1 semester (4 cr) Nutrition Education or Nutrition Counseling, (4 cr) 1 semester Professional Issues in Dietetics, 1 semester (1 cr)
Foodservice Management	Quantity Food Production, 1 semester with lab (4 cr) 1 semester of Organizational Behavior or Industrial Psychology (3 cr) Management of Foodservice Systems, 1 semester (3 cr)

*Biochemistry must have been taken within the last 10 years.

If as a returning student, you have already completed General Biology and General Chemistry, the remaining requirements could be completed in 2 years, depending upon the semester entering the program. Some courses only meet in the fall semester, some are only spring courses.

If the number of credits required to complete the DPD is 32 or fewer credits, you may enroll in Rutgers University as a nonmatriculated student to complete DPD requirements and receive a DPD verification statement. If the total number of credits needed to complete the program is greater than 32, it is recommended to matriculate as a second-degree student in the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences.

What should I do if I have a complaint about the dietetics education program?

Students with a complaint about the Rutgers Didactic Program in Dietetics are encouraged to discuss the issue with their academic advisor, the DPD Director, the undergraduate program coordinator, or the interim department chair. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses for these individuals are listed on page 1 of this manual. Students have the right to file a formal complaint against any dietetics program, which fails to comply with accreditation standards set by CADE, the Commission for Accreditation of Dietetics Education, American Dietetic Association. The filing procedure is outlined below.

If a student's complaint remains unresolved at the department, school, or university level, CADE has an established procedure to deal with complaints against programs.

Procedure for Complaints Against Programs

CADE has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring the quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner or member of the public, may submit a complaint against any accredited or approved program to CADE. CADE will not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admissions, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty or students. It will act only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the accreditation standards or policies. The complainant must sign the complaint. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education
American Dietetic Association
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000
Chicago, IL 60606-6995
(312) 899-0040, ext. 5400

Am I covered by insurance when I am in an academic setting?

Students are covered for general liability by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey for all academic reasons, both on and off campus. This coverage includes laboratories required to be completed by students enrolled in 11:709:344 Quantity Food Production, which may be held off the campus of the university.

Common Questions about Supervised Practice Appointments and Computer Matching

When should I begin investigating supervised practice programs?

It's never too early to begin the process of investigating dietetic internships. Each internship will provide a unique focus in the field of dietetics, and it is to your advantage to learn as much as you can about the internships, which offer or specialize in areas of nutrition, which interest you most. Are you interested in clinical nutrition? Pediatric nutrition? Computer applications in nutrition? Public health? Find out as much as you can about the programs to which you will potentially apply. At the very latest, you should begin investigating programs during the summer before your senior year. During the fall semester of your senior year, continue to investigate programs and attend as many open houses as possible.

What do I have to do to apply for supervised practice programs?

There are 2 components to the process. First, you must complete the standard *Supervised Practice Program* application, available at www.depdp.org. The application will be included in a packet of materials, which the applicant compiles to send to the programs to which they are applying. Most dietetic internships will require the application, personal statement (some of which will be handwritten), official transcripts for all coursework in the DPD, and 3 recommendations sealed in envelopes.

The second component is to rank order the programs to which you are applying in decreasing order of your wish to attend them, that is, the program that you would like to attend should be ranked first, and the second program next, etc. Obtain a D & D Digital mark sense card from your Program Director, and mark the ranking you choose for the internships to which you are applying. Return the mark sense card to D & D Digital, Inc., postmarked no later than September 25 for fall match and February 15 for the spring match.

What does a computer-matching program do?

The matching program serves as a clearinghouse to help applicants obtain supervised practice positions of their choice and to help dietetic internships obtain applicants of their choice. It eliminates unfair pressures and premature decisions in appointments by programs and acceptance or rejection of appointments by applicants. ADA has contracted with D & D Digital to facilitate matching through a computerized process.

Is there a limit to the number of programs that I can apply to and rank for computer matching?

There is no limit to the number of programs selected; however, you must submit an application to each program you list on the mark sense card sent to D & D Digital. Programs charge an application fee, so applying to many programs can be costly.

Who screens the applications and decides which applicants are accepted to a program?

Each supervised practice program reviews its applications using specific admissions standards unique to its program. The DI Director will submit a prioritized list of acceptable applicants along with the number of positions to be filled. Computer matching does not change the applicant's or the program's selection process. You will only be matched to programs to which you applied.

What can I do if I don't match with a program?

The computer matching system does not fill all of the dietetic internship positions nationwide. After each match sequence, a list of programs with openings is published on the D & D Digital website. Applicants are free to contact those programs listed and follow directions to apply to fill an opened position.

What can I do if I'm not doing a supervised practice program?

Some dietetics students will choose not to apply for an internship immediately after graduation from Rutgers. Others who applied for supervised practice will not match with any supervised practice program. Determine your interests and consider the following options:

1. Go to graduate school in nutrition, dietetics, public health, or other related fields of study. Graduate school admission generally requires a good GPA. Most schools also require that students score well on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE.) If you think that there is an outside chance that you will apply to graduate school, plan to take the GRE no later than the fall of your senior year. Some graduate programs in nutrition and dietetics offer supervised practice programs that are open only to their graduate students. Students apply to these programs after admission to the graduate program.
2. Work as a diet technician or assistant. Many hospitals and long term care facilities hire individuals with bachelor's degrees in dietetics to work as diet technicians or assistants. These positions are excellent for graduates who plan to apply or reapply to supervised practice programs in dietetics.
3. Work in foodservice management. These positions are available to graduates who are interested in a career in business. Food management companies (Aramark, Sodexo) and restaurant chains look for energetic people who they train to manage operations in schools, businesses, health care facilities, etc.
4. Work as a WIC Nutritionist. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children hire individuals who have a DPD verification statement. WIC Nutritionists conduct nutritional assessments and provide nutrition education to low-income women and their children up to the age of 5.

5. If your GPA is low, consider repeating courses or taking additional courses in the sciences or nutrition to improve your knowledge base. Dietetic internship directors look highly on individuals who assess their strengths and weaknesses and take initiative to correct possible deficiencies in academic preparation.

Appendix

Foundations Skills and Competences

Didactic Program in Dietetics



**Knowledge, Skills and Competencies for Entry-Level
Dietitian Education Programs**
Required topics in the didactic program in dietetics

Foundation Knowledge and Skills for the Didactic Component

The entry-level dietitian is knowledgeable in the eight areas listed below. The foundation knowledge and skills precede achievement of the core and emphasis area(s) competencies, which identify the performance level expected upon completion of the supervised practice program.

Foundation learning has two parts: 1) knowledge of a topic as it applies to the profession of dietetics, and 2) the ability to demonstrate the skill at a level that can be developed further. To successfully achieve the foundation knowledge and skills, graduates must have demonstrated the ability to communicate and collaborate, solve problems, and apply critical thinking skills.

1. Communications

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Negotiation techniques
- Lay and technical writing
- Media presentations
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Counseling theory and methods
- Interviewing techniques
- Educational theory and techniques
- Concepts of human and group dynamics
- Public speaking
- Educational materials development

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to*:

- Use oral and written communications in presenting an educational session for a group
- Counsel individuals on nutrition
- Document appropriately a variety of activities
- Explain a public policy position regarding dietetics
- Use current information technologies
- Work effectively as a team member

2. Physical and Biological Sciences

Graduates will have *knowledge of*:

- Exercise physiology
- Genetics
- General health assessment, e.g., blood pressure and vital signs
- Organic chemistry

- Biochemistry
- Physiology
- Microbiology
- Nutrient metabolism
- Pathophysiology related to nutrition care
- Fluid and electrolyte requirements
- Pharmacology: nutrient-nutrient and drug-nutrient interaction

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to:*

- Interpret medical terminology
- Interpret laboratory parameters relating to nutrition
- Apply microbiological and chemical considerations to process controls

3. Social Sciences

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Public policy development
- Psychology
- Health behaviors and educational needs of diverse populations
- Economics and nutrition

4. Research

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Research methodologies
- Needs assessments
- Outcomes-based research
- Scientific method
- Quality improvement methods

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to:*

- Interpret current research
- Interpret basic statistics

5. Food

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Food technology
- Biotechnology
- Culinary techniques
- Sociocultural and ethnic food consumption issues and trends
- Food safety and sanitation
- Food delivery systems
- Food and nonfood procurement
- Availability of food and nutrition programs in the community
- Local, state, and national food security policy
- Food production systems
- Environmental issues related to food

- Role of food in promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- Promotion of pleasurable eating
- Food and nutrition laws/regulations/policies
- Food availability and access for the individual, family, and community
- Applied sensory evaluation of food

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to:*

- Calculate and interpret nutrient composition of foods
- Determine recipe/formula proportions and modifications for volume food production
- Apply food science knowledge to functions of ingredients in food
- Demonstrate basic food preparation and presentation skills
- Modify recipe/formula for individual or group dietary needs

6. Nutrition

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Evolving methods of assessing health status
- Influence of age, growth, and normal development on nutritional requirements
- Nutrition and metabolism
- Assessment and treatment of nutritional health risks
- Medical nutrition therapy
- Strategies to assess need for adaptive feeding techniques and equipment
- Health promotion and disease prevention theories and guidelines
- Influence of socioeconomic, cultural, and psychological factors on food and nutrition behavior
- Complementary and alternative nutrition and herbal therapies
- Dietary supplements

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to:*

- Calculate and/or define diets for health conditions addressed by health promotion/disease prevention activities or uncomplicated instances of chronic diseases of the general population, e.g., hypertension, obesity, diabetes, and diverticular disease
- Screen individuals for nutritional risk
- Collect pertinent information for comprehensive nutrition assessments
- Determine nutrient requirements across the lifespan
- Translate nutrition needs into food choices and menus for people of diverse cultures and religions
- Measure, calculate, and interpret body composition data
- Calculate enteral and parenteral nutrition formulations

7. Management

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Program planning, monitoring, and evaluation

- Strategic management
- Facility management
- Organizational change theory
- Risk management
- Management theories
- Human resource management, including labor relations
- Materials management
- Financial management, including accounting principles
- Quality improvement
- Information management
- Systems theory
- Marketing theory and techniques
- Diversity issues

Graduates will have *demonstrated the ability to:*

- Determine costs of services/operations
- Prepare a budget
- Interpret financial data
- Apply marketing principles
- Develop a personal portfolio

8. Health Care Systems

Graduates will have *knowledge of:*

- Health care policy and administration
- Health care delivery systems
- Current reimbursement issues, policies, and regulations