Dietetic Internship Program Intern Handbook

This program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics the accrediting agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Program
Mission Statement and Program Goals
Structure of the Program
Program Costs
Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures
Statement of Equal Opportunity
Policies and Procedures Related to Student Services
Insurance
Travel Requirements
University Academic Policies
Class Attendance and Conduct
Dismissal from the Program
Dismissal Procedures
Program Completion Requirements
Assessment of Prior Learning
Policies and Procedures for Supervised Practice Sites
Criteria and Process for Assigning Students to Supervised Practice Sites
Problem-Solving at sites
Inquiries at Sites
Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks
Educational Purpose of Supervised Practice
Formal Assessment of Learning While at Sites
Unsatisfactory Progress - Retention and Remediation
Work Assignments
Attendance at Sites
Snow Day/Severe Weather Policy
Vacation and Holiday Policies
Ethical and Professional Behavior
Confidentiality of Client Information
Use of Medical Records
Fulfillment of Professional Duties
Personal Appearance and Grooming
Personal Communications
Campus Orientation
Location, Office Hours, Faculty and Staff
Parking and Vehicle Registration
Shuttle Buses and Local Buses
Student Identification Cards
Campus Map
Internship Competency Areas
Competency Statements for the Supervised Practice Component of the Dietetic Internship
Competency/Learning Outcomes for Dietetic Internship Programs
Program-defined concentration competencies

Introduction to the Program

This handbook is intended to assist you in navigating the internship program. Written policies and procedures protect your rights as an intern and are consistent with university policies and those of our accrediting body (ACEND). Policies and procedures for supervised practice sites describe site placements and will help facilitate problem-solving. Each site will have specific policies and procedures for their particular organization, and you will be provided with those details in orientation to your site.

The Nutrition Science and Dietetics Programs welcome you to the dietetic internship. We are committed to providing you with meaningful and quality practice experiences in this, the second step of the credentialing process to become a registered dietitian nutritionist. Program activities will assist you in preparation for the C.D.R. credentialing examination for dietitian nutritionists.

Mission Statement and Program Goals

The Dietetic Internship at Syracuse University seeks to prepare graduates to become entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists to fulfill the employment needs of nutrition and dietetics employers and to positively affect individuals, families, and communities through the application of the nutrition care process with a concentration in program monitoring, evaluation, and outcomes management.

Program Goals and Outcome Measures

1. To prepare graduates for success as entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists

   Outcome measures:
   a. Program completion rate: At least 80% of program students complete program requirements within 13 months (150% of the program length).
b. R.D. exam pass rate (program specific): Over a 3 year period, at least 80% of program graduates pass the C.D.R. credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists on the first attempt.

c. R.D. exam pass rate: The program's one-year pass rate (graduates who pass the registration exam within one year of first attempt) on the C.D.R. credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists is at least 80%.

d. 90 percent of program graduates take the C.D.R. credentialing exam for dietitian nutritionists within 12 months of program completion.

e. Employer satisfaction: Of employers who respond to annual surveys, greater than 75 percent will rate their satisfaction with graduate's preparation for entry-level practice as registered dietitian nutritionists as satisfied or very satisfied.

f. Intern exit survey (program specific): In an exit survey, greater than 80% of program students will rate their ability to apply the N.C.P. in their professional practice as confident.

2. Graduates will fulfill the employment needs of nutrition and dietetics employers.

Outcome measures:

a. Employment: Of graduates who seek employment, at least 80 percent are employed in nutrition and dietetics or related fields within 12 months of graduation.

b. Employment in C.N.Y. (program specific): Over a 3 year period, at least 70% of graduates desiring employment in the C.N.Y. area will secure employment. (C.N.Y. is defined as approximately 1.5 hour radius of Syracuse.)

3. The program will prepare graduates to value life-long learning and self-assessment in order to manage their personal and professional development.

Outcome measures (all program specific):

a. Of those who respond to a one-year post-graduate survey, at least 75% will report that they have participated in a national, state or local C.P.E.U. event.

b. Of those who respond to a one-year post-graduate survey, at least 50% will report that they have applied for licensure or certification in the state they reside.

c. Of those who respond to a one-year post-graduate survey, at least 80% will reply that the program prepared them to value life-long learning and self-assessment to manage their professional and personal lives.

d. Of those who respond to a one-year post-graduate survey, at least 50% will report that they are pursuing a certificate of advanced practice or advanced degree.

e. Concentration assessment: Annually through exit surveys, 80% of program students state that they feel competent to develop or participate in program monitoring and perform outcomes management.

Outcomes data is available from the program director upon request.

The Dietetic Internship (D.I.) program provides an opportunity for interns to gain competency for careers as entry-level registered dietitian nutritionists. The Dietetic Internship builds on academic skills acquired during completion of an accredited D.P.D. (Didactic Program in Dietetics) program. A carefully structured program of at least 1200 hours of supervised practice experience focused on the nutrition care process and model and outcomes management is based on the ACEND Accreditation Standards for Dietetic Internships.

Syracuse University’s Dietetic Internship program is currently granted accreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, Illinois, 60606-6995 (800.877.1600). ACEND is recognized by the United States Department of Education and the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (A.S.P.A.). Upon completion of the program, graduates will be eligible for active membership in The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and may take the registration examination for dietitian nutritionists through the Commission on Dietetics Registration (C.D.R.). Upon passing the exam, many R.D.s apply for licensure/certification in the state(s) in which they practice. Licensure/certification is a state credential or requirement and is separate from the internship and from dietetic registration.

Structure of the Program

Dietetic Internship Calendar

The Dietetic Internship starts in late August according to the fall semester academic calendar and takes a minimum of 32 weeks of supervised practice (plus limited vacation time). From late August until mid-May, the program is full-time (32 hours of supervised practice plus approximately seven hours of weekly didactic instruction).

Academics

The internship program provides graduate credit and a Certificate of Advanced Study (C.A.S.). Students who wish to complete a master’s degree after the internship must apply to the graduate school. The Department of Nutrition and Food Studies offers both a Master of Arts and a Master of Science Degree in Nutrition Science. Not all of the internship credits count towards the master’s degree in Nutrition Science.

The Dietetic Internship consists of 13 graduate credits. For the fall semester, all interns must register for N.S.D. 650 Dietetics Practicum (3 credits), N.S.D. 680 Seminar in Food and Nutrition (3 credits), and N.S.D. 515 Physical Assessment and Multi-skilling (1 credit).

For the spring semester, all interns register for N.S.D. 650 Dietetics Practicum (3 credits) and N.S.D. 658 Participatory Program Planning (3 credits).

N.S.D. 680 Seminar in Food and Nutrition (3 credits)

The program begins with an overview of the program and facilities, and discussion of Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice, Standards of Professional Performance framework, and the Nutrition Care Process and Model (N.C.P.M.). An evaluation of D.P.D. knowledge in medical nutrition therapy, community nutrition, long-term care and food management calculations and food safety will be assessed by four computer-based multiple-choice exams. Interns will have two opportunities to score at least 70 percent on each examination before program completion. If a score of 70 percent is not achieved at the end of each semester, remedial study must be completed before an intern is allowed to progress to the next practice area or is verified.

After orientation, interns will continue to meet on Mondays in N.S.D. 680 Seminar in Food and Nutrition throughout the fall semester. The focus of the seminar will be the application of the N.C.P.M. as it applies to individuals, groups, and populations across the lifespan. The seminar will present didactic material related to the following conditions: weight management, endocrine disorders, cancer, cardiovascular disease/disorders of lipid metabolism, G.I., and renal disease. The topics will be coordinated as closely as possible to topics in N.S.D. 515 Physical Assessment and Multi-skilling.

The second half of the seminar will prepare interns to implement nutrition interventions and begin to monitor and evaluate care. Every month, schedules, topics, and assignments will be distributed and/or posted. More details will be discussed during orientation. Some of the seminar course will count towards supervised practice hours as a simulation, case study, and/or role playing.
N.S.D. 515 Physical Assessment and Multi-skilling (1 credit)

This course meets on Mondays during the fall semester for a total of 16 contact hours. The course covers topics related to nutrition focused physical assessment such as abdominal assessment with interventions such as tube feedings, cardiovascular assessment and blood pressure monitoring, skin and wound assessment, as well as dysphagia and diabetes monitoring. The course involves hands-on skill with individual and group validations and is considered part of supervised practice as a simulation.

N.S.D. 650 Dietetics Practicum (Fall and Spring Semesters, 3 credits each semester)

Following orientation, each intern will be assigned to one of two practice areas for the semester. Practice area one is community based food and nutrition settings focusing on nutrition education, counseling, and food management in either child or senior feeding programs. Practice area two is health care settings and includes acute care/ critical care, long-term care and outpatient/ specialties.

To allow close supervision and individualized treatment, interns will be assigned one or two at a time to most facilities; the order of the rotations will vary within each practice area. Students will be expected to track their experiences with patients and clients in terms of lifespan and medical conditions.

After completing one of the practice settings in the fall semester, the intern will switch to the second practice setting for the spring semester.

Community Based Food and Nutrition Settings

Community Education and Counseling - 8 weeks

Interns will assess the nutritional concerns of individuals, groups and families in community settings. They will apply diagnostic terminology, and practice interventions of education and counseling, food and or nutrient delivery and begin to coordinate nutrition care.

Affiliated agencies: Crouse Bariatric Center; Food Bank of Central New York; Head Start/P.E.A.C.E.; Hutchings Psychiatric Center; Kelly's Choice Nutritional Company; Onondaga County Department of Adult and Long Term Care Services; P.A.C.E. of C.N.Y.; Women, Infants and Children (W.I.C.).

Food Management – 6 weeks

Interns will gain competence in the practice of management and the use of resources through the provision of food services to individuals and organizations.

Affiliated agencies: Baldwinsville Central School District; Liverpool Central School District; Meal on Wheels of Syracuse, North Syracuse Central School District; Skaneateles Central School District; Syracuse City School District; Syracuse University Food Service; S.U.N.Y. Oswego Dining Services.

Health Care Settings

Long-term/Extended Care – 5 weeks

Interns will work with clients and preceptors in a long-term care facility gaining experience in medical nutrition therapy, documentation and state and federal regulations. The experience culminates in staff relief. The intern will apply the nutrition care process to patient management reports and presentation.

Affiliated agencies: Loretto Corporation; Jewish Home of C.N.Y.; The Centers at St Camillus; Van Duyn Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing; The Manor at Seneca Hill.

Acute Care – 9 weeks

This rotation will focus on medical nutrition therapy in an inpatient setting, which includes inpatient disease management as well as critical care. The experience will culminate in a week of staff relief. The intern will gain competency with the N.C.P. and A.D.I.M.E. documentation in reports to program director and will follow hospital guidelines for nutrition care services.

Affiliated agencies: Crouse Hospital; Auburn Community Hospital; Oswego Hospital; St Joseph's Hospital Health Center; Syracuse Veteran's Administration Medical Center; Upstate University Hospitals.

Outpatient/ Specialties Care – 2 weeks

Interns will be introduced to medical nutrition therapy in outpatient clinics. All interns will have two weeks of experience in a clinical specialty, such as renal dialysis, diabetes, oncology, bariatrics, or high-risk obstetrics. The goal of this rotation is to compare and contrast the N.C.P. in an outpatient setting and to gain experience with coding and payment for services.

N.S.D. 658 Participatory Program Planning. (3 credits)

Students produce a plan for how they will apply the steps of the PRECEDE-PROCEED model to research and participate with their community of choice to develop a nutrition program. This course is the academic framework for the internship concentration in program monitoring/evaluation and outcomes management.

Expected Competence to be Attained by Graduates

Graduates of the Dietetic Internship program will be prepared for application of the nutrition care process in entry-level positions in dietetics and be committed to life-long learning. All interns must achieve competency in the core statements as evidenced by evaluation scores of 3 (on a 5-point scale) or better in rotations, assessed as highest score achieved during program. In addition, all interns must complete N.S.D. 658- Participatory Program Planning, which includes a nutrition focused outcomes project, with a grade of B- or better.

Verification Policy
The Dietetic Internship Director will prepare verification statements for all graduates who have successfully completed the program and met all program requirements. The director initiates the application and verification for registration with the Commission on Dietetic Registration, but it is the graduate's responsibility to accurately complete the remaining paperwork with Pearson V.U.E. and schedule the examination. Internship requirements include all of the following:

1. Completion of at least 1200 hours of supervised practice or alternate learning, as established by the Syracuse University Dietetic Internship program
2. Score of 3 (on a 5-point scale) or greater for all competencies and overall rotation final grade
3. Completion of exit interview
5. Final grade of B or greater for N.S.D. 515, N.S.D. 650, N.S.D. 680
6. Final grade of B- or greater for N.S.D. 658
7. Maintenance of overall G.P.A. of 3.0 or greater
8. Completion of all class and rotation assignments
9. Development of a professional portfolio

**Program Costs**

*Estimated Cost of Attendance* based on figures from the Syracuse University website

### Non-Optional Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>expense</th>
<th>cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse University tuition ($1620/credit hour; register for 13 credit hours)</td>
<td>$21,060.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum Course Fee (N.S.D. 650)</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Professional Liability Insurance <em>(Healthcare Provider’s Service Organization (H.P.S.O.))</em></td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books &amp; supplies (estimate)</td>
<td>$939.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical exam - health clearance (estimate; arranged by the student)</td>
<td>$250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance - estimate if purchased through Syracuse University</td>
<td>$1,730.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal expenses</td>
<td>$2,039.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing**</td>
<td>$10,121.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals**</td>
<td>$3,835.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation (varies by location of field sites and parking fees) **</td>
<td>$1,481.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.N.D. Student Membership dues</td>
<td>$58.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational loan fee</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition and Fees Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$46,413.00</strong></td>
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** Assumes Intern needs to purchase

### Optional Expenses

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central New York Dietetic Association (C.N.Y.D.A.) Membership</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Optional Expenses Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10.00</strong></td>
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</table>

### Upon Completion of the Program:

<table>
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<th>expense</th>
<th>cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.N.D. membership dues</td>
<td>$58.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing fee for Dietetic Registration exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.D.R. Maintenance fee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Upon completion of the program total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$328.00</strong></td>
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</table>

Grand Total (estimate based on data obtained 6/4/19) - $46,751.00
Housing
Interns are responsible for the cost and selection of housing. Housing arrangements should be made over the summer prior to enrollment.

Dietetic Internship Policies and Procedures

Statement of Equal Opportunity
Syracuse University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, marital status, age, disability or sexual orientation. This non-discrimination policy covers admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs, services and activities.

Policies and Procedures Related to Student Services

Registration:
Dietetic interns register for coursework as a part time graduate student in the Certificate of Advanced Study. Information regarding the registration process will be sent to the intern, over the summer, from enrollment management.

Financial Aid:
Interns qualify for financial aid through the graduate school in the form of loans. Students may also receive a scholarship from the program through the William Allen Scholarship Program.

Leave of Absence, Withdrawals, Readmission
Readmission to the Dietetic Internship after a leave of absence cannot be guaranteed. Interns who take leave or withdraw from the program and wish to be readmitted must reapply to the program. Readmission will depend on available space and the ranking of the intern in comparison with the applicant pool.
Please see Syracuse University web site for the policy regarding tuition refunds.

In case of physical or psychological health problems, a physician or licensed mental health professional must certify that the intern is deemed capable of safely completing the internship. This may need to be confirmed by the university and/or agency health services.

For additional information regarding Leave of Absence, see Leave of Absence FAQs on MySlice.
The Bursar’s Office can provide additional information regarding tuition refunds for Leave of Absence or Withdrawal.

Health Examination / Health Status
Prior to entering the program, interns must submit the program’s health form, completed by a health care provider, documenting that they have completed a physical examination, have obtained the required immunizations and titters, and are in good health. The Certificate of Health Form will be emailed to the intern. Additional health updates may be required during the program, depending on New York State and institutional health codes. Immunization to influenza or compliance with the New York State Department of Health regulations for influenza prevention will be required.

Continued enrollment in the program is dependent upon satisfactory psychological and physical health. Interns experiencing health problems (medical or psychological) may need to leave the program if these problems result in prolonged or frequent absence, or if they are observed to be a threat to the welfare of patients/clients or the intern.

Health Services are available to interns on a fee-for-service basis.

Counseling:
Individual, group, consultation and referral services are provided through the Syracuse University Counseling Center.

Advising
The program director provides academic advising for all dietetic interns.

Insurance

Health Insurance
Interns are required to have a current health insurance policy while enrolled in the program to cover injury or illness while in the supervised practice sites. Interns are required to provide documentation of this coverage.

Professional Liability / Malpractice Insurance
Interns are required to obtain professional liability insurance for the duration of the program in the coverage amount of $1 million/$3 million. Find more information concerning this insurance at Healthcare Provider’s Service Organization (H.P.S.O) or Proliability.

Travel Requirements
Liability
The intern is responsible for all travel associated with the program. Interns who drive to supervised practice experiences should be aware that they are responsible for all expenses related to automobile and transportation accidents.

Travel Expenses
The intern is responsible for the costs and arrangement of all travel associated with the program. Interns will be expected to commute up to an hour-and-a-half around the Central New York area (bus transportation is not always available). Parking may be expensive at some facilities and difficult to find at others.

For campus parking, interns may wish to purchase a parking pass. For parking information, contact Syracuse University Parking and Transit Services.

University Academic Policies

Protection of Privacy of Student Information
The law requires that the university maintain the confidentiality of student records. Syracuse University accords all rights under the law to all current and former students. The policy outlining the university’s compliance with the provision of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is available at Syracuse University Office of the Registrar.

Access to Personal Files
Intern records, maintained by the program, may be reviewed by that intern. Interns wishing to examine their folders or records should notify the internship director.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty
All interns are expected to conform to the principles of academic honesty. This is a requirement of both Syracuse University and the Commission on Dietetic Registration (C.D.R.). Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy, and the procedures for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating any violations, are described at Syracuse University Center for Learning and Student Success and in Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy, adopted January 1, 2017.

The four general expectations for academic integrity at Syracuse University are:

1. Credit Your Sources
2. Do Your Own Work
3. Communicate Honestly
4. Support Academic Integrity

Please refer to the A.I. policy document for more information.

The submission of any piece of written work by a student is assumed by the university to guarantee that the thoughts and expressions in it are literally the student’s own. Sanctions against giving or receiving aid in examinations; plagiarism (presenting as one’s own work, the words, ideas and opinions of someone else); or the falsification of any university academic record will be imposed by appropriate bodies as outlined in Syracuse University’s Academic Integrity Policy.

Falsification of any agency records will carry similar sanctions within the university and may result in criminal convictions as well.

Computer Use
Unauthorized use of a computer, computer trespass, computer tampering, unlawful duplication and unlawful possession of computer related material can carry criminal sanctions and other liability.

Alcohol and Drug Use
Alcohol and inappropriate drug use will not be tolerated according to campus policies.

Incompletes
Illness or other exceptional circumstances are the usual basis for consideration for the grade of incomplete. To receive a grade of incomplete in a course, an intern must complete the Request for Incomplete Form.

Student complaints /Grievance Resolution
Any intern with a grievance regarding improper treatment by the program director or any other faculty member should seek to resolve the grievance within the academic unit of study. If the grievance is not resolved locally, it should be pursued through the procedures of the school or college or brought before the Dean of the school or college within which the academic unit resides. If the graduate student wishes to appeal the decision of the school or college, the appeal may be taken to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School shall have the authority to investigate all relevant aspects of the grievance with the objective of seeking fair resolution of the grievance. If the findings or recommendations of the Dean of the Graduate School are not agreeable to the Dean of the school or college, then the grievance will be referred to the Provost, who will make a final decision. The authority of the Dean of the Graduate School extends to investigations of compliance with rules and procedures, and shall include authority to investigate allegations of misconduct or inappropriate treatment of students, but shall not extend to matters of academic assessment. The Graduate School is not an appropriate
venue for review of decisions made by the Office of Academic Integrity or through the student judicial process. A copy of the Student Grievance Processes are available from the College. A student may also submit complaints to ACEND only after all other options with the program and institution have been exhausted.

**Disciplinary Action**

Special university or college policies and procedures cover academic dishonesty (see above). Disciplinary actions include loss of credit for the course in which dishonesty occurs or suspension from the college (the length of time to be determined by the college committee). An intern arrested for a felony will be suspended from the university, its campus and all its facilities pending a university hearing.

**Class Attendance and Conduct**

Professional conduct including attire, promptness, politeness and attention is expected during class and presentations. Cell phones and smart watches should be set to vibrate or off during scheduled class times. Cell phones and smart watches may only be used before and after class, or during breaks. Other electronic devices may only be used in class when appropriate and directly enhances intern learning. Interns should expect that alternate assignments will be required if class is not attended. Unexcused absences of more than two missed classes in a semester or chronic tardiness will lead to a probationary plan of action developed by the internship director. Failure to show immediate and sustained improvement after a plan of action has been initiated may be grounds for dismissal from the internship program.

**Dismissal from the Program**

Grounds for dismissal are outlined below. An intern who interferes with the agency’s primary mission of client care will be removed from the agency and possibly the program.

**Poor Attendance**

Prolonged absence (or frequent short absences or excessive tardiness) for any reason will result in dismissal from the program.

**Poor Health**

Interns experiencing health problems (medical or psychological) may need to leave the program if these problems result in prolonged or frequent absence. Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs) while at rotations is grounds for dismissal. Interns exhibiting bizarre or threatening behavior will be required to undergo a psychiatric evaluation to confirm their ability to continue in the program; as an alternative, they may resign from the program.

**Unethical Conduct or Dishonesty**

Unethical conduct, failure to treat client records with confidentiality, falsification of medical records or other records, plagiarism, academic dishonesty or other acts of dishonesty are conduct unbecoming of a professional and constitute grounds for dismissal from the program.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Special procedures established by the university cover academic dishonesty. Academic penalties for suspected dishonesty cannot be imposed without following the established procedures. Detailed information, including a copy of these procedures, is available at Syracuse University Center for Learning and Student Success.

**Dismissal Procedures**

The decision to dismiss an intern from the program for reasons other than academic dishonesty will be made by a committee consisting of at least five members (e.g., the internship director, a faculty member, one or more dietetic administrators from agencies affiliated with the internship program, and if desired, an advocate chosen by the intern in question). The intern will be given an opportunity to present information on his/her behalf and may appeal the decision.

**Program Completion Requirements**

To complete the Dietetic Internship program, the following elements are required:

- Completion of 1200 required hours of supervised practice;
- Satisfactory evaluations for all competencies (with a score of 3 out of 5 or better)
- Completion of N.S.D. 680 Seminar in Food and Nutrition with a grade of B or greater.
- Completion of skill validations in N.S.D. 515 Physical Assessment and Multi-skilling with a grade of B or greater; and
- Completion of N.S.D. 658 Participatory Program Planning with a grade of B- or better.
- Program requirements met within 13 months (150 percent of program length).

**Assessment of Prior Learning**

Interns with previous supervised experience in the area of food management may apply for exemption from the rotation. The intern must have the direct supervisor of the experience complete a rotation evaluation form. The intern must also provide other documentation from the experience including job performance evaluations, written documentation of management experience in safety, security and sanitation, examples of customer services quality management activities, preparation and interpretation of financial reports, and examples of menus and or recipes developed.

**Criteria:**
Intern must have evaluation form completed by the direct supervisor with an overall score of 3 for the recommended grade. The intern must have direct supervisor complete the professional practice expectations form with all characteristics meeting or exceeding expectations. The intern must also pass the computer food service exam with a score of 70 percent or greater.

Any intern desiring to be exempted from this rotation must notify the program director by mid-July (July 15.) Documentation of the experience must be submitted no later than the beginning of October (October 1). A review of the documentation will be completed and a decision will be made no later than early December.

Interns who are approved for assessment of prior learning will not be verified early, as there are other program requirements that can not be met until the end of the spring semester.

Students that have taken N.S.D. 515 Physical Assessment and Multiskilling at Syracuse University do not need to retake this course if a grade of B or greater has been earned. If applied to an undergraduate degree, interns will be advised to take another 1-credit course to fulfill requirements for the Certificate of Advanced Study.

Policies and Procedures for Supervised Practice Sites

Criteria and Process for Assigning Students to Supervised Practice Sites

The procedure for assignment to supervised practice sites is based on the following assumptions:

1. A minimum of six to eight weeks of time is needed to plan for placement.
2. All students are required to complete five rotations unless exempted from a rotation based on documented prior learning.
3. An individualized learning/supervised practice plan involves communicating with internship faculty to discuss interests, goals and prior experiences.

The intern supervisor will read the personal self-assessment, completed by admitted interns during the summer before entering the program. The program director may interview the student during orientation to gain a better perspective of the student's needs and to prioritize three settings for each rotation. Interns meet again with intern supervisor to review plans for spring semester experiences and meet as needed based on rotation evaluations.

After communicating with the intern supervisor, the director contacts sites to begin scheduling experiences. Once a site placement has been confirmed, student information and rotation information is sent to the site. In the event that more interns request a particular site than the site is capable of accommodating, the director will discuss this with students but the final decision regarding placement rests with the faculty and agency preceptors. Students will be notified of rotation plans once placement at a site has been confirmed.

Problem-Solving at sites

The filing and handling of formal complaints from interns will include a recourse to an administrator or other program director and prevents retaliation.

Preceptor Identifies Problem

1. Preceptor identifies a problem or concern
2. Preceptor and Intern discuss issue
3. Issue is resolved or plan is made to address the problem
4. If Preceptor and Intern cannot come to a resolution
   a. Preceptor and Internship Program Director discuss possible solutions to address the problem.
   b. A written document is placed in the Intern file and provided to the Preceptor

If parties cannot come to resolution:

1. Preceptor and Internship Program Director schedule joint meeting with Preceptor and Intern
2. Internship Program Director notifies Graduate Program Director
3. Problem is resolved or a plan is developed to address the problems
4. If the problem cannot be resolved
   a. Internship Program Director and Graduate Program Director develop a plan
   b. A written document is filed

Possible resolutions: placement is disrupted, Intern is reassigned to a different agency or different preceptor, or Intern may be counseled out of the program.

Intern Complaints

1. Intern identifies a problem / complaint
2. Intern and Preceptor discuss issue
3. Issue is resolved or plan is made to address the problem
4. If Intern and Preceptor cannot come to a resolution
   a. Intern and Internship Program Director discuss possible solutions plan is made to address the problem.

If parties cannot come to resolution:

1. Intern and Internship Program Director schedule joint meeting with the Preceptor
2. Internship Program Director notifies Graduate Program Director
3. Problem is resolved or a plan is developed to address the problems
4. If the problem cannot be resolved
In the event of severe weather conditions, the intern is expected to observe the following procedure:

1. If Syracuse University campus closes related to snow or other severe weather, the intern will not attend their supervised practice site. Interns will be notified of campus closing via the Orange Alert System. The intern is required to notify the primary preceptor prior to their scheduled time.
2. If the supervised practice rotation site closes, the intern will not attend their rotation. If the site closes early, the intern will be dismissed as determined by the primary preceptor. The intern is required to notify the Dietetic Internship Director in either instance.

Possible resolutions: placement is disrupted; intern is reassigned to a different agency or different preceptor.

Interns may also submit complaints directly to ACEND only after all other options have been exhausted. Please note that ACEND will only discuss violations of the ACEND standards, not program operations.

**Injuries at Sites**

In the event of accidents or illness, the site is responsible to render emergency care to the intern. Interns must have health insurance and should follow-up with their health care provider following an accident or injury. The Dietetic Internship Director must be notified of the occurrence by the intern within one business day.

**Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks**

If a student is assigned to a facility that requires drug testing and criminal background checks, they must follow the procedure the facility has arranged. It should be noted that interns who have felony convictions or sanctions may be excluded from placement at some agencies.

**Educational Purpose of Supervised Practice**

Supervised practice provides training in dietetic practice settings. The internship experience is for the benefit of the intern. The intern does not displace regular employees, but instead works under supervision of existing staff. The supervised practice site that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the intern, and, on occasion, the facility operations may actually be impeded. The intern will be expected to participate in a culminating experience to document entry-level competence for no less than one week.

**Formal Assessment of Learning While at Sites**

At the end of each five or six week rotation, the intern will receive a written evaluation on their progress. For the eight and nine week rotations, evaluations will take place at the midpoint and the end. The preceptor will review these evaluations with the intern and the evaluation will be sent to the program director. The program director will meet individually with the intern at the end of the first semester and at the end of the program to review evaluation forms. The program director may meet more frequently with the intern if a problem is identified. The intern must pass all rotations with a score of 3 or greater (on a 5-point scale) for the overall final rotation grade.

Weekly evaluative meetings between interns and preceptors are encouraged to discuss progress and suggested improvements. Written assignments and preceptor evaluations will be reviewed with the intern by the internship program director.

**Unsatisfactory Progress - Retention and Remediation**

If a knowledge deficit is identified while at a site, the program director will provide the intern with remedial work in the form of case studies, problem sets, self-study aids. Occasionally an intern may be required to spend additional time at a site in order to achieve competency. The decision to lengthen a rotation is determined in collaboration with the preceptor, the internship director and the intern.

**Work Assignments**

Supervised practice assignments are always subject to the approval of the host institutions. Interns will spend approximately 32 hours per week in agency rotations and an additional five to seven hours in classes or field trips to other agencies. In general, interns will work the same hours as their primary preceptors; this may include early or late shifts.

**Attendance at Sites**

Prompt attendance is required for rotations. Unexcused absences are not permitted and may result in dismissal from the program. If you have legal documentation to verify an excused absence in the case of illness or death in the family, this must be provided to program director immediately upon return. Adjustments in schedule may be possible for exceptional and valid reasons. The intern should discuss these with the program director and agency preceptor well in advance of the anticipated date to arrange for a schedule adjustment.

In the event of an illness or emergency, it is the intern’s responsibility to notify the agency preceptor and the internship director’s office of the absence prior to the intern’s scheduled start of shift. Failure to do so may result in inaccurate tracking of hours, could compromise ability of the intern to become verified of internship completion, and may prompt further disciplinary action.

Missed hours must be made up. Whenever possible, supervised rotation hours, comparable experiences or assignments will be provided. However, because of the sequential nature of the program and the demands on agencies, it is often impossible to make up missed work in the usual sense. Thus, interns with accumulated absences may be forced to leave the program.

**Snow Day/Severe Weather Policy**

In the event of severe weather conditions, the intern is expected to observe the following procedure:

a. Internship Program Director and Graduate Program Director develop a plan
b. A written document is filed
3. If severe weather is anticipated, the primary preceptor may plan assignments/projects that may be completed independently instead of attending supervised practice site. This is solely at the discretion of the preceptor and appropriateness of the type of site.

4. In other instances, the intern is expected to make all reasonable attempts to attend their supervised practice rotation. This includes monitoring weather conditions and making advance plans to be prompt by planning additional time for the commute and alternate routes or forms of transportation. The intern is required to notify the preceptor if he/she will be late.

**Vacation and Holiday Policies**

The Dietetic Internship program, being a pre-professional as well as an academic program, may not adhere to the same academic calendar as the university. Interns will be given the program calendar and rotation schedule during orientation. Vacations will include a break in the fall for Thanksgiving and a break between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Interns who wish to observe other important religious holidays should notify the internship director in writing three weeks in advance so that appropriate scheduling modifications can be made. Missed time will need to be made up. Agencies differ in the holidays they observe. When agency holidays differ from the internship program holidays, the intern will be asked to make up the time. See Religious Observances Policy.

**Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Dietetic interns are expected to conduct themselves as professional persons. During their rotations they represent Syracuse University and the nutrition services department to other members of the hospital/agency’s staff and to the community. Interns are expected to follow the Code of Ethics.

**Confidentiality of Client Information**

Confidentiality of client records must be maintained at all times. Each agency/facility will review HIPAA regulations as they apply to the rotations.

**Use of Medical Records**

Medical records are legal documents and must be used appropriately. The patients’ charts are available to interns as a privilege. Any information from the charts is confidential and should only be discussed with the preceptor as required for professional purposes. Protected health information should never be taken off site, unless de-identified. Policies for charting in medical records will vary with the institution. Under no circumstance, should information regarding a practice site, client, patient, or family be posted on social media. Violations to protected health information (HIPAA) can be punishable by law.

**Fulfillment of Professional Duties**

Interns are expected to comply with the Standards of Professional Performance, Standards of Practice for the Profession of Dietetics, and the Code of Ethics. In the rotations, interns work under the direction of an assigned agency preceptor. Interns should refer any questions or problems they do not feel competent to handle to their agency preceptor.

Interns must follow the agency’s professional conduct policies. Agency policies should be reviewed with the preceptor during the orientation period.

**Personal Appearance and Grooming**

Interns must conform to the dress code of the agencies in which they have supervised practice rotations. Some agencies require professional dress/business clothes; others require white lab coats with professional dress/business clothes. The dress code of each agency should be explained to the intern by the preceptor during the agency orientation. In general, the following guidelines apply:

Male interns will wear a conservative business shirt (polo style or button-down) and trousers/dress pants. Shoes and socks should be appropriate for business wear. Sneakers, sandals, jeans, cargo pants, athletic pants, and shorts are not permitted. Non-slip shoes or sneakers may be required in the Food Service Management rotation. Cologne or scented lotions should not be heavily used and in some facilities are banned. Body odor must be managed so as not to be offensive to patients and preceptors.

Female interns will wear professional business attire. Jeans, cords, leggings, yoga pants, shorts or skorts are not permitted. In general, clothes should be conservative in hemline and neckline, skirts should be knee-length or longer, etc. Pantyhose are required with skirts and dresses. Dress shoes (low heel or flats) appropriate for business wear should be worn. Sneakers, open-toed shoes, sandals, boots, high heels, and clogs are not permitted. Non-slip shoes or sneakers may be required in the Food Service Management rotation. Jewelry and makeup should be conservative and appropriate for daytime. Perfume or scented lotions should not be heavily used and in some facilities are banned. Body odor must be managed so as not to be offensive to patients and preceptors.

For all interns, jewelry, rings and pierced body parts cannot interfere with patient care or be in violation of sanitation codes. Therefore, rings are limited to engagement and wedding bands. Earrings may be worn if they are post-type, non-dangling and no larger than a dime. Please remember that patients/customers have the right to refuse to work with you if they find your jewelry, hair color or piercing offensive.

A clean, ironed, white lab coat will be required during the acute care rotation (provided by program).

Hair must be clean, neat and worn off the collar whenever the intern is having contact with patients and personnel (in food service settings, hair must be covered). Hair should be of a “natural” color (green, purple or other unnatural hair colors are not acceptable).

Nails should be short and clean (nail polish may not be worn in food service settings). Health care settings in N.Y.S. generally prohibit any form of artificial fingernails for clinical personnel, including dietetics staff.

Interns should wear name tags whenever in the hospital/agency (these will be provided for the interns). Some agencies will provide an additional identification badge.

Backpacks should not be carried around the facility during rotation work hours.
Personal Communications

Cell phone usage should be kept to a minimum while at rotations and during class, seminars and other Internship-related functions. Personal phone calls and texting should be restricted to breaks and before and after class, rotation time, etc. to maintain a professional demeanor. Notify the instructor or preceptor immediately in case of a true emergency or other situation requiring a variance from this policy.

Campus Orientation

Location, Office Hours, Faculty and Staff

The Dietetic Internship is part of the Program of Nutrition Science and Dietetics (N.S.D.) in the Department of Nutrition and Food Studies in the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics. Offices are located at 550L White Hall.

Office Hours:
8:30 am - 5:00 pm (fall and spring)
8:00 am - 4:30 pm (summer)

Who’s Who in the Nutrition Science and Dietetics Program:

Undergraduate Program Director:
Kay Stearns Bruening, Ph.D., R.D.N., F.A.N.D.

Graduate Program Director:
Lynn S. Brann, Ph.D., R.D.N., F.A.N.D.

Nutrition Science and Dietetics Faculty:
Lynn S. Brann, Ph.D., R.D.N., F.A.N.D.
Kay Stearns Bruening, Ph.D., R.D.N., F.A.N.D.
Chaya Charles, M.S., R.D., C.S.G., C.D.N.
Tanya M. Horacek, Ph.D., R.D.
Sudha Raj, Ph.D., R.D.N.
Jessica Redmond, Ph.D., R.D.N., F.A.N.D.
Jane Uzcategui, M.S., R.D.N.
Margaret Voss, Ph.D.

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Didactic Program in Dietetics Director
Nancy Rindfuss, M.A., R.D.

Administrative Staff
Donna Sparkes
(315) 443-5573
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Parking and Vehicle Registration

Vehicles not displaying appropriate university permits will be towed and fined. Refer to Syracuse University Parking and Transit Services.

Shuttle Buses and Local Buses
Shuttle buses link the campuses (North, South, Main and Connective Corridor) and provide free transportation. Centro provides regional bus service. Schedules can be found at [Syracuse University Parking and Transit Services](#).

**Student Identification Cards**

Student identification cards are needed to gain access to most university facilities. Identification cards are obtained in Steele Hall.

**Campus Map**

[Campus Maps](#) are available on the Syracuse University website.

**Internship Competency Areas**

**Competency Statements for the Supervised Practice Component of the Dietetic Internship**

Competency statements specify what every dietitian should be able to do at the beginning of his or her practice career. The core competency statements build on appropriate knowledge and skills necessary for the entry-level practitioner to perform reliably at the performance level indicated. One or more of the emphasis areas should be added to the core competencies so that a supervised practice program can prepare graduates for identified market needs. Thus, all entry-level dietitians will have the core competencies and additional competencies according to the emphasis area(s) completed.

**Competencies/Learning Outcomes for Dietetic Internship Programs**

The following competencies are from the ACEND Accreditation Standards for Nutrition & Dietetics Internship Programs, effective June 1, 2017.

1. **Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice:** Integration of scientific information and translation of research into practice.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.1 - Select indicators of program quality and/or customer service and measure achievement of objectives.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.2 - Apply evidence-based guidelines, systematic reviews and scientific literature.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.3 - Justify programs, products, services and care using appropriate evidence or data.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.4 - Evaluate emerging research for application in nutrition and dietetics practice.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.5 - Conduct projects using appropriate research methods, ethical procedures and data analysis.
   - C.R.D.N. 1.6 - Incorporate critical-thinking skills in overall practice.

2. **Professional Practice Expectations:** Beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the professional dietitian nutritionist level of practice.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.1 - Practice in compliance with current federal regulations and state statutes and rules, as applicable, and in accordance with accreditation standards and the Scope of Nutrition and Dietetics Practice and Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.2 - Demonstrate professional writing skills in preparing professional communications.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.3 - Demonstrate active participation, teamwork, and contributions in group settings.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.4 - Function as a member of interprofessional teams.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.5 - Assign duties to N.D.T.R.s and/or support personnel as appropriate.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.6 - Refer clients and patients to other professional and services when needs are beyond individual scope of practice.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.7 - Apply leadership skills to achieve desired outcomes.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.8 - Demonstrate negotiation skills.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.9 - Participate in professional and community organizations.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.10 - Demonstrate professional attributes in all areas of practice.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.11 - Show cultural competence/sensitivity in interactions with clients, colleagues, and staff.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.12 - Perform self-assessment and develop goals for self-improvement throughout the program.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.13 - Prepare a plan for professional development according to Commission on Dietetic Registration guidelines.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.14 - Demonstrate advocacy on local, state, or national legislative and regulatory issues or policies impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.
   - C.R.D.N. 2.15 - Practice and/or role-play mentoring and precepting others.

3. **Clinical and Customer Services:** Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.1 - Perform the Nutrition Care Process and use standardized nutrition language for individuals, groups and populations of differing ages and health status, in a variety of settings.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.2 - Conduct nutrition focused physical exams.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.3 - Demonstrate effective communication skills for clinical and customer services in a variety of formats and settings.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.4 - Design, implement, and evaluate presentations to a target audience.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.5 - Develop nutrition education materials that are culturally and age appropriate and designed for the literacy level of the audience.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.6 - Use effective education and counseling skills to facilitate behavior change.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.7 - Develop and deliver products, programs, or services that promote consumer health, wellness and lifestyle management.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.8 - Deliver respectful, science-based answers to client questions concerning emerging trends.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.9 - Coordinate procurement, production, distribution and service of goods and services, demonstrating and promoting responsible use of resources.
   - C.R.D.N. 3.10 - Develop and evaluate recipes, formulas and menus for acceptability and affordability that accommodate the cultural diversity and health needs of various populations, groups and individuals.

4. **Practice Management and Use of Resources:** Strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations.
   - Upon completion of the D.I., graduates are able to demonstrate the following required competencies:
   - C.R.D.N. 4.1 - Participate in management of human resources.
   - C.R.D.N. 4.2 - Perform management functions related to safety, security and sanitation that affect employees, customers, patients, facilities and food.
   - C.R.D.N. 4.3 - Conduct clinical and customer service quality management activities.
   - C.R.D.N. 4.4 - Apply current nutrition informatics to develop, store, retrieve and disseminate information and data.
   - C.R.D.N. 4.5 - Analyze quality, financial or productivity data for use in planning.
C.R.D.N. 4.6 - Propose and use procedures as appropriate to the practice setting to promote sustainability, reduce waste, and protect the environment.
C.R.D.N. 4.7 - Conduct feasibility studies for products, programs or services with consideration of costs and benefits.
C.R.D.N. 4.8 - Develop a plan to provide or develop a product, program or service that includes a budget, staffing needs, equipment and supplies.
C.R.D.N. 4.9 - Explain the process for coding and billing for nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems.
C.R.D.N. 4.10 - Analyze risk in nutrition and dietetics practice.

Program-defined concentration competencies:

O.M. 1 - Performs needs assessment for targeted programs.
O.M. 2 - Develops short-term and long-term goals and plans for targeted programs
O.M. 3 - Develops/reviews policies and procedures to assure compliance with standards, regulations, and laws
O.M. 4 - Designs/reviews quality assurance assessments for targeted programs
O.M. 5 - Applies nutrition care outcomes measures to a targeted program
O.M. 6 - Analyzes, evaluates, and uses program outcomes data to goals to track performance, manage resources, and improve quality of care.
O.M. 7 - Demonstrates leadership, advocacy, and collaboration within targeted organizations in order to discuss how policy decisions impact food and nutrition services at the local, state, or national level