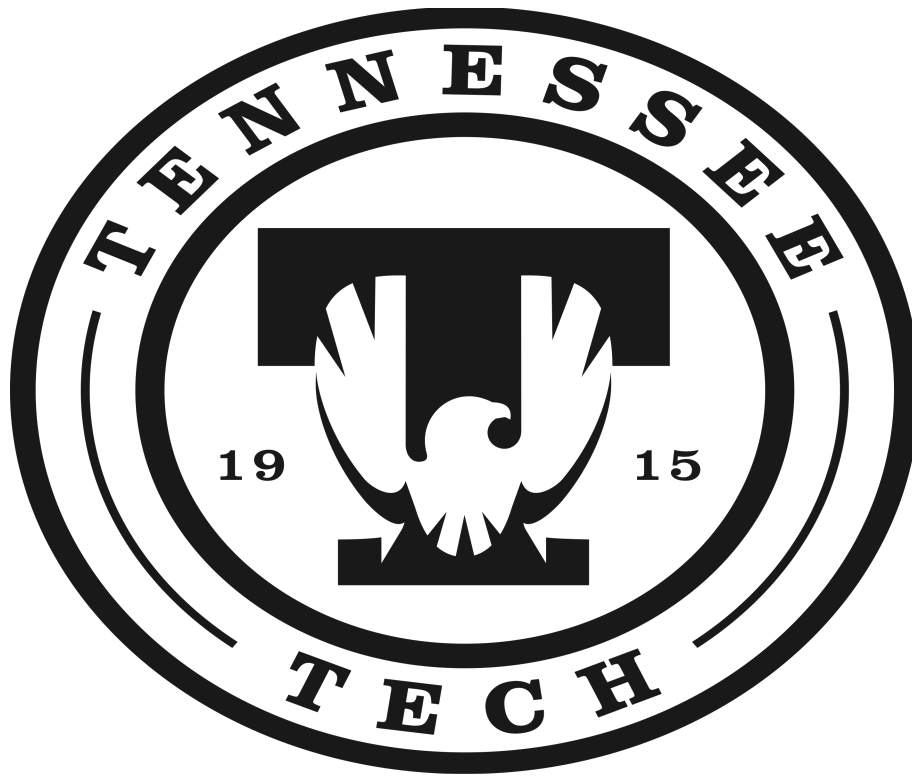




## **Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD)**

### **Student Handbook**

2026-2027

School of Human Ecology  
Tennessee Tech University

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## **Program Overview**

The Food, Nutrition and Dietetics (FND) area of study was first identified as a concentration in the Tennessee Technological University (TN Tech) undergraduate catalog in 1975 as part of the Home Economics major. In 1997, the name of the major and name of the School was changed to Human Ecology. In August 2016, the name of the concentration changed to: Nutrition and Dietetics (HDPD).

The Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) received initial Accreditation in 1976. The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) has continuously approved the program since that time. Dr. Cathy Cunningham served as DPD Director from 1975-1999, and again from 2002-2007. Dr. Melinda Anderson served as DPD Director from 2007-2014 and was re-appointed as DPD Director in August 2015. Dr. Anderson retired as DPD Director July 2026, and Dr. Allison Coutinho was appointed DPD Director July 1, 2026. Contact information for Dr. Coutinho: 931-372-6157 or [acoutinho@tnitech.edu](mailto:acoutinho@tnitech.edu)

## **ACCREDITATION STATUS**

The Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD) at Tennessee Tech University is currently granted Accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606-6995, (Phone: 800-877-1600 ext. 5400) or [ACEND](https://www.acend.org)

ACEND is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education as a Title IV gatekeeper. The DPD program completed its seven-year accreditation site visit in September 2021 and has received confirmation of continued accreditation for another seven-year cycle. The next accreditation site visit is scheduled for 2029.

## **PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The Nutrition and Dietetics Didactic Program (DPD) at Tennessee Tech University seeks to provide a high-quality curriculum that prepares students for supervised practice leading to eligibility for the CDR credentialing exam to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist.

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

1. Graduates will be qualified and competent to successfully enter supervised practice graduate programs.
2. Graduates will be prepared to successfully complete the process to become Registered Dietitian Nutritionists to enter entry-level practice.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

#### **Program Goal 1 Objectives:**

- a. Program Completion: At least 80% of program students complete program requirements within 3 years (150% of planned program length).
- b. Graduate Application, Admission and Preparedness for RDN Programs (SPE, CP, or nutrition-related graduate program):
  1. Application to RDN Programs: At least 70 percent of program graduates apply for admission to an RDN or a graduate program within 12 months of graduation.
  2. Admission to RDN Programs: At least 70 percent of program graduates who apply to an RDN or a graduate program are admitted within 12 months of graduation.

#### **Program Goal 2 Objective:**

3. Graduate Preparedness: At least 80% of program directors responding to a survey will rate the quality of the graduate's preparation for a supervised practice graduate program as "above average" or better, within 12 months of the student's graduation.

### **Information to Prospective Students and the Public**

### **Standard 7**

Program policies, procedures, practices, and materials related to student recruitment and admission comply with state and federal laws and regulations. Recruitment and admission practices are applied fairly and consistently. Program outcomes data are available on request. Please send a written request to Dr. Allison Coutinho, DPD Director, at [acoutinho@tntech.edu](mailto:acoutinho@tntech.edu) or School of Human Ecology, 715 Quadrangle Drive, Cookeville, TN 38505.

**Required Element 8.1**

Programs must have policies and procedures specific to nutrition and dietetics programs or refer to institutional policies. The policies must be provided to students in a single comprehensive document, such as in a program handbook or on a program website. Policies and Procedures must include:

**a. Student Support**

Support for the variety of needs of students – the DPD Program at TN Tech University informs students of all campus resources available to them through the distribution of this student handbook, via hard copy and posting on the DPD program webpage.

Ensure all students are treated with dignity and respect by program faculty and preceptors – the DPD Program at TN Tech University follows university policy for non-discrimination  
<https://www.tntech.edu/hr/nondiscrim.php>

Access to student support services, such as health services, counseling, tutoring and testing, and financial aid resources:

[Health Services](#)

[Counseling](#)

[Tutoring](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

**b. Student Performance Monitoring**

The process of assessment, including academic performance, academic integrity and professionalism

**Student Performance Monitoring, Step One**

Student Performance Monitoring is accomplished through several steps. First, the Nutrition and Dietetics program uses a self-managed application process for admission to its undergraduate didactic program (DPD) in Nutrition and Dietetics. It is the student's responsibility to collect and prepare all forms and documents and to submit them at one time to the DPD Director. Fulfillment of specific requirements does not ensure admission into the program. The application process allows for early analysis of a student's GPA and commitment to the DPD Program.

## ELIGIBILITY:

Students interested in pursuing an ACEND Verification statement from the TN Tech DPD program will be required to complete an application process. Students must have completed ALL of the following requirements in order to be eligible to submit an admission application:

1. Must have completed at least 7 hours in HEC 2020 (Nutrition for Health Sciences), and HEC 2240 (Food Preparation & Management). A grade of "B" or higher is required in HEC 2020 and HEC 2240.
2. Must have completed and received a grade of "C" or higher in: CHEM 1010, 1020 (General Chemistry I & II); and BIOL 2350 (Intro Anatomy & Physiology).
3. Must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the time of admission to the DPD program.
4. Students who wish to transfer to the DPD program in the School of Human Ecology at TN Tech must have their transcripts evaluated by the DPD Director (at least two weeks prior to application deadlines) in order to determine DPD course equivalency. Other university courses will be evaluated for equivalency by the TN Tech Transcript Analyst.

## ADMISSION PROCESS

Students will submit application information via email to the DPD Director. The application can be submitted at any time prior to advising week during fall or spring semesters. Dr. Coutinho will email each student who is eligible to apply to upper division to remind them of the process and timeframe for submission.

A statement of professional goals should be attached to the application. This should be typed and include: your professional goals and why you have selected nutrition and dietetics as your program of study. This document should be limited to no more than 2 double-spaced pages and be free of grammatical errors.

## ADMISSION PROCESS CHECKLIST FOR DPD

- \_\_\_ active Tennessee Tech student: number of hours completed:
- \_\_\_ completed HEC 2020, 2240 (minimum B in 2020 & 2240); or transfer equivalents as determined by DPD Director
- \_\_\_ completed CHEM 1010, 1020; BIOL 2350 (min grade: C); or transfer equivalents
- \_\_\_ cumulative GPA of at least 3.0
- \_\_\_ completed application form
- \_\_\_ typed professional goals/narrative document

## Student Performance Monitoring, Step Two

Student Performance Monitoring continues each semester by evaluating student learning throughout the academic program at predetermined times in courses as established by the syllabi for those courses, as well as advising appointments. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the various evaluation methods so that they are well prepared for each evaluation, each semester.

Academic performance concerns are addressed in a timely and adequate manner to facilitate students' progression in the program

To increase student success, TN Tech utilizes an early notification system in which advisors are notified by the course instructor if one of their students is struggling in a class or at risk to fail a class. This student alert system is found in Tech Connect (the advising portal). The DPD Director is the academic advisor for all DPD students from 30 credits to graduation. The Academic Advisor for all DPD students from zero to 29 credits is assigned within the Launchpad Student Success Center at the Volpe Library. The DPD Director (and Student Success Advisor) schedules regular advising appointments with each DPD student, each semester to advise for next semester courses and to check on overall progress in current classes. Student concerns are directed toward the appropriate university resource for resolution. **Any issues with professional behavior, ethical behaviors, and/or academic integrity are taken very seriously. The TN Tech Plagiarism and Code of Conduct policy will be followed, as well as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics.**

At the end of each semester, the DPD Director checks final course grades and cumulative GPA of all DPD students. If a student falls below the **required 3.0 GPA** or receives a course grade lower than required for continuation in the program; the student receives an email reminder of the program retention requirements. Students are advised to meet with the DPD Director in person to discuss options when grades/GPA fall below expectations. If at any time, student coursework or conduct is at an unsatisfactory level of performance or the student's health status is a detriment to the student's successful completion of the DPD program, a meeting will be held with the DPD Director to resolve the concerns and determine a course of action.

### c. Student Remediation and Retention

The process for evaluating the need for remedial instruction and other support and the procedure for creating an action plan that delineates where program expectations have not been met and the actions needed to satisfy program requirements

### **DPD Retention Procedures**

Students who have been admitted to upper division dietetics must maintain a **cumulative GPA of 3.0** or better EACH semester. **A grade of “B” is required for all DPD courses; any grade lower than this will require that course to be retaken and will likely delay time to graduation. A grade of “C” is required for all Science courses; any grade lower than this will require that course to be retaken.** Students will be removed from the DPD program when the GPA falls below 3.0 for more than 2 semesters; or students do not retake courses with less than acceptable letter grades. Students may choose to re-apply another semester when grades have improved or courses retaken.

Students will be **retained** in the TN Tech DPD program provided the following retention criteria are met EACH semester:

1. Completion of all required courses as outlined on the 120-hour B.S. Degree Curriculum for Human Ecology: Nutrition and Dietetics Concentration
2. **Maintenance of a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 GPA each semester for all courses on transcript; and an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 (minimum) in 3000 and 4000 level DPD courses.**
3. Once admitted to upper division, a letter grade of A or B is required in all 3000 and 4000 level DPD courses and a letter grade of C or higher in Science courses each semester.

The DPD Director monitors all DPD student grades at the end of **each semester** to verify adherence to retention requirements. Any student failing to meet retention requirements will be notified by email within ten days of final grade postings. Students are allowed to retake courses as needed to meet retention criteria.

Any student denied admission or retention to the TTU DPD program will be notified in writing/email by the DPD Director. Students are given the opportunity to discuss the rationale of the decision with the DPD Director. If a student is not satisfied with the explanation, he/she may request a review of the decision by the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology. An official request for review must be received by the Dean in writing within 10 business days from the mailing date of the denial letter. Requests for review received later than 10 days after receipt of the denial letter will be reviewed at the discretion of the Dean.

### **Remediation Procedures and Access to Remedial Instruction**

Students with minimal chances of success in the program will be counseled into career paths that are appropriate for their ability. In cases where a student has the potential to be successful in the program, a remediation plan will be developed and the DPD Director will work with the student on a timeline for success. If the student does not complete the remediation plan during the agreed upon timeframe, the student will be dismissed from the DPD program.

DPD students are advised each semester by the DPD Director. Students are encouraged to meet with the DPD Director each semester to review academic progress, goals and course selection.

DPD Students who fail to meet for academic advising are sent email notifications and phone calls until a face to face or virtual meeting can be scheduled.

Each DPD Course syllabus includes a statement about remediation:

“For any assignment in this course that is used to assess progress toward a Competency and/or Performance Indicator, a score of 80% or better must be achieved. If a student does not score at least an 80% on the designated assignment, a remediation assignment or option will be given. However, the instructor reserves the right to use the original score/grade when calculating the overall grade for the course. Students who do not achieve the level of competency required (80% or better), even after remediation, would not be eligible to receive a Verification Statement. Points deducted for late assignments will not be calculated in the grade used for Competency and/or Performance Indicator assessment.”

#### d. Confidentiality

Protection of privacy of student information, including students in distance learning; and strategies used to verify the identity of a student when distance instruction or online testing is used

The TN Tech DPD Program follows university policy for confidentiality of student records and verifying identity of students in distance education/online testing:

[Policy 1206 Confidentiality of Student Records](#)

When using distance education and/or online testing, strategies used to verify the identity of a student.

The TN Tech DPD program follows university policy for strategies used to verify the identity of a student:

[Policy 223 Online and Distance Education](#)

#### e. Requirements for Program Completion

Requirements to earn the verification statement

Students have completed the TN Tech DPD program when:

1. They have completed the 120-hour BS Degree Curriculum in Human Ecology – Nutrition and Dietetics concentration.
2. Students have maintained a **cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above**, with no grade lower than a B in all HEC DPD required courses, and no grade lower than a C in all required Science courses (See Appendix A for required DPD courses)
3. Students should plan to complete the DPD requirements within 3 years of admission to the DPD program (150%) of the program length.

Maximum time allowed to complete program requirements and receive a verification statement must follow the sponsoring academic institution's policy. In the absence of an institutional policy, the maximum time must be no less than five years

All coursework meeting upper division (3000 and 4000 level) food and nutrition course requirements must be completed within five years of receiving the verification statement. Students who completed upper division food and nutrition courses five or more years ago will be required to retake all the 3000 and 4000 level food and nutrition courses, in addition to satisfying all the requirements listed above.

f. Issuance of Verification Statement

Providing verification statements, including timing delivery method, and number issued, if applicable, to all students who complete program requirements

In addition to earning the BS degree, students who satisfactorily complete all DPD program requirements receive an ACEND Verification Statement from the DPD Director signifying the completion of the academic qualifications required by ACEND to be eligible to apply for an ACEND-accredited supervised practice program. Verification statements are completed within 3 days of the graduation date each semester. A digital copy is emailed to the student's preferred email address. Students also receive an electronic letter stating that hard copies can be mailed if requested by the student.

In order to receive a verification statement, students enrolled in the DPD program at TN Tech must:

1. Achieve and maintain a **cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above**, with no grade lower than a B in all HEC DPD required courses, and no grade lower than a C in all required Science Courses. A list of DPD required courses is found in Appendix A.
2. Complete a minimum of 21 hours of upper division food and nutrition courses from TN Tech, to specifically include: HEC 3240 Quantity Food Production, HEC 4271 Medical Nutrition Therapy, and HEC 4272 Clinical Dietetics.

Students who have previously earned a bachelor's degree may choose to enroll in the DPD program at TN Tech to receive an ACEND verification statement. These students may be awarded a verification statement from TN Tech if they complete all the DPD required courses (Appendix A) with a grade of B or better in required HEC DPD Courses, a C or better in all required Science courses, and earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. Transcripts from previous degrees will be reviewed by the DPD Director to determine whether previous coursework satisfies any of the DPD program requirements.

Transfer students (without a BS degree) must complete at least 21 hours of upper division food and nutrition courses at Tennessee Tech University (to specifically include: HEC 3240 Quantity Food Production, HEC 4271 Medical Nutrition Therapy, and HEC 4272 Clinical Dietetics) in order to be eligible to receive the verification statement. Transcripts from universities/colleges will be reviewed by the DPD Director to determine whether previous coursework satisfies any of the DPD program requirements; a grade of C or better is required for coursework to be considered from other universities to apply towards a verification statement.

g. Supervised Practice (not applicable to DPD)

h. Complaints

#### Process for Filing and Handling Complaints

The TN Tech Student Complaint policy is found at:

[Student Complaint Policy](#)

Students who have a grievance with the DPD program are encouraged to meet with the DPD Director to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the student may present the grievance to the Director of the School of Human Ecology and/or the Dean of the College without fear of retaliation. A student may initially present his/her grievance to the Director of the School and/or Dean if preferred. Some grievances may be under the jurisdiction of the College and/or University and university policies for student complaints/grievances will be followed as specified in the Student Handbook. The office of Student Affairs may facilitate the processing of student grievances as appropriate [Student Affairs](#)

Dr. Samantha Hutson (Interim Director of the School of Human Ecology) [shutson@tntech.edu](mailto:shutson@tntech.edu)

Dr. Darron Smith (Dean of the College of Agriculture and Human Ecology)  
<mailto:darronsmith@tntech.edu>

There will be no retaliation toward any student who has filed a complaint. If a student suspects that retaliation has occurred, the same procedure for filing a complaint may be followed and/or the student may contact the office of Student Affairs directly at [Student Affairs](#)

Process for submission of written complaints to ACEND related to program noncompliance with ACEND accreditation standards after all other options with the program and institution have been exhausted.

If a student has followed the proper procedure, as outlined above, and still believes that the matter has not been properly handled, the student has the right to file a complaint with the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). Written complaints may be sent to: ACEND, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606. The phone number is: ACEND: 800-877-1600, ext 5400. Website: [ACEND](#)

Email: [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org)

From the ACEND Website: “ACEND has established a process for reviewing complaints against accredited programs in order to fulfill its public responsibility for assuring quality and integrity of the educational programs that it accredits. Any individual, for example, student, faculty, dietetics practitioner and/or member of the public may submit a complaint against any accredited program to ACEND. However, the ACEND Board does 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 acts only upon a signed allegation that the program may not be in compliance with the Accreditation Standards or Policies. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints are not considered. “

i. Credit for Prior Education and Experience

Evaluating the equivalency of prior learning and experience to the program competencies. Otherwise, the program must indicate that it does not assess prior learning or competence.

Students with coursework from another institution who wish to have that coursework considered for substitution of TN Tech coursework must submit official transcripts from all institutions attended. In addition, students should be prepared to provide copies of syllabi, assignments and/or exams to provide documentation of course content. The DPD Director will review transcripts and determine course equivalency for HEC DPD courses. If the DPD Director is unable to determine course equivalency from the materials provided, the student will be required to pass a comprehensive examination of the course content in order to justify course equivalency. The TN Tech DPD program does not give academic credit for previous work or volunteer experience toward meeting course completion requirements.

j. Disciplinary/termination procedures

**Students falling below the 3.0 cumulative GPA or receiving a grade of “C” or lower in any Science course, or lower than a “B” in any HEC DPD Course in any semester, will be sent an email indicating their GPA or course grade is below the minimum requirement for retention.**

Students in this circumstance will be placed on probation for one semester. If by the end of the next semester, their GPA is not 3.0 or above (or course grade improved); they will be dismissed from the DPD program and counseled into another program of study. Students may re-apply to the DPD program one time following a dismissal.

k. Additional Policies

Student access to their own student file

DPD student files are maintained by the DPD Director and stored in a locked and secured location. Access to the DPD student files is limited to only the DPD Director. Information

contained within each student file includes but is not limited to academic advising notes, program of study progress, and Verification statement (following graduation). DPD students may view their files upon request.

Program schedule, vacations, holidays and leaves of absence.

The TN Tech academic calendar can be found at: [Academic Calendar](#)

The TN Tech DPD program schedule follows the university calendar with classes offered in fall, spring and summer semesters. Holidays are determined by the university. The DPD Director is available to students and individuals interested in applying to the program year-round and is available by email during holiday breaks. In the event the DPD Director were to take a temporary leave of absence, an appropriately qualified member of the Human Ecology faculty would be appointed to cover the duties of the DPD Director during that absence.

Compensation practices when students are paid compensation as part of the program.

DPD students are never paid compensation as part of the DPD Program requirements; therefore, no policies are in place.

Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees.

The TN Tech policy for withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees can be found at the following link:

[Withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees.](#)

## DIETETIC STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ETHICS

Students enrolled in the TN Tech DPD program must follow appropriate student conduct as outlined in the TN Tech Student Handbook:

[Student Handbook](#)

Additionally, dietetic students should conduct themselves in a professional manner while on or off campus while attending classes or completing coursework. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Code of Ethics is the reference document for professional conduct of dietetics students and practitioners.

[Nutrition & Dietetics Code of Ethics](#)

### **Professional Dress Code**

Students are expected to be clean, neat, and dressed in a professional manner when representing the TN Tech DPD Program.

### **FEES AND EXPENSES**

Fees and expenses related to tuition and other costs can be found at:

[Fees](#)

### **ADDITIONAL DPD EXPENSES**

*Transportation expenses* may be incurred as part of the following courses:

HEC 3201 Community Nutrition

HEC 3240 Quantity Food Production

HEC 3270 Nutrition and Disease

HEC 4271 Medical Nutrition Therapy

HEC 4262 Nutrition Applications in the Community

HEC 4272 Clinical Dietetics

HEC 4945 Sports/Human Performance Nutrition

*Membership Fees* **REQUIRED** for the program include:

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics - approximately \$60.00 per year

Recommended:

Food, Nutrition and Dietetics Association (TN Tech) - \$10.00 per year

*Equipment/lab apparel costs* may be incurred in HEC 2240, and/or HEC 3240 approximately \$15 for a lab coat.

### **PROCESS TO BECOME A REGISTERED DIETITIAN**

To become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) you will need to:

1. **Complete a minimum of a master's degree** granted by a college or university accredited by a U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agency or foreign equivalent, and coursework through an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics accredited Didactic, Coordinated, Graduate or International program.
2. **Complete required supervised practice/experience** through an ACEND-accredited Dietetic Internship, Coordinated Program, Graduate Program or an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway offered through an ACEND-accredited program.
3. **Pass a national examination** administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. For more information regarding the examination, refer to [CDR's Website](#)
4. **Meet requirements to practice in your state.** Many states have regulatory laws (i.e. licensure) for food and nutrition practitioners. All states accept the RDN credential for state licensure purposes.
5. **Stay up to date in dietetics through continuing education.** After successfully passing the national exam and earning the credential, RDNs maintain ongoing professional development in order to stay up to date on the latest research, recommendations and best practices. 75 CEUs are required to be completed every 5 years to maintain the RDN credential.

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics administers the examination and also establishes the criteria for eligibility of applicants to take the exam. Eligibility criteria include both knowledge and performance standards. The knowledge requirements are stated at the end of this Handbook and provide the core knowledge base for entry-level dietitians. The performance requirements involve completion of an ACEND accredited post-baccalaureate supervised practice program designed to provide students with practice experience and opportunity to master specific performance skills necessary for entry-level dietitians.

Forty-seven states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia currently have statutory provisions regulating the dietetics profession or associated titles such as dietitian and nutritionist. In Tennessee, registered dietitian/nutritionists are required to apply for and receive licensure from the State of Tennessee's Board of Dietitian/Nutritionist Examiners. Requirements for licensure in each state can be found [here](#).

The School of Human Ecology now offers the MS Degree in Community Health and Nutrition which has received accreditation status from ACEND for a Future Education Model (FEM) Experiential Learning track within the MS Degree. Students who successfully complete the Experiential Learning track and MS Degree requirements are eligible to sit for the RDN exam. More details are found here: <https://www.tntech.edu/cahe/hec/programs/community-health.php>

### APPLICATION TO A SUPERVISED PRACTICE PROGRAM

Supervised practice from an accredited program is required, along with academic coursework to become a registered dietitian/nutritionist (RDN). There is a national application process that is made available through the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

#### ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS

Online application to supervised practice programs uses the Dietetics Inclusive Centralized Application Services (DICAS). Students can get more information and set up accounts at: [DICAS](#)

#### TIPS FOR APPLYING TO A SUPERVISED PRACTICE PROGRAM

Beginning Spring 2026, juniors will enroll in HEC 3212 Careers and Professional Preparation in Dietetics in preparation for applying to graduate programs by the October deadline.

1. Build a professional portfolio. Begin EARLY to establish relationships, experiences and an information base needed to successfully apply for supervised practice. Directors of the supervised practice program consider these attributes:
  - a. **Cumulative grade point average – Many programs require a GPA of 3.0 or higher for admission.** Other programs may not specify a certain GPA, but national competition and experience strongly suggests that a GPA of 3.0 or higher is needed for acceptance. Grade points are viewed as **cumulative**. Particular consideration is given to all DPD courses, with special emphasis on science courses and upper division nutrition and food service courses.

- b. *Relevant work experience.* Evidence that you are a productive, reliable and competent worker is critical. Volunteer and paid work experience in areas of nutrition and foodservice is helpful.
  - c. *Activities.* Program directors look for students whose activities suggest they are committed to becoming a registered dietitian and contributing to the profession.
  - d. *Leadership.* Demonstrated leadership skills. What future expectation do you have for yourself? What evidence can you provide to the selection committee that you are a good investment for their program?
  - e. *References.* Dietetic programs often require references in the following categories: DPD Director, professors, academic advisors, employer and personal. Obtaining good references should not be the sole basis for decisions, but it is important to develop relationships over time with people who may serve as references in the future. This may include a variety of interactions so that the persons from whom you request recommendations have an adequate basis for providing a strong reference when needed.
2. Collect information about supervised practice programs: The *Directory of Dietetic Programs* is available on the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics website [Directory](#)

Information about supervised practice programs should be sought during the sophomore and junior years. Once the directory has been reviewed, a student should select programs of interest, request information on the programs, review the information, and develop a sense of which program(s) best suits his or her needs.

3. Follow good business etiquette in writing, e-mailing, and calling for information and in all professionally related activities. You cannot predict when a program director or potential employer will form an opinion about you. Good business practices suggest that all written communications be on plain, good quality paper, typed, error-free, grammatically correct, well-organized, and the request clearly stated. All correspondence (including e-mails) should be dated, include name and correct titles of person to whom you are writing, and include your complete name and contact information.
4. Applications to supervised practice programs are a national application process. The application timetable is available here [Student Applications](#)
- a. Each program will have its own application requirements – pay close attention to what is required for submission – each program will have a separate application fee. Make a grid of what is required for each program.
  - b. Applications for graduate school are completed in separate packets according to each school's guidelines – these often require separate recommendation letters and separate mailing addresses.
  - c. Request letters of recommendation from appropriate individuals and allow enough time for completion. One letter of recommendation must come from the DPD Director – Dr. Anderson.

- d. The DPD Director will complete “Declaration of Intent to Complete Form” online in DICAS when applicant submits Dr. Coutinho’s contact information.
5. Adhere to Dietetics applicant and Program Traffic Rules – See Appendix E.
6. Take the GRE if needed: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)

#### **DECLARATION OF INTENT and DPD Course Form**

This form is required as part of the application documents in DICAS. The form is completed online in DICAS by the DPD Director (you must submit Dr. Coutinho’s contact information) and states the courses to be completed and the date the B.S. degree will be complete. The DPD Course Form is also required of students enrolled in a DPD Program; this form is found on [eatrightpro.org](http://eatrightpro.org). Dr. Coutinho will complete this form when requested by each applicant who then submits it in DICAS. Students who have already completed B.S. degree requirements would submit a Verification Statement instead of the Declaration of Intent to complete form.

## **APPENDIX A – Required DPD Courses at TN Tech**

### **HEC Core Courses:**

**HEC 2065 Families in Society**

**HEC 3011 Consumer Economics**

### **HEC Dietetic (DPD) Courses:**

**HEC 2020 Nutrition for Health Sciences**

**HEC 2240 Food Preparation & Management**

**HEC 3201 Community Nutrition**

**HEC 3202 Topics in Public Health and Community Nutrition**

**HEC 3212 Careers and Professional Preparation in Nutrition & Dietetics**

**HEC 3240 Quantity Food Production**

**HEC 3270 Nutrition in Disease**

**HEC 3215 Intro to Nutrition Research & Scholarly Writing**

**HEC 3290 Nutrition through Life Cycle**

**HEC 4200 Advanced Nutrition Research**

**HEC 4945 Sports and Human Performance Nutrition**

**HEC 4242 Foodsystems Administration**

**HEC 4262 Nutrition Applications in the Community**

**HEC 4271 Medical Nutrition Therapy**

**HEC 4272 Clinical Dietetics**

**HEC 4925 Nutrition Counseling and Education**

**HEC 4055 Resilience in the Workplace or HEC Elective**

**HEC 4100 Cross-Cultural Awareness for Professionals**

### **Biology Courses:**

**BIOL 2350 Intro Anatomy & Physiology OR BIOL 2010/2020 Anatomy & Physiology I & II**

**BIOL 3230 Health Science Microbiology**

### **Chemistry Courses:**

**CHEM 1010, CHEM 1020 General Chemistry**

**CHEM 3005 Elementary Organic Chemistry**

**CHEM 4500 Nutritional Biochemistry**

**Quantitative Reasoning & Analysis:**

**MATH 1530 Introductory Statistics**

**Communications Courses:**

**ENG 1010, ENG 1020 Writing I & II**

**COMM 2025 Fundamentals of Communication OR NURS 2600**

**Social and Behavioral Science Courses: 6 credits**

The following courses are needed to graduate with a BS degree in HEC from TN Tech, but ARE NOT part of the DPD curriculum:

HIST 2010 and HIST 2020 American History (6 credits)

Humanities and Cultural Expression: 6 credits

HEC 1040 Connections in Human Ecology – required freshmen orientation class; not required for transfer students

Financial or Digital Literacy: 1 credit

## Bachelor Level Competencies for Nutrition and Dietetics

ACEND's Bachelor Level Competencies and Performance Indicators are organized hierarchically from broad learning expectations to more specific indicators.

- Level 1: The Units (e.g., Unit 1, Unit 2) are the broad content areas that describe a group of competencies and a focus area
- Level 2: The Competencies (e.g., 1.1, 1.2) follow and describe what learners should achieve within that unit. Competencies identify expected performance (knowledge, skill, and judgment)
- Level 3: The Performance Indicators are the sub-statements (e.g., 1.1.1, 1.1.2) that define each competency or the level of expected performance into specific, measurable skills that demonstrate how the broader outcome is applied in practice

### Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge

#### 1.1 Apply foundational sciences and knowledge in food and nutrition (S)

- 1.1.1 Describe nutrient metabolism, including the integration and regulation of macro- and micro-nutrition (K)
- 1.1.2 Apply organic chemistry and biochemistry knowledge to make informed food and nutrition decisions for medical nutrition therapy and optimal health (S)
- 1.1.3 Apply an understanding of social, physical, and behavioral factors that impact food and nutrition across the lifespan (S)
- 1.1.4 Integrate knowledge of molecular factors, including genes, proteins, and metabolites, in the development and management of disease (K)

#### 1.2 Apply knowledge of pharmacology and pharmacokinetics to recommend, prescribe, and administer medical nutrition therapy (K)

- 1.2.1 Identify the classifications of nutraceutical and pharmacological agents and their actions on the body (K)
- 1.2.2 Apply knowledge of classifications, categories, and indications for commonly used medications and supplements (for example, weight management, hypertension, diuretics, cardiovascular disease, diabetes) (K)
- 1.2.3 Demonstrate understanding of pharmacokinetics as it applies to medications and supplements (K)

#### 1.3 Apply an understanding of the impact of integrative and functional nutrition on disease, health, and wellness (S)

- 1.3.1 Explain how nutrients and nutrition supplements influence disease, physical activity, and wellness (K)
- 1.3.2 Evaluate the safety and efficacy of integrative and functional nutrition approaches and interventions (S)
- 1.3.3 Critically evaluate evidence-based literature to inform decisions about the use of integrative and functional nutrition (S)

#### 1.4 Integrate research methods and principles into evidence-based practice (S)

- 1.4.1 Explain the steps of the research process (K)
- 1.4.2 Choose appropriate statistical methods, perform statistical analysis, and interpret results in various data analysis situations (S)
- 1.4.3 Evaluate research to support evidence-based decision-making and draw valid conclusions (S)

## Unit 2: Community Services

### 2.1 Promote health and wellness for individuals and groups (S)

- 2.1.1 Engage in community outreach to address the nutrition-related needs of the target group (S)
- 2.1.2 Use nutrition and health coaching strategies to create a shared vision and goals with individuals (S)
- 2.1.3 Assess and monitor the effectiveness, adequacy, and quality of infant feeding practices (S)
- 2.1.4 Provide evidence-based breastfeeding education to promote human milk feeding, human lactation, nutrition, and well-being (S)

### 2.2 Design and implement a program that addresses the nutrition needs for health, wellness, and disease prevention (S)

- 2.2.1 Conduct a community needs assessment to identify the health status and behavior of the community and the gaps in resources and services (S)
- 2.2.2 Provide evidence-based education to address nutrition misinformation in a manner that supports informed decision-making (S)
- 2.2.3 Demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences as they pertain to patient/client care (S)

## Unit 3: Leadership

### 3.1 Apply critical thinking to make ethical and evidence-based decisions (S)

- 3.1.1 Make decisions based on evidence-based practice and ethical principles (S)
- 3.1.2 Define the problem and determine steps for resolution (S)
- 3.1.3 Identify fundamental research concepts that inform evidence-based practice (K)

### 3.2 Demonstrate ethical and professional behaviors (S)

- 3.2.1 Apply knowledge of the professional Code of Ethics (S)
- 3.2.2 Maintain confidentiality and security when sharing, transmitting, storing, and managing protected health information (S)
- 3.2.3 Perform self-reflection to identify skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences, and develop goals for self-improvement (D)
- 3.2.4 Identify and take steps to manage unethical, incompetent, and unsafe behavior (S)
- 3.2.5 Practice in a manner that respects patient/client needs (S)
- 3.2.6 Apply nutrition-related legislation, regulations, and standards of practice (K)

### 3.3 Apply leadership skills to guide practice (K)

- 3.3.1 Apply knowledge of leadership and management theories (K)
- 3.3.2 Gain an understanding of social cues and group dynamics to facilitate desired outcomes (K)

## Unit 4: Nutrition Care Process and Medical Nutrition Therapy for Individuals

### 4.1 Conduct nutrition screening to identify health and nutrition-related problems (D)

- 4.1.1 Interview individuals and gather information from other sources, following established tools and guidelines (D)
- 4.1.2 Identify and prioritize needs based on screening results (S)

#### 4.2 Conduct a nutrition assessment to inform the nutrition diagnosis (S)

- 4.2.1 Obtain diet history and the level of physical activity (D)
- 4.2.2 Select nutrition assessment tools for individuals and groups (S)
- 4.2.3 Recognize pertinent laboratory values and their impact on health and nutrition (S)
- 4.2.4 Address nutritional risk factors across the life span (S)
- 4.2.5 Conduct a nutrition-focused physical examination and interpret results (D)
- 4.2.6 Identify signs and symptoms of malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies and excesses (S)
- 4.2.7 Assess individual energy and nutrient needs based on physiology and health status (S)
- 4.2.8 Recognize and communicate the causes of disease and nutritional risks (K)
- 4.2.9 Develop a problem, etiology, signs and symptoms (PES) statement to communicate a nutritional diagnosis (S)

#### 4.3 Develop an individualized plan of care that addresses nutrition care needs, diagnosis, and client/patient nutrition goals (S)

- 4.3.1 Develop goals that address nutrition care needs and diagnosis (S)
- 4.3.2 Create a nutrition prescription to address nutrition goals (S)
- 4.3.3 Describe the regulatory system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third-party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained (K)

#### 4.4 Create an intervention, monitoring, and evaluation plan to address nutrition diagnosis (S)

- 4.4.1 Evaluate and address the influence of food consumption on the development and management of diseases (S)
- 4.4.2 Address food-medication interactions and food allergies to ensure client/patient safety (S)
- 4.4.3 Apply medical nutrition therapy principles for the management of enteral and parenteral nutrition (S)
- 4.4.4 Explain the implications of genetic variation for nutritional needs and medical nutrition therapy (K)
- 4.4.5 Instruct clients/patients on self-monitoring blood glucose levels, with consideration of their diabetes medication, and the medical nutrition therapy plan (S)
- 4.4.6 Evaluate the impact of nutrition intervention on the nutrition diagnosis (S)
- 4.4.7 Document all elements of the nutrition care process following professional standards and organizational policies (S)

#### 4.5 Apply counseling and behavior change theories to promote nutritional health and disease prevention (S)

- 4.5.1 Identify the benefits, risks, and limitations of counseling (K)
- 4.5.2 Apply counseling theories, psychological methods, and strategies that empower patients/clients to make changes (S)
- 4.5.3 Explain the effect of mental health on food behavior (K)

### Unit 5: Foodservice

#### 5.1 Apply sanitation and food safety principles in compliance with state and federal regulations (D)

- 5.1.1 Apply sanitation principles related to food safety, personnel, and consumers (D)
- 5.1.2 Demonstrate awareness of food regulations specific to the practice settings (K)
- 5.1.3 Adhere to policies and procedures to optimize food and water safety in compliance with state and federal regulations (D)

## 5.2 Design meals that promote health and disease management for various individuals and groups across the lifespan (D)

- 5.2.1 Develop and modify menus and meal plans to ensure acceptability and affordability, accommodating for age, dietary patterns, preferences, and health status (D)
- 5.2.2 Evaluate recipe acceptability using sensory evaluation methods (D)
- 5.2.3 Modify recipes and ingredients based on preferences, dietary needs, trends, seasonality, and product availability (D)
- 5.2.4 Design therapeutic diets applying food science principles (D)
- 5.2.5 Adjust recipes to scale for the desired quantity (D)
- 5.2.6 Modify recipes or develop a food product integrating principles of chemistry and food science (D)
- 5.2.7 Prepare infant formula and human milk safely and accurately to meet patient/client needs (S)

## 5.3 Manage the production, distribution, and service of quantity and quality food systems (S)

- 5.3.1 Perform functions related to purchasing, production, and service of food that meet nutrition guidelines, cost parameters, and health needs (S)
- 5.3.2 Perform human resource functions to achieve goals (S)
- 5.3.3 Perform foodservice budget activities to achieve financial goals (S)
- 5.3.4 Apply workplace safety principles to identify and mitigate safety hazards (S)
- 5.3.5 Analyze organizational needs, including workforce, equipment, space, and technology, to ensure sustainability (S)
- 5.3.6 Analyze the workflow design and make recommendations to improve system efficiency (S)
- 5.3.7 Develop disaster planning protocols to ensure safe and continuous food service (S)
- 5.3.8 Conduct a facility analysis of equipment based on resource availability, anticipated future growth, and sustainability (S)

## 5.4 Apply knowledge of purchasing, receiving, and storage of food products (S)

- 5.4.1 Identify inventory management principles to ensure food production needs are met (S)
- 5.4.2 Manage the process of receiving and storing products, demonstrating adherence to food safety code guidelines and regulations (K)
- 5.4.3 Manage the relationship between forecasting and production as it pertains to recipe needs and organizational demand (S)

## Prerequisite Competencies for the Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD)

Programs must ensure that competencies in years 1 through 2 have been met through prerequisite coursework, prior learning assessment, or within the program. Programs are expected to demonstrate the process for setting and evaluating these prerequisites. Assessment of year 1 and 2 competencies is not a requirement and they will not be incorporated in the Competency Assessment Table.

## Associate Level Competencies for Nutrition and Dietetics (Years 1 & 2)

### Unit 1: Foundational Knowledge

#### 1.1 Apply foundational sciences and knowledge in food and nutrition (K)

- 1.1.1 Perform food and nutrition calculations using math skills (S)
- 1.1.2 Apply knowledge of microbiology to food safety principles (K)
- 1.1.3 Demonstrate knowledge of chemistry to the fundamentals of nutrition (K)
- 1.1.4 Apply knowledge of basic food science to food preparation techniques and culinary nutrition (S)
- 1.1.5 Demonstrate knowledge of anatomy and physiology related to disease, wellness, and nutrition (K)
- 1.1.6 Demonstrate knowledge of psychology, sociology, or anthropology of human behavior (K)
- 1.1.7 Integrate principles of nutrition across the lifespan (K)
- 1.1.8 Demonstrate appropriate use of medical terminology and abbreviations (K)
- 1.1.9 Recognize the components of the Nutrition Care Process (K)
- 1.1.10 Compare health care delivery systems that impact nutrition and dietetics (K)

### Unit 2: Community Services

#### 2.1 Promote health and wellness for individuals and groups (D)

- 2.1.1 Plan meals that promote health for individuals and target groups (D)
- 2.1.2 Apply nutrition and health coaching strategies to meet the goals of individuals (S)
- 2.1.3 Direct patients/clients to resources and services, including RDN, based on identified needs and access (S)
- 2.1.4 Perform waived point-of-care tests, anthropometric and body composition measurements (D)
- 2.1.5 Discuss the influence of the determinants of health on nutrition and the well-being of individuals and communities (D)
- 2.1.6 Demonstrate an understanding of cultural differences that impact food and nutrition (D)

#### 2.2 Provide education to individuals and groups based on the learners' determinants of health (S)

- 2.2.1 Select current evidence-based educational materials based on audience needs (D)
- 2.2.2 Apply learning principles to modify and deliver education based on the learners' determinants of health (S)
- 2.2.3 Provide education using various delivery methods to promote health and wellness (S)
- 2.2.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of education and make modifications as required (S)

## Unit 3: Leadership

### 3.1 Apply critical thinking to make ethical and evidence-based decisions (S)

- 3.1.1 Determine the credibility of information and sources (S)
- 3.1.2 Identify nutrition resources and apply evidence-based guidelines to inform decisions (S)

### 3.2 Demonstrate ethical and professional behaviors (S)

- 3.2.1 Demonstrate ethical behaviors in accordance with the professional Code of Ethics (S)
- 3.2.2 Maintain confidentiality and security when sharing, transmitting, storing, and managing protected health information (K)
- 3.2.3 Perform self-reflection to identify skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences, and develop goals for self-improvement (D)
- 3.2.4 Prioritize activities to manage time and workload (S)

### 3.3 Advocate for opportunities in the nutrition and dietetic profession (S)

- 3.3.1 Identify community and organizational support services and resources (K)
- 3.3.2 Engage in advocacy efforts that impact nutrition and dietetics at the local, state, or national level (S)
- 3.3.3 Demonstrate self-advocacy for financial and professional opportunities and advancement (S)

### 3.4 Work collaboratively with teams to achieve desired outcomes (S)

- 3.4.1 Identify the roles and responsibilities of interprofessional team members (K)
- 3.4.2 Demonstrate active participation and promote teamwork, respecting opinions and experiences (S)
- 3.4.3 Recognize differences and manage conflict (S)

### 3.5 Demonstrate effective professional communication skills (D)

- 3.5.1 Communicate in a clear, effective, and respectful manner (D)
- 3.5.2 Identify and address barriers to communication (S)
- 3.5.3 Adapt communications for a target audience (D)
- 3.5.4 Ensure timely, clear, accurate, and valid documentation using correct spelling and grammar (D)
- 3.5.5 Use communication skills to influence or produce a desired outcome during negotiations or conflict resolution discussions (D)

### 3.6 Engage in management and continuous quality activities (S)

- 3.6.1 Understand budgeting principles to achieve financial targets (K)
- 3.6.2 Incorporate marketing principles in the promotion of services and products (S)
- 3.6.3 Recognize principles of sustainability to minimize waste and protect the environment (K)
- 3.6.4 Collect data to inform program planning, evaluation, and quality improvement (S)

## Appendix C

### Student Code of Conduct and Signature Page

## Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics – TN Tech DPD Program

**Self-Presentation:** I will present myself in a manner that demonstrates self-respect as well as respect for my peers, professors, and others.

Your attire and behavior can convey a professional attitude. Unique dress is not discouraged, although **unprofessional dress** (e.g. exposed body parts etc.) can be distracting to others and send unintended messages. Consider presenting yourself in a way that *communicates*:

- I am a mature person
- I respect myself
- I respect my audience, peers, professors, students etc.
- I am serious about conveying professional or academic messages

**Original Work** I will submit or present work that is my own, or cite my sources appropriately. Refer to the TN Tech Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity Guidelines: [Student Handbook](#)

Developing original ideas or ways of describing them in words is a critical part of success in higher education. Homework assignments, papers, presentations, and exams are all opportunities to practice and hone these skills. Using others' work is crucial in certain situations (e.g., reviewing literature or writing a research paper). Doing so effectively requires use of an accepted citation format. Copying and pasting information from Web sites into a paper is plagiarism, unless the text is in quotes and cited. In summary, give credit where credit is due, do not present someone else's work as your own, and when giving credit to a source, do so in an appropriate way.

**Attendance and Class Conduct** I will be present in class both physically and mentally. I will make contributions to class that are respectful and relevant to my own learning process and the learning processes of others. My behavior will be professional and appropriate, and not disruptive to class. Each class period is an irreplaceable, interactive learning opportunity. Listening attentively, taking notes, and actively participating in discussions or other activities accelerate learning and also convey interest and respect in others, including professors and classmates. I understand that arriving late, leaving the room in the middle of class, walking out early, studying for other classes, using a cell phone or text messaging, sleeping, etc. is disruptive, distracting, and can hinder others' ability to teach or learn. I will manage my time and commitments so that I can attend all classes to the best of my ability. I will come to class with a focused mind in order to think clearly, focus on understanding what is being communicated, and contribute effectively.

## **Time Management**

I will respect others' time and will follow through on all scheduled time commitments.

Time is valuable to both professors and students. Program participants are responsible for being on time for class meetings, group meetings, and other scheduled appointments. In the unfortunate event of being late or missing a meeting or appointment, I understand I can restore integrity by acknowledging the error and apologizing to others affected. Program participants are also responsible for maintaining an adequate level of availability for communication outside of class. This includes maintaining or using office hours, and checking voice mail and email messages regularly, and responding promptly or within a reasonable time frame.

## **Emergencies**

I will fulfill my academic obligations to the best of my ability. If a personal emergency is preventing me from fulfilling my academic obligations, I will take appropriate action.

In some cases, personal emergencies may jeopardize a participant's ability to fulfill academic commitments successfully by preventing class attendance, causing one to miss due dates for assignments, meetings for group projects, exams etc. Such cases call for clear and early communication with the program director to determine the best course of action. While special consideration and accommodation can be made for students who have temporary unfortunate circumstances, longer term or habitual emergencies may require requesting a leave of absence from the program.

## **Recommendations**

For Faculty: I will write honest and objective recommendations for deserving students with appropriate attention to deadlines.

For Students: I will work to establish positive relationships with all professors from whom I may seek a recommendation for a Dietetic Internship, employment, graduate school, or other opportunity. I will seek recommendations with respect and humility. The following suggestions are appropriate ways to foster positive relationships with recommenders:

- Justify a professor's recommendation with the quality of your work, professionalism, and character.
- Choose individuals to be references who are well acquainted with you and your abilities.
- Request a recommendation in a timely fashion, respectfully, and without presumption.

- Assume that the recommendation will be confidential.
- Acknowledge the time and energy taken to write and submit a recommendation letter with a written thank you to your references.
- Keep in touch with your references and inform them about your progress and whereabouts (you may need additional letters in the future).

**Feedback/Evaluation** I will actively engage in the program's evaluation processes, to promote its continued improvement and success for present and future participants. For faculty, examples to provide feedback include a professor's comments on student assignments, and faculty-student communications. For students, examples to provide feedback include mid-semester surveys, end of semester teacher or advisor evaluations, one on one meetings, exit interviews for seniors, and follow up surveys for alumni. I understand that providing constructive and relevant feedback is a professional responsibility.

### **Criteria for Retention in the DPD Program**

#### **DPD Retention Procedures**

Students who have been admitted to upper division dietetics must maintain a **cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better EACH semester**. A grade of "B" is required for all DPD courses; any grade lower than this will require that course to be retaken and will likely delay time to graduation. A grade of "C" is required for all Science courses; any grade lower than this will require that course to be retaken. Students will be removed from the DPD program when the GPA falls below 3.0 for more than 2 semesters; or students do not retake courses with less than acceptable letter grades. Students may choose to re-apply another semester when grades have improved, courses retaken, and if an upper division slot is available.

Students will be **retained** in the TN Tech DPD program provided the following retention criteria are met EACH semester:

1. Completion of all required courses as outlined on the 120-hour B.S. Degree Curriculum for Human Ecology: Nutrition and Dietetics Concentration
2. **Maintenance of a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 GPA each semester, AND an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 (minimum) in 3000 and 4000 level DPD courses.**
3. Once admitted to upper division, a letter grade of A or B is required in all 3000 and 4000 level DPD courses and a letter grade of C or higher in Science courses each semester.

### Acknowledgement Page

**I have received a copy of the TN Tech DPD Student Handbook and I have read and understand its contents. I agree to abide by this code of conduct and professional ethics while enrolled in the DPD Program at Tennessee Tech. I understand failure to engage in professional behavior as outlined in this Code of Conduct could forfeit my place in the TN Tech DPD Program.**

**I understand that a cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required to receive a Verification Statement from the TN Tech DPD Program upon graduation.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D – RDN Fact Sheet

## Careers in Nutrition and Dietetics

### Becoming a Registered Dietitian

#### Educational and professional requirements

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) are food and nutrition experts who have met the following criteria and earned the RDN credential:

- **Completed accredited coursework** through an Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) accredited Didactic (DPD), Coordinated (CP), Graduate (GP), or Foreign (FDE) program. For a list of accredited programs, see [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend).
- **Completed required supervised practice/experience** through an ACEND-accredited Dietetic Internship (DI), Coordinated Program (CP), Graduate Program (GP) or an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) offered through an ACEND-accredited program. Information on ACEND-accredited programs at [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend).
- **Completed a minimum of a master's degree** granted by a college or university accredited by a USDE recognized accrediting agency or foreign equivalent.
- **Passed a national examination** administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR). For more information regarding the examination, refer to CDR's Website at [www.cdrnet.org](http://www.cdrnet.org). In order to maintain the credential, an RDN must complete continuing professional educational requirements.

Some RDNs hold additional certifications in specialized areas of practice. These are awarded through CDR, the credentialing agency for the Academy, and/or through other medical and nutrition organizations. These certifications are recognized within the profession but not required. Some of the certifications include pediatric or renal nutrition, sports dietetics, oncology, gerontology, nutrition support and diabetes education.

#### College course work

Nutrition and Dietetics students study a variety of

subjects, including food and nutrition sciences, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, anatomy, chemistry, foodservice systems, business, pharmacology, culinary arts, behavioral social sciences and communication.

#### Employment opportunities

RDNs work in a wide variety of settings, including healthcare, business and industry, community/public health, education, research, government agencies and private practice. Many work environments, particularly those in medical and healthcare settings, require that an individual be credentialed as an RDN.

#### RDNs work in:

- **Hospitals, clinics or other healthcare facilities** educating patients about nutrition and administering medical nutrition therapy as part of the healthcare team. They may also manage the food services operations in these settings, or **schools, daycare centers or correctional facilities**, overseeing everything from food purchasing and preparation to managing staff.
- **Sports nutrition and corporate wellness programs**, educating clients about the connection between food, fitness and health.
- **Private Practice**, working under contract with healthcare or food companies, or in their own business. RDNs work with foodservices or restaurant managers, food vendors and distributors, athletes, nursing home residents or company employees.
- **Community and public health settings**, teaching, monitoring and advising the public and helping improve quality of life through healthy eating habits.
- **Universities and medical centers**, teaching physician's assistants, nurses, dietetics students, dentists, and others about the sophisticated science of food and nutrition.

## Careers in Nutrition and Dietetics

- **Research areas** in food and pharmaceutical companies, universities and hospitals directing or conducting experiments to answer critical nutrition questions and find alternative foods or nutrition recommendations for the public.

### Where to start if you already have a degree:

If you already have a master's degree that is not in nutrition and dietetics, and are interested in becoming a registered dietitian, have your transcripts evaluated by the director of the ACEND-accredited program you wish to attend.

The program director will review your previous academic preparation and identify courses that you will need to complete to meet the educational and supervised practice/experiential learning requirements to be eligible to take the RDN credentialing exam.

### Salaries and job outlook

According to the *2024 Compensation & Benefits Survey of the Dietetics Profession*, the median full-time salary of all RDNs equates to \$79,000 per year. As with any profession, salaries and fees vary by region of the country, employment setting, scope of responsibility and supply of RDNs. Salaries increase with experience and many RDNs, particularly those in business, management, education and research earn incomes above \$100,000.

According to the *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, employment of dietitians is projected to grow 6% from 2024-2034, faster than the average for all occupations, because of the increased emphasis on the role of food and nutrition in preventing and treating disease, a growing and aging population, and public interest in nutrition.

### Financial aid

There are many resources to help students pay for college. You may be able to obtain a grant or scholarship from a corporation, community or civic group, philanthropic or religious organization or directly from your chosen school or college you are interested in attending. Federal grants and low-interest loans may also be available.

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation offers scholarships to encourage eligible students to enter the field of dietetics. Student members of the Academy enrolled in their junior year of study in an ACEND-accredited program may apply for a Foundation scholarship. Scholarships are also available for student members in ACEND-accredited dietetic internships and graduate studies. Contact the Academy's Accreditation and Education Programs Team (800/877-1600, ext. 5400 or [education@eatright.org](mailto:education@eatright.org)) for scholarship information.

### Need more information?

Go to [www.eatrightpro.org](http://www.eatrightpro.org) and click on "EatRight Careers" for more information. The site also lists the dietetics education programs accredited by ACEND at <https://www.eatrightpro.org/acend>.

For other career guidance information, contact the Accreditation and Education Programs Team (800/877-1600, ext. 5400 or [education@eatright.org](mailto:education@eatright.org)).

### Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Accreditation and Education Programs Team  
120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-6995  
Phone: 800/877-1600, ext. 5400  
Fax: 312/899-4817  
E-mail: [education@eatright.org](mailto:education@eatright.org)

The **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

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## Appendix E – RDN Job List

### Registered Dietitian's Job List

This is a comprehensive list of job opportunities for Registered Dietitians (RDs), categorized by specialties. Explore the various fields, from clinical and community nutrition to sports, research, and more, to find potential career paths that align with your interests and expertise.

#### 1. Clinical Dietitian's

- *Director of Food and Nutrition Services* \*
- *Clinical Nutrition Manager* \*
- *Patient Services Manager* \*
- Critical Care Dietitians
- Cardiac Dietitians
- Gastrointestinal Dietitians
- Diabetes Educators
- Nephrology Dietitians
- Neurology Dietitians
- Pediatric Dietitians (in clinical settings)
- Bariatric Dietitians

#### 2. Community Dietitians:

- *Health Coach* \*
- *Health Magazine Editor* \*
- *WIC Nutritionist* \*
- Public Health Dietitians
- School Dietitians
- Community Outreach Dietitians
- Wellness Coordinators
- Grocery Store Dietitians
- Hotels

#### 3. Sports Dietitians:

- *Exercise Physiologist* \*
- Athletic Performance Dietitians
- Endurance Sports Dietitians
- Team Sports Dietitians

\*Roles compiled with insights from [\*Dietitian Dream Jobs E-book\*](#)

**4. Pediatric Dietitians:**

- Neonatal Dietitians
- Childhood Obesity Specialists
- Pediatric Gastrointestinal Dietitians

**5. Gerontological Dietitians:**

- Elderly Nutrition Specialists
- Long-Term Care Dietitians

**6. Renal Dietitians:**

- Dialysis Dietitians
- Kidney Transplant Dietitians

**7. Oncology Dietitians:**

- Cancer Treatment Support Dietitians
- Survivorship Dietitians

**8. Eating Disorder Dietitians:**

- Anorexia Nervosa Specialists
- Bulimia Nervosa Specialists
- Binge-Eating Disorder Specialists

**9. Food Service Dietitians:**

- *Retail Dietitian*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Food Stylist*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Restaurant Consultant*<sup>\*</sup>
- Menu Development Specialists
- Culinary Nutritionists
- Food Safety and Sanitation Experts

**10. Dietitians in Research**

- *Nutraceutical Formulation*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Nutrition App Creator*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Researcher*<sup>\*</sup>
- Nutrigenomics

*\*Roles compiled with insights from [Dietitian Dream Jobs E-book](#)*

## 11. Dietitians in Corporate

- *Marketing Director*\*
- *Pharmaceutical Sales Representative*\*
- Enteral Formula Manufacturers
  - Nestle
  - Abbott
- Corporate Wellness
- Cookbook Publishers
  - Health and Wellness Magazines
  - Nutrition Journals
  - Medical journals
  - Educational Publishers
  - Nutritional Blogs and Websites
  - Lifestyle magazines
  - Textbook Publishers
  - Culinary Publishers
- Food Manufacturers
- Beverage Manufacturers
- Supplement Companies
- Bakeries
- Dairy manufacturers
- Frozen food manufacturers
- Meat and Poultry Processors
- Plant-Based and Vegan food Companies
- Snack-Food Company
- Condiment Manufacturer
- Baby-food company
- Cereal and Breakfast Food Manufacturers

## 12. Dietitians in Education

- *Dietetic Internship Director*\*
- *Education Specialist*\*
- *Nutrition Writer*\*
- *Freelance Writer*\*
- *Ghost Writer*\*
- Higher Education (Professor)
  - Universities
  - Colleges
- Research Institutions
- Extension Specialist
- Extension Instructor/ Educator – Food, Nutrition & Health
  - *Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior*

\*Roles compiled with insights from [\*Dietitian Dream Jobs E-book\*](#)

### 13. Entrepreneurial Dietitians

- *Private Practice Dietitian*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Professional Speaker*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Website Developer*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Nutrition Communications*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Health Education Specialist*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Nutrition Podcaster*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Meal Prepping*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Restaurant Owner*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Program Consultant*<sup>\*</sup>
- *Regulatory Dietitian*<sup>\*</sup>
- Eating Disorders

### 14. Governing Agencies Dietitians

- **Federal Agencies:**
  - USDA (United States Department of Agriculture)
  - FDA (Food and Drug Administration)
  - CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
  - NIH (National Institutes of Health)
  - Health Departments
- **Specialized Programs:**
  - WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)
  - HHS (Department of Health and Human Services)
    - *Commissioned Corps:* [Apply Now](#)
- **Educational and Healthcare Institutions:**
  - Department of Education
  - Veterans' Health Administration (VA)
- **International Organizations:**
  - WHO (World Health Organization)
- **Military:**
  - Various branches of the military

*\*The content of this list includes adapted suggestions from the '[Dietitian Dream Jobs E-Book](#),' utilized with permission from [allaccessdietetics.com](#). For in-depth information and detailed descriptions of these coveted positions, we recommend referring to [All Access Dietetics](#) for a wealth of valuable and complimentary resources.*

Appendix F  
Dietetics Applicant and Program Traffic Rules from DICAS

## Dietetics Applicant and Program Traffic Rules

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These traffic guidelines have been established by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) Dietetics Application Process Task Force and approved by the ACEND Board. These traffic rules represent the guidelines under which the nutrition and dietetics supervised practice programs [Dietetic Internships (DIs), Coordinated Programs (CPs), and Graduate Programs (GPs)] and their institutions have agreed to conduct the annual admissions process.

### A. Applicant Traffic Rules

Applicants to dietetics programs, although some are not yet members of the dietetics profession, are bound to legal and ethical standards of behavior during the admission process.

#### TRAFFIC RULES FOR ALL APPLICANTS:

As an applicant to the profession of nutrition and dietetics, I pledge to:

- Act with honesty and integrity throughout the admission process when interacting with nutrition and dietetics programs, including program directors, faculty, staff, and Dietetics Inclusive Centralized Application System (DICAS) staff.
  - As an applicant, I will submit my own thoughts and original work/not falsify or plagiarize information in my application and/or interview.
- Be responsible and accountable for my actions.
  - I will personally manage and respond to all matters related to my application.
  - I will respond promptly to all communication from all programs.
- Be respectful of decisions made by admission faculty and staff involved in the admission process.
  - I understand that programs are not required to provide details about decisions or offer suggestions to improve my application.
- Abide by the Admission Traffic Rules for Applicants.

#### **ADMISSIONS TRAFFIC RULES FOR APPLICANTS:**

Applicants applying to programs outside of their current institution, regardless of the use of DICAS, should follow these traffic rules.

- You may **not** be enrolled in more than one program at any time.
- In fairness to other applicants and nutrition and dietetics programs, if you have decided before November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring) **not** to attend a program that has offered you admission, promptly withdraw your application from the program(s) by contacting the program director.
- Once you have accepted an offer, if you were offered admission to other programs, you **MUST** contact the program director(s) to decline offer(s). This allows waitlisted applicants to be given an offer.
- If you receive and accept an alternative offer after you have already accepted an offer, you **MUST** rescind/withdraw your acceptance at the program where you had previously accepted an offer within 24 hours of accepting the offer at the new program.
- If you are interested in programs starting in the fall, you may apply to those programs with a fall start that have open applications in both the fall application timeframe and spring application timeframe.

#### **Applicant Traffic Rule Violations**

ACEND serves as a clearinghouse for reports of possible applicant and program misconduct. Questions about the Applicant Traffic Rules should be directed to [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

## B. Programs Traffic Rules

Nutrition and dietetics programs are bound to the Code of Ethics for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession and must abide by a set of core values during the admission process: customer focus, integrity, innovation, social responsibility and diversity ([Code of Ethics for RDNs and NDTRs](#)).

**Note: All programs that provide dietetics supervised practice (DIs, CPs, GPs) are required to participate in the Dietetics Inclusive Centralized Application System (DICAS)\*.**

*\*Does not apply to applicants selected within the same institution (e.g., Sophomore CP student applying to a CP for their junior year; DPD-DI in same institution; DI programs accepting their own employees into the program).*

### TRAFFIC RULES FOR PROGRAMS:

As a nutrition and dietetics program, we pledge to:

- Act with honesty and integrity throughout the admission process when interacting with nutrition and dietetics applicants, other program directors, faculty, staff, and DICAS staff.
- Abide by the Admission Traffic Rules for programs.

ACEND encourages each of its member programs and institutions to conduct an application process that is inclusive and professional. The purpose of these traffic rules is to allow applicants to explore their options with each nutrition and dietetics program in a fair manner.

### ADMISSIONS TRAFFIC RULES FOR PROGRAMS:

ACEND adopted the following Admissions Traffic Rules for Nutrition and Dietetics Education Programs. For questions, please contact [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

### Throughout the Cycle

- Programs may continue to market and recruit applicants.
- Program openings can be offered to waitlisted applicants as they become available.
- Programs with available positions may reopen their DICAS application for interested applicants by changing their application due dates, allowing applicants to submit their application. Programs must still adhere to the key dates for fall and spring.

### On or Before November 1 (Fall) or March 1 (Spring)

- Each individual program sets their own application deadline.
- Programs may begin extending offers of admission on applications deemed complete by the program at any time during the admissions cycle.

- Programs should notify all applicants by November 1 (Fall) or March 1 (Spring) if they receive an offer, are waitlisted, or are rejected.
- Programs should indicate to applicants whether deposits, if applicable, are non-refundable, including those voluntarily paid before the deposit deadline.
- Notes:
  - Applicants may not be required to notify programs of their decision until on or after November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring).
  - Programs may not coerce applicants to accept an offer before November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring). Examples of coercion include, but are not limited to:
    - Offering applicants discounted tuition if they accept the offer prior to November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring).
    - Informing applicants that the offer cannot be guaranteed if they wait to accept it by the last day of November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring).

#### **On or Before November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring)**

- Programs that require a deposit from applicants to hold their spot may not coerce applicants to pay the deposit before November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring).
  - If voluntarily paid by the applicant, programs can accept the deposit before November 10 (Fall) or March 10 (Spring).
  - For programs accepting deposits, programs must indicate on their website whether the deposit is refundable.

#### **Program Traffic Rules Violations**

ACEND serves as a clearinghouse for reports of possible applicant and program misconduct. Questions about the Program Traffic Rules should be directed to [ACEND@eatright.org](mailto:ACEND@eatright.org).

**ACEND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS 2022**

Standard 3: Curriculum and Learning Activities

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

3.1 The program's curriculum must be designed to ensure the breadth and depth of requisite knowledge needed for entry to supervised practice to become a registered dietitian nutritionist.

a. The program's curriculum must include the following required components, including prerequisites:

1. Research methodology, interpretation of research literature and integration of research principles into evidence-based practice
2. Communication and documentation skills sufficient for entry into professional practice
3. Principles and techniques of effective education, counseling and behavior change theories and techniques
4. Governance of nutrition and dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics; and interprofessional relationships in various practice settings
5. Principles of medical nutrition therapy, the Nutrition Care Process and clinical workflow elements
6. Role of environment, food, nutrition and lifestyle choices in health promotion and disease prevention
7. Management theories and business principles required to deliver programs and services
8. Continuous quality management of food and nutrition services
9. Fundamentals of public policy, including the legislative and regulatory basis of nutrition and dietetics practice
10. Licensure and certification in the practice of nutrition and dietetics
11. Individual National Provider Identifier (NPI)
12. Health care delivery systems (such as accountable care organizations, managed care, medical homes, local health care agencies)
13. Coding and billing of nutrition and dietetics services to obtain reimbursement for services from public or private payers, fee-for-service and value-based payment systems
14. Food science and food systems, food safety and sanitation, environmental sustainability, global nutrition, principles and techniques of food preparation, and development, modification and evaluation of recipes, menus and food products acceptable to diverse populations

15. Organic chemistry, biochemistry, anatomy, physiology, genetics, microbiology, pharmacology, statistics, logic, nutrient metabolism, integrative and functional nutrition and nutrition across the lifespan

16. ~~Cultural humility, self-reflection, and diversity, equity and inclusion~~

16. Reflective practice

17. Human behavior, psychology, sociology or anthropology

b. The programs' curriculum must prepare students with the following core knowledge:

Domain 1. Scientific and Evidence Base of Practice: Integration of scientific information and translation of research into practice.

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

KRDN 1.1 Demonstrate how to locate, interpret, evaluate and use professional literature to make ethical, evidence-based practice decisions.

KRDN 1.2 Select and use appropriate current information technologies to locate and apply evidence-based guidelines and protocols.

KRDN 1.3 Apply critical thinking skills.

Domain 2. Professional Practice Expectations: Beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner level of practice.

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

KRDN 2.1 Demonstrate effective and professional oral and written communication and documentation.

KRDN 2.2 Describe the governance of nutrition and dietetics practice, such as the Scope of Practice for the Registered Dietitian Nutritionist and the Code of Ethics for the Profession of Nutrition and Dietetics.

KRDN 2.3 Assess the impact of a public policy position on the nutrition and dietetics profession.

KRDN 2.4 Discuss the impact of health care policy and different health care delivery systems on food and nutrition services.

KRDN 2.5 Identify and describe the work of interprofessional teams and the roles of others with

whom the registered dietitian nutritionist collaborates.

~~KRDN 2.6 Demonstrate cultural humility, awareness of personal biases and an understanding of cultural differences as they contribute to diversity, equity and inclusion.~~

KRDN 2.7 Describe contributing factors to health inequity in nutrition and dietetics ~~including structural bias, social inequities, health disparities and discrimination.~~

KRDN 2.8 Participate in a nutrition and dietetics professional organization and explain the significant role of the organization.

KRDN 2.9 Defend a position on issues impacting the nutrition and dietetics profession.

Domain 3. Clinical and Client Services: Development and delivery of information, products and services to individuals, groups and populations.

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

KRDN 3.1 Use the Nutrition Care Process and clinical workflow elements to assess nutritional parameters, diagnose nutrition related problems, determine appropriate nutrition interventions and develop plans to monitor the effectiveness of these interventions.

KRDN 3.2 Develop an educational session or program/educational strategy for a target population.

KRDN 3.3 Demonstrate counseling and education methods to facilitate behavior change and enhance wellness for diverse individuals and groups.

KRDN 3.4 Practice routine health screening assessments, including measuring blood pressure and conducting waived point of care laboratory testing (such as blood glucose or cholesterol)

KRDN 3.5 Describe concepts of nutritional genomics and how they relate to medical nutrition therapy, health and disease.

KRDN 3.6 Develop nutritionally sound meals, menus and meal plans that promote health and disease management and meet client's/patient's needs.

Domain 4. Practice Management and Use of Resources: Strategic application of principles of management and systems in the provision of services to individuals and organizations.

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

KRDN 4.1 Apply management theories to the development of programs or services.

KRDN 4.2 Evaluate a budget/financial management plan and interpret financial data.

KRDN 4.3 Demonstrate an understanding of the regulation system related to billing and coding, what services are reimbursable by third party payers, and how reimbursement may be obtained.

KRDN 4.4 Apply the principles of human resource management to different situations.

KRDN 4.5 Apply safety and sanitation principles related to food, personnel and consumers.

KRDN 4.6 Explain the processes involved in delivering quality food and nutrition services.

KRDN 4.7 Evaluate data to be used in decision-making for continuous quality improvement.

Domain 5. Leadership and Career Management: Skills, strengths, knowledge and experience relevant to leadership potential and professional growth for the nutrition and dietetics practitioner.

#### Knowledge

Upon completion of the program, graduates are able to:

KRDN 5.1 Perform self-assessment that includes awareness in terms of learning and leadership styles and ~~cultural orientation and~~ develop goals for self-improvement.

KRDN 5.2 Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals.

KRDN 5.3 Practice how to self-advocate for opportunities in a variety of settings (such as asking for needed support, presenting an elevator pitch).

KRDN 5.4 Practice resolving differences or dealing with conflict.

KRDN 5.5 Promote team involvement and recognize the skills of each member.

KRDN 5.6 Demonstrate an understanding of the importance and expectations of a professional in mentoring and precepting others.