

# **Nutrition and Dietetics Program Western Kentucky University**



## **Student Handbook of Policies and Procedures**

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## Section 1. General Information

### Mission of the Nutrition & Dietetics Program

The mission of the dietetics program at Western Kentucky University (WKU) is to prepare students to compete for ACEND accredited supervised practice experiences that lead to eligibility for the Commission on Dietetics Registration Examination, and thus, to “Registered Dietitian Nutritionist” designation. Students are provided educational experiences to prepare them to effectively fulfill duties of entry-level dietetics positions and to manage others who provide dietetic-related services. Students emerge from the program with information and management skills which enable them to creatively solve problems in the delivery of dietetic services.

### Program Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: The program will prepare students to effectively fulfill duties of entry-level dietetics positions and to manage others who provide dietetic-related services.

- At least 80% of graduates over a five year period will pass the registration examination for registered dietitian nutritionists within one year of the first attempt.
- 65% of program graduates will become employed in dietetics or dietetics related fields within 4 years of graduation.
- Within three years following graduation the mean graduate rating on the quality of preparation for a professional career related to the field will be at least a 3.5 on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, with 5.0 being the best level of preparation.
- Over a three to five year period the mean internship director rating on the overall preparation for a dietetic internship will be at least a 3.5 on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, with 5.0 being the best level of preparation

Goal 2: The program will prepare students to successfully compete for supervised practice experiences that lead to eligibility for the Commission on Dietetics Registration Examination

- Program completion: 80% of students enrolled in the professional courses in the third year of the DPD program are expected to complete program/degree requirements within three years
- Supervised Practice Application Rate: Over a 5 year period, 65% of the graduates will apply to supervised practice programs within 12 months of graduation.
- Supervised Practice Acceptance Rate: over a 5 year period 50% of those applying to supervised practice programs within 12 months of graduation will be accepted.
- Within 4 years following graduation the mean graduate rating on the quality of preparation for an internship will be at least a 3.5 on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, with 5.0 being the best level of preparation.

Goal 3. The program will improve the quality of student support/information related to major, career options, and related resources.

- The mean student rating on the overall quality of advising will be at least a 3.5 ("good" rating) on a scale from 1.0 to 5.0, with 5.0 being the best rating.
- At least 2 group meetings will be held each academic year to provide information about career options or to provide an opportunity for social interaction/ mentoring.

Program outcomes data are available upon request. Student learning outcomes are on the [program website](#).

## **Accreditation Status**

The Nutrition and Dietetics Program at WKU is currently accredited 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, 312/899-5400, [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend) .

For information regarding:

- Accredited programs for dietitian/nutrition students: Coordinated Programs, Didactic Programs and Dietetic Internships
- Accredited programs for dietetic technician students
- Computer matching for dietetic internships
- Sponsoring organizations eligibility requirements, Standards of Education, and policies for accreditation refer to [www.eatright.org/ACEND](http://www.eatright.org/ACEND) .

## **Estimated Program Costs**

- Lab coat to be used in HMD 151, HMD 251 and HMD 464 - \$25 to \$40
- Lab fees for HMD 151 and 251- \$150 (\$75 per lab)
- Student liability insurance (if required by site) HMD 464 - \$35+
- TB skin test series - \$20 (if required by site)
- Background check for HMD 464 (if required by site)- \$50
- Drug screen--\$55
- Tuition – Kentucky Resident, Fall 2017/Spring 2018 = \$5,101; Non-resident, Fall 2017/Spring 2018 = \$12,756. Tuition Rates change annually. You are encouraged to check for the current rate and additional information from the WKU Office of the Bursar website: <http://www.wku.edu/bursar/home-tuition-fees.php>
- Fee for online courses--\$100 per credit hour in addition to full-time tuition rates. For example, a three credit hour online HMD 211 course would cost the student \$300 in addition to the full time tuition rate of \$5,101. You are encouraged to check for the current rate and additional information from the WKU Office of the Bursar website: <http://www.wku.edu/bursar/home-tuition-fees.php>. One three hour course, HMD 361 Life Stage Nutrition and a one credit hour online course, HMD 152 Food Service Sanitation are required for the major. Others are available for some Dietetics electives, sections of HMD 211 Human Nutrition and other courses required for the major.
- Internet access and a personal computer for online courses—Both are available for no additional charge on campus, but a computer and online access will need to be purchased by the student should he/she want access from home.
- Other expenses and fees per semester, such as for meals (\$1485-\$1984), books (\$500 per semester on average), and more may be found through the [WKU Office of the Bursar](#).
- AND DICAS application fee--\$40 for the first application and \$20 for each additional application
- D&D Digital--\$50

## **Financial Assistance**

Financial aid is available through the University.

<http://www.wku.edu/financialaid/alternativeloansapply.php>

A limited number of professional scholarships are available through the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics. Application qualifications and forms are available at the following link: <http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=7934&terms=scholarships>.

### **Distance Education Requirements**

The majority of courses required for the Nutrition & Dietetics program are only offered through face-to-face instruction, particularly those offered through the Hospitality Management and Dietetics division. However, one three credit hour course, HMD 361 Life Stage Nutrition, and a one credit hour course, HMD 152 Food Service Sanitation, are required for the program. The elective courses HMD 364 Sports Nutrition and HMD 368 Dietary and Herbal Supplements are only offered online. Web based sections of HMD 211 Human Nutrition and some of the supporting courses required for the major are available. Students should be aware that there is an additional fee for online courses as described above in Estimated Program Costs. Students must be proficient in Blackboard and basic computer use in order to be successful in web based courses. Computer labs and wireless internet are available on campus. However, the student will need to purchase a computer and internet access should he/she require access to online course materials from home. Assistance with computing issues can be found by contacting the [IT Helpdesk](#).

### **Transportation**

Students are responsible for transportation to any off-campus venues required for classes. The University does not provide any travel reimbursement for students traveling to off-campus sites. Students are also responsible for securing their own personal auto liability insurance. WKU is not liable for any accident or injury that occurs during travel required for college-related activities

### **Student Health Services**

WKU students have access to Student Health Services as described in the WKU Student Handbook under [Graves Gilbert Health Services](#). See the [WKU Health Services](#) website for more information.

### **Student Professional Liability Insurance**

Students may need to purchase professional liability insurance for HMD 464 Applied Institution Management, if required by the site. One source is [www.proliability.com](http://www.proliability.com) ; with a minimum insurance of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate.

### **Student Health Insurance**

All WKU students are advised to have personal health insurance, although this is not required. When in off-campus facilities for required learning experiences, neither the facility nor WKU is responsible for any costs related to student illness or injury. Insurance is needed to defray the cost of hospital and medical care for any illness or injury that might be sustained while in this program and the substantial monetary liability that you, as a student, might incur as a result of failure to have such insurance. If you are not currently covered, you may want to consider affordable student policies. Information regarding WKU's student health insurance can be found at <http://www.wku.edu/healthservices/insurance-billing/student-health-insurance.php> but you are not required to purchase through WKU.

### **Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks**

A background check may be required by the practicum site for HMD 464. One source is: [www.certifiedbackground.com/](http://www.certifiedbackground.com/). The code to access the background check website is WC75. Drug screening is available at WKU Health Services or Certified Backgrounder. The code to access the drug testing feature of Certified Backgrounder is WC75dt.

## **Access to Counseling and Testing Services**

WKU students have access to a variety of support services as specified in the WKU Student Handbook. The WKU Counseling and Testing Center, located in Potter Hall 409, provides personal counseling services and is responsible for the administration of national testing programs. Contact the Center for appointments and for test information at (270) 745-3159 or see the [website](#).

## **Academic Calendar**

The academic calendar for WKU and the program can be found at the following link: [http://www.wku.edu/registrar/academic\\_calendars/acadcal\\_20172018.php](http://www.wku.edu/registrar/academic_calendars/acadcal_20172018.php)

## **Section 2. Path to Becoming a Registered Dietitian**

### **Requirements for Becoming a Registered Dietitian/Registered Dietitian Nutritionist**

To become a registered dietitian/registered dietitian nutritionist (RD/RDN) the following requirements must be completed:

1. Complete at least a bachelor's degree at an accredited college or university in the United States AND complete course work approved by the Commission on Accreditation of Dietetics Accreditation of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Completion of the CFND concentration in nutrition and dietetics, within the HMD major, at Western Kentucky University allows for the completion of the bachelor's degree AND the necessary course work. (See below for admission criteria).
2. Complete an internship that has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Students apply to these programs in their last year at Western Kentucky University and complete the programs after graduating from the University. Entrance into internships is competitive. An undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.3 to 3.5, relevant work experience, and volunteer experience aid in the preparation for an internship.
3. Pass a national examination administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
4. After gaining status as a RD/RDN, continuing professional education is needed to maintain registration status.
5. In addition to earning registration status through the Commission on Dietetic Registration of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, individual states may have laws regarding licensure/certification regarding dietitians and nutritionists. For example, the Kentucky Division of Occupations and Professions has a Board of Dietitians and Nutritionists. In order to be a licensed dietitian in the state of Kentucky, the RD/RDN credential and 15 hours of continuing education per year are required.

### **Admission Requirements of the WKU Nutrition and Dietetics Program**

- For admission into the dietetics program at Western Kentucky University, students must be admitted to Western Kentucky University as a degree-seeking student and must have a minimum G.P.A. of 3.0 on at least 30 college credit hours.
- The 30 credit hours must include: Anatomy and Physiology (BIOL 131), College Algebra (MATH 116), and Fundamentals of College Chemistry (CHEM 105), with a minimum grade of "C" for these pre-admission courses. The 30 credit hours must also include HMD 211 Human Nutrition with a minimum grade of "B."
- A composite ACT of 20 or SAT (critical reading + math) of 950 is also needed for program admission.

## Admission Process of the WKU Nutrition and Dietetics Program

Students who meet the above admission requirements can apply to the Nutrition and Dietetics Program by completing the [Admission Application](#) and submitting it to their advisor. Submitted applications are processed by the DPD director at the end of the fall and spring semesters.

## Internship Programs

- Internships are the second step to becoming a RD/RDN. An internship is completed after the undergraduate degree is obtained.
- Internships are located in many universities, colleges and hospitals across the United States.
- A list of all internships is available on the website of the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#), and from the undergraduate program director at WKU.
- In the third year of the nutrition and dietetics curriculum, students develop a list of supervised practice programs that may be of interest.
- In the last year of the program, students may wish to visit an internship or attend an internship open house.

## Becoming a Competitive Internship Applicant

- Nationally, there is a shortage of internship openings, compared to the number of students applying to internships. Currently, only about half of the students who apply nationally have a chance for placement into an internship.
- Internships each set application standards and guidelines. Thus, criteria for selection into different programs may vary from internship to internship. Some internships do require the GRE for program admission.
- **Earn excellent grades.** An undergraduate grade point average of at least a 3.3 to 3.5 is probably needed to be competitive for a supervised practice program. Having a strong GPA will not ensure that entrance into an internship is received. Internships also review the GPA of courses required for the major, and may also focus on the science-related GPA. The higher the GPAs, the better chance a student may have of gaining entrance into an internship. Internships set their own admission standards.
- **Gain relevant work experience.** Positions as dietary aides or diet assistants in hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities provide valuable experience. In these facilities, students also gain work experience as cooks and diet supervisors. Other work experience in the food service industry, such as server positions or cashiers in fast food restaurants, can be beneficial; however, the degree of importance placed on these types of work experience may vary from internship to internship.
- **Gain dietetic-related volunteer experiences,** as available. Examples of volunteer experiences include assisting with events sponsored by the health department, assisting with health and recruitment fairs at WKU or off-campus, and shadowing dietitians in the workplace. Other opportunities based on personal motivation and interest can also be completed.
- **Get involved in extracurricular activities.** Membership in the Student Dietetic Association, Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society, and/or other on- and off-campus activities can be of benefit. Participation in such organizations and holding an office can increase your leadership and interpersonal skills and can provide volunteer opportunities.
- **Manage your time and prioritize.**
- **Be a respectful, conscientious student and employee.** When applying to supervised practice programs, you will need letters of recommendation. Practice



good interpersonal skills and work hard in classes and on the job. Be on time and have a positive attitude.

### **Preparation of Internship Applications**

- Obtain current information (within past three to six months) from programs of interest.
- Follow program directions very carefully.
- Apply to at least 5 programs. You will be matched to **one** program, however applying to multiple programs is necessary as you only have as many opportunities as you create for yourself. However, do NOT apply to programs that you will not really be willing to attend. Failure to accept a position to which you have been matched is damaging to you, the student, the internship program and the WKU undergraduate Nutrition and Dietetics program.
- Talk to your program director or advisor at WKU about the application process and attend meetings concerning the application process.
- Read the complete information about the computer matching policy and procedures used to apply to most dietetic internships at the website of The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.
- **Verification Statements versus Declarations of Intent:** If you have graduated, you will receive a Verification Statement. If you have NOT graduated, you will receive a Declaration of Intent that identifies the courses needed to complete program and graduation requirements. The verification statement will be mailed to you following completion of program requirements and graduation. Thus, you will need to provide the program director at WKU with a mailing address that the verification statement can be sent to. You must submit the verification statement to your internship director after you have been matched to a program. To be eligible to receive a verification statement, and thus to be eligible for dietetic internships, all program and university requirements at WKU must be completed. These requirements are specified in the [WKU undergraduate catalog](#).
- **Dietetic Internship Centralized Application System (DICAS):** Most internship programs utilize DICAS to receive and review internship applications. This is an online system to which you will submit your internship application, recommendation letters and transcripts.
- **D&D Digital Systems Computer Matching:** Most supervised practice programs participate in computer matching. An applicant rank orders his or her choices for an internship and will be matched to **one** program. A single fee for computer matching is charged. Computer matching forms may be obtained from the WKU didactic director or may be requested directly from D&D Digital.

## **Section 3. Policies and Procedures**

### **Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy**

Western Kentucky University is committed to equal opportunity in its educational programs and employment. It is an equal opportunity - affirmative action employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the Compliance Officer, Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/University ADA Services (EAU), Weatherly Administration Building, Room 13, Bowling Green, KY 42101-1009, 270-745-5121.



## **Student Code of Conduct**

The University is committed to developing and maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and conduct. Therefore, all students are subject to the rules and regulations of the university. In accepting admission to the University, students indicate their willingness to abide by university rules and regulations and acknowledge the right of the university to take appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion as may be deemed appropriate, for failure to abide by university rules and regulations. For rules related to student conduct, see the following [link](#).

## **Academic Dishonesty**

According to the WKU Academic Dishonesty policy (WKU Catalog) “Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the coursework in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal. The faculty member may also present the case to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary sanctions.” Additional information regarding academic offenses can be found in the [undergraduate catalog](#).

## **Assessment of Prior Learning and Credit toward Program Requirements**

Credit toward program requirements can only be earned through equivalent course work. Transfer credits from other universities are reviewed by the advisor and Registrar’s Office. Course equivalency is determined through comparison of course descriptions, objectives and syllabi.

## **Access to Student Records**

In accordance with federal law as established in 1974 by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Western Kentucky University maintains the confidentiality of student records and provides a student the right to inspect and review education records, the right to seek to amend those records, and the right to limit disclosure of information from the records.

## **Protection of Privacy**

Basic guidelines regarding access to student files/educational records are found in the [undergraduate catalog](#) and are based on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Online access to academic records is secured through the use of a WKU id and password. Similarly, the WKU id and password are required for access to grades, assignments, notes and other course materials that are posted on Blackboard for web assisted and online courses.

## **Filing and Handling Complaints**

These procedures are consistent with the [Student Grievance Procedure](#) for WKU. A student who has a disagreement with a faculty member about an academic matter must first attempt to resolve the matter through discussion with the instructor. If the issue is not resolved satisfactorily between the student and the instructor, the student may specify in writing the basis for the disagreement and request a review by the Department Head of the Family & Consumer Sciences Department within a month of the date of the instructor’s decision, enclosing copies of the written documents and requesting a review. The Department Head, in consultation with the faculty member, will arrive at a final decision in the matter. If the complaint is still not resolved, the student should meet/write the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services. If no resolution occurs at this point, the student may file a written notice of appeal which is delineated in the [WKU Student Handbook](#).

The Accreditation Council for Nutrition and Dietetics Education (ACEND) will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with accreditation standards.

**Complaints should be submitted to ACEND only after all other options with the program and institution have been exhausted.** ACEND is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dietetics education programs, but does not intervene on behalf of individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff, or students. A copy of the accreditation standards and/or ACEND's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting staff at the Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2190, Chicago, IL 60606, 312/899-5400, [www.eatrightpro.org/acend](http://www.eatrightpro.org/acend)

### **Withdrawal and Refund of Tuition and Fees**

For various reasons a student may withdraw from the University. A refund of tuition shall be made if a student officially withdraws or is dismissed from the University during the first three weeks of a regular semester. Information concerning withdrawal and refund of tuition and fees may be found in the [undergraduate catalog](#).

### **WKU Student Handbook**

Additional information for students can be found in the [WKU Student Handbook](#). Topics include policies regarding Academics, Information Technology, Housing and Residence Life, Alcohol and Drug Abuse and others.

### **Graduation and Program Completion Requirements**

A Verification Statement is only granted under the following circumstances (receipt of the Verification Statement allows a graduate to complete an internship):

1. Completes all University general education requirements.
2. Satisfactorily completes all required coursework for the Nutrition and Dietetics concentration. Students must earn a B or better in HMD 211 Human Nutrition and a C or better in all other dietetic specific courses.
3. The student has discharged all indebtedness to Western Kentucky University.

All students must complete an Application for Graduation in the WKU Office of the Registrar after 90 credit hours are earned.

### **Maximum Amount of Time Allowed for Completing Program Requirements**

The maximum amount of time allowed for completing program requirements in place at the time a student enrolls is based on the following University policy as delineated in the Undergraduate Catalog:

"The student's initial term of entry is identified as the student's "catalog term"... A student will be allowed seven consecutive years from his/her catalog term to complete degree requirements. The college dean may grant an extension to this deadline...A student who drops out and re-enrolls after an absence of seven consecutive years or more will be assigned the catalog term of the readmission term." A change in the catalog term may result in changes to the required courses of the major.

Students should be aware that some internship programs have admission requirements related to recency of education for certain courses or the bachelor's degree. For this reason, students who have completed didactic or admission courses 5 or more years ago may be advised to retake those courses prior to applying to internships. Additional Information can be found in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#).

### **Evaluation of Student Learning and Progress**

Within each course for the Nutrition & Dietetics program, students will receive feedback following the completion of assignments, quizzes and exams; this feedback will occur during the course and consist of comments and grades written on assignments and exams by the instructor. Final course feedback will occur with receipt of the overall course grade, which may be viewed online through the TopNet system at WKU. A grade of B or better is required for HMD 211 Human Nutrition, and a grade of C or better is required for all other nutrition and dietetics specific courses. [The Learning Center](#) provides tutoring for HMD 211 Human Nutrition, math and several supporting science courses.

Review of student progress by the academic advisor will occur in advising sessions held prior to the scheduling of courses each semester. Students who are not successful in the program will be counseled to select another concentration or major as appropriate. Students should be aware that although a GPA of 3.0 is required to enter the dietetics program at WKU, a higher GPA (e.g. 3.3 to 3.5) is necessary in order to be competitive for internships. Similarly, although a minimum of a C in dietetics specific courses is required for a verification statement, a grade of a C or lower in a professional course will trigger discussions on competitiveness and academic performance with the advisor.